

## HAZARD ALERT

### **Log truck driver fall - October 2017**

#### **Background:**

A log truck had been loaded on a skid site, and the driver then got in the truck and drove off the skid and up the road a short distance to a flat area to chain down the load. He did this to get clear of the skid and allow the harvesting crew room to continue working. Where the driver stopped to chain down his load was out of sight of the logging crew due to an adjacent crop of younger trees.

When the driver climbed down the steps of the truck, his left foot became caught between the bottom step and the truck mudflap. The driver has then lost his balance and has fallen backwards, twisting his leg as he fell. He then hit his head on the ground and was knocked unconscious.

The driver lay there unconscious for approximately 1 hr and 20 minutes until the next truck driver coming in found him lying on the side of the road. At that point the emergency response was initiated - an ambulance was dispatched, but upon arrival the ambulance crew subsequently ordered the rescue helicopter. As well as the concussion, the driver suffered a torn ligament in his knee.



#### **Learnings from this:**

**Truck drivers are required to get in and out of their cabs on a regular basis every day. Some of these times will be within view of other people, and occasionally it will be when they are by themselves (for example in this situation, or when they stop at the forest entrance to check their chain tensions). The main control to avoid slips/trips/falls is for people to use 3 points of contact when getting on and off vehicles and machinery.**

**As an added control however, Port Blakely would also recommend that truck drivers chain down their load in view of the harvesting operation wherever possible. This is so that help is quickly available if required.**

**In addition, the following points have also come from this incident:**

- **Hazards associated with vehicles and machinery, where other objects may interfere with people's ability to safely use the steps, are to be reviewed.**
- **When dealing with a suspected serious injury in isolated areas in the forest environment, the person contacting emergency services should suggest that a rescue helicopter would be the best initial response option.**