

Removing logs and timer from site

Incident description:

In January 2016, an incident occurred when operatives were removing logs from the embankment, as part of a soft estate improvements scheme.

A cut log rolled down the embankment, across Lane 1 (which was closed) and across Lane 2 (which was live). The log narrowly missed a passing van. An operative then ran out across the live lane and retrieved the log. Fortunately, there were no resultant injuries and no damage to the passing vehicle.

Investigation/findings:

During the investigation, it was found that the Safe Working Procedure (which the contractor had in place) hadn't been adhered to. This resulted in works being undertaken in an unsafe environment, without appropriate safety zones in place. A summary of the findings are listed below:

- Decisions made by the operatives on site, did not align with the company procedure and put the travelling public and workforce at high risk.
- There wasn't a physical barrier to stop any errant logs from rolling into the carriageway.
- In line with the current ban on carriageway crossing, operatives are not to enter/cross the live carriageway.

Following the investigation, a company-wide review of the Safe Working Procedure was undertaken. This led to several changes and improvements being made, which are summarised to the right.

For more information please contact:

Jeremy Bird, Highways England
Health and Safety Team
Jeremy.Bird@highwaysengland.co.uk
Tel: 07810 050479

HE 170

Actions taken:

- Where there is room and it is safe to do so, timber is to be left in lengths long enough to be loaded and removed from site with a tractor and timber trailer with grab
- When removing logs from a bank the working area shall have a row of double based 1 metre cones placed side by side at the foot of the bank, with the van/lorry parked in front to create a physical barrier, to catch the logs - should any roll.
- Where there isn't room for a timber trailer/grab, logs should be cut into manageable lengths and passed hand to hand down the bank. Under no circumstances should a log be rolled or thrown down the bank.
- Tool Box Talk: Carriageway Crossings and Live Lane Working was briefed to all operatives.
- The revised Procedure was fully briefed out to all Managerial, Supervisory and Operational staff.

Information about alerts process contact
PTSPprogrammeOffice@highwaysengland.co.uk