

SAFETY NOTICE

16th December 2015

To all contractors

We have had a recent incident where a contractor has become crushed between a tree and the butt plate of a skidder while un-choking. This has resulted in a broken bone in his pelvis giving pain when walking.

The operator had got out of the cab and was working behind the butt plate when the skidder rolled backwards and hit him. He said that he thought he had engaged the handbrake, but in fact, he hadn't.

FISA guide 501 states:

[Apply the parking brake but be aware that when parking on slopes, the tractor parking brake alone may not be effective. If you have to park on a slope take additional precautions, such as chocking the wheels.](#)

Due to the way the trees had been winched in there was also room to stand between the butt plate and the trees.

FISA guide 502 states:

[Ensure the load is winched up close to the butt plate or the notched drawbar.](#)

If this cannot be achieved always un-choker from either side of the load.

The direct causes of this incident are that the handbrake was not engaged and the contractor was working between the tree and the butt plate.

The root causes will be familiarity with the operation. Getting in and out of the cab on numerous times during a day.

Never forget that forestry is a high risk activity full of hazardous tasks. Keep alert and always follow safety guidance.