

Harvest-line – Machine Rollover!

Fortunately no one was seriously hurt – a very close shave!

LTI 16/06/08 – Orakei Korako near Taupo

FIPS 1993: A Harvest-line hauler, engaged in downhill retrieval (scabbing) on a steep, regular slope had just finished a setting.

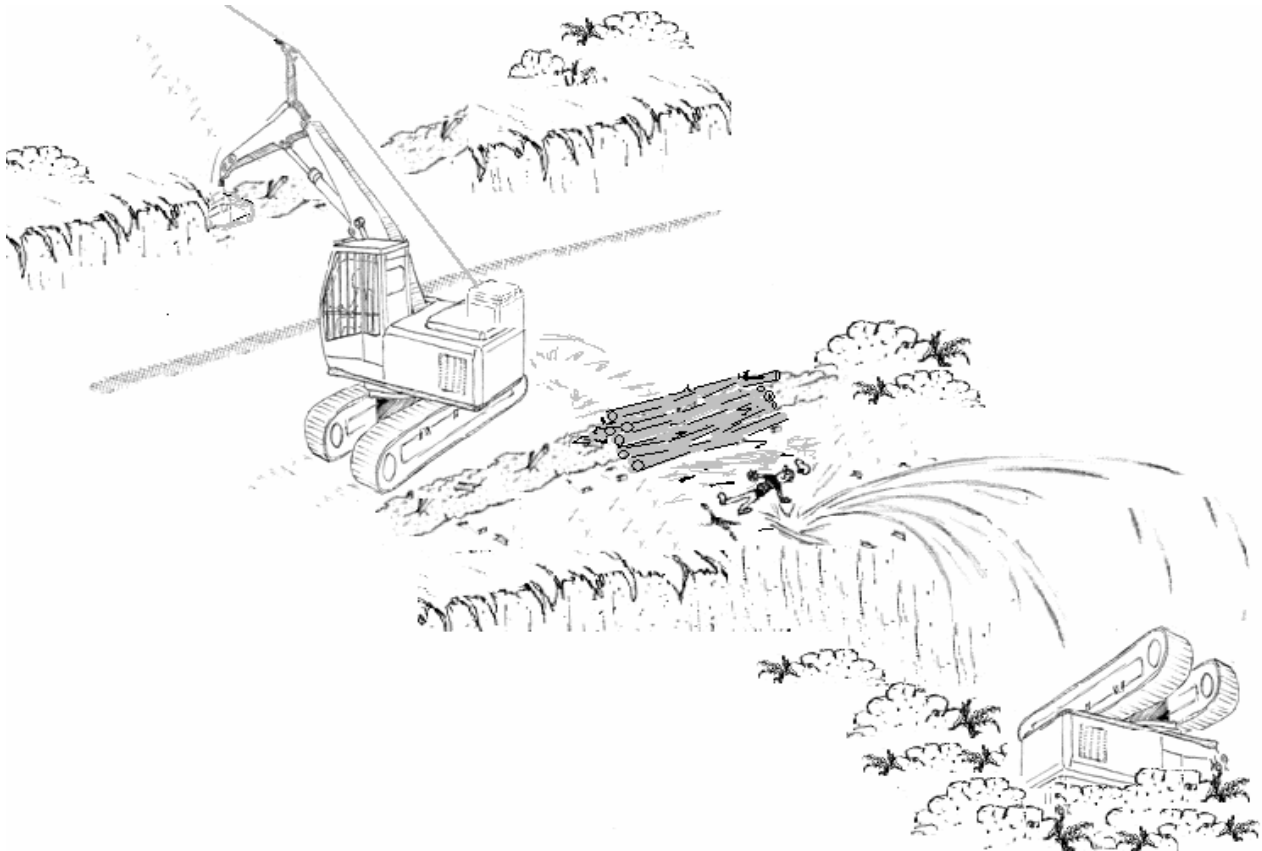
The machine was re-positioned to help wind in the lines. It was turned 90 degrees to its original position, with the tracks partially resting on stacked logs. The stacked logs were on the road edge supported by stays and fresh cut stumps.

The cable winding operation was proving difficult, as there was a lot of slack in the system. The Hauler Operator decided that he would attend to the winch drum at the back of the machine while another worker, under his instruction, operated the winch motor.

The cable suddenly twisted resulting in an instruction to put the ‘winch motor’ in the ‘forward’ position to slacken the cable. The worker misinterpreted the instruction putting the Harvest-line ‘track motors’ into forward drive. As the machines track orientation was at 180 degrees to the cab, the ‘forward position’, put the machine into reverse.

The machine reversed a further 1-2 metres onto the stack. At the same time, a stump, supporting one side of the stack of logs, failed.

The machine toppled backwards then slid 25 metres over a bluff into a stream bed. The Hauler Operator jumped from the machine and was narrowly cleared by the machine as it toppled over. The other worker, not wearing a seatbelt, remained in the cab and rode the machine to its resting point.



What have we learnt – points to observe:

1. Landings, where Harvest-line machines are positioned, are best planned in advance of operations and marked on harvest plans. Variations (including earthworks) must be discussed with the harvesting manager and require approval before they go ahead.
2. No part of the Harvest-line machine may sit on unstable ground – If sited on roads and tracks, these must be properly formed and the machines tracks must remain parallel to the carriage way at all times.
3. When not in the haul phase, the Harvest-line machine is considered 'moving plant' and seat belts shall be worn – see p. 49 (4) Approved Code of Practice for Safety and Health in Forest Operations.
4. Consider all the hazards and controls carefully – document properly.
5. Carefully and closely monitor inexperienced operators – only the most experienced persons shall work in the high risk situations.
6. Be sure that signals and other instructions are properly understood – prior to embarking on the task.