

Safety Alert



Safety Alert – Chain shot from Operating Harvesters, October 2016

Safety Alert Number 17

Background

This Safety Alert is being issued as a result of a recent chain shot accident on a harvesting site.

Chain shot can cause serious injury or death to the machine operator, ground personnel and bystanders. It occurs when the chain breaks within the harvesting head and ejects a piece or pieces of chain at high velocity (similar to the speed of a bullet).

What happened

A harvester was processing a tree when the chain broke. This resulted in a chain fragment flying from the broken chain (i.e. a chain shot) and penetrated the harvester windscreen at high velocity. This struck the operator, causing serious abdominal injuries.

Findings

The windscreen on the Harvester was replaced in July 2016. A new chain was fitted to the harvester on the morning of the accident. It broke after approximately one hour's work; a fragment of which penetrated the harvester windscreen and injured the driver. The Health and Safety Authority are in the process of carrying out a full investigation

Corrective Action

CONDUCT daily checks of all harvesting machinery including saw chains.

REPLACE damaged parts, such as cracked harvester windscreen or saw chain immediately. Only use high quality chains and replace as per manufacturer's recommendations.

ENSURE replacement windscreen & saw chains meet manufacturer specifications to mitigate against potential chain breakage/chain shot.

ALL personnel working on harvesting sites to take due care of machinery risk zone.

All other personnel approaching an operating harvester, must advise the operator to power down before entering the risk zone.

Please Don't Walk By 