

HAZARD ALERT

BRANCH ENTERS HARVESTER CAB

July 2018

Incident Description

A Cat 330C harvester was felling trees when a heavy tree branch came through the machines roof grating hitting the operator's right leg after cutting through his Schoen gumboot. The injury sustained was luckily only bruising.

This particular machine has been certified to COPS grade 3, ISO 3471, ISO 8084 ISO 8083 with ROPS, OPS and FOPS however the branch was a small diameter and entered through the 75mm grating on the roof top.

The cab structure is an older type with the protective structure being built around the outside of a standard Cat excavator cab as opposed to the cab being replaced by a purpose built cab/structure.

Below the grating there was a standard sunroof/cab hatch with a (7mm) polycarbonate window, this afforded very little resistance as the branch smashed through when it entered the cab.

After discussion with the engineering certification company it was discovered that while the machine was certified and tagged as having ROPS, COPS, FOPS & OPS and current, it did not have OPS over the grill on the roof.

It appears to be common practice on later model harvesters to have additional 19mm polycarbonate over top of roof grills, NZFM where advised that this option comes under OPS rather than FOPS.





Immediate Cause:

- The protective structure didn't provide adequate protection from vertically falling branches of said diameter.

Recommendation

- Contractors/ principals should consider specification of OPS protection on harvester roof grills.