

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN

**SAWMILL SAFETY  
CODE**

FIRST EDITION, 1962

SECOND EDITION (Revised), 1964

THIRD EDITION (Revised), 1969

**TO ALL EMPLOYEES  
OF**

Safety is the responsibility of each and every employee. It is not the responsibility only of the Foreman, the experienced employee, the Safety Officer, the Management, or of any other single person or group of persons. Everybody must be mindful at all times of his own safety and the safety of others about him.

All employees on any job must be alert. If one employee fails to be alert, he may cause an injury to himself or one or more others.

It is essential for each employee to know and observe not only these General Safety Rules but also any specific safety rules of the Section in which he works.

When a man is transferred, he must learn the rules of the Section to which he is transferred.

This booklet should be respected, carefully preserved and re-read from time to time.

*I hereby acknowledge receipt of this Safety Code and I agree to comply with the rules and regulations contained in this book.*

Name.....

Date.....

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Name.....

Date.....

**FOR PERSONNEL WHO CANNOT READ  
ENGLISH**

*I certify that I have given a copy of the  
Sawmill Safety Code to—*

Name.....

*and that he understands that he must have  
it read and explained to him as soon as  
possible.*

Signature of

Person Issuing.....

Date.....

*I certify that I have read and explained  
the Sawmill Safety Code to.....  
and I am satisfied that he understands the  
rules that apply to the Section in which he  
is to work and knows that he must observe  
them.*

Signed.....

(This form is to be detached and handed in  
at the office within 48 hours of engagement.)

## INTRODUCTION

*The number of accidents in sawmills is very high and many of the injuries are serious.*

*Accidents have been reduced by the use of good safety rules in all types of industries the world over—including the Sawmilling Industry.*

*The rules contained in this book have been drawn up for your use by the men of the Industry—men with much experience in sawmilling. They are well proven ways of making your work safer.*

**Read them—make sure you understand them—use them and see that others working with you do so too.**

**REMEMBER—THE LIFE THAT IS SAVED MAY BE YOURS!**

Associated Sawmillers and Timber Merchants  
of W.A.

Forests Department of W.A.

*(Together constituting the West Australian  
Division of Aus. T.I.S.—Australian Timber  
Industry Stabilisation Conference)*

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## SECTION A

### GENERAL SAWMILL SAFETY

#### 1. General

(a) All who work in or around a sawmill should use the safety appliances, protective clothing and devices provided or recommended.

(b) All tools, machinery and equipment should be kept in good working order. Regular inspection is the only way to be sure it is in good order.

(c) Be sure that you know the signals that apply to your section of the work.

(d) You must know how to stop the machinery in your section in case of an accident.

(e) Don't stop a machine improperly.

(f) Wait till a machine stops before starting any adjustments or repairs to it.

(g) Never take part in or condone any horseplay, skylarking or shouting in or about a sawmill. The only excuse for a shout is a bad accident requiring immediate assistance, or as a warning. Don't throw skid grease, bark, heart mud, etc., about.

(h) Don't show off.

(i) Compressed air or other gas must never be directed towards the body because it can very easily penetrate causing serious injury or death. Never use it to clean yourself or your clothes.

(j) Learn where the fire fighting equipment is and how it is operated. If the mill is burnt your job goes with it.

(k) Be very careful with matches and cigarette butts.

(l) Put inflammable waste in the proper receptacles.

(m) Keep your work area clear of sawdust, grease, debris and rubbish—it may save you a serious fall.

(n) Assist in keeping all access ways clear of obstacles.

(o) Use only sharp tools. Blunt tools are dangerous because they require extra force which cannot be properly controlled.

(p) Always use the correct tools for the job. Do not improvise.

(q) Don't use equipment or machines without authority.

(r) Don't remove safety guards, except for authorised maintenance. See that guards are securely fixed and properly adjusted.

(s) Ask to be shown how to lift by using your legs instead of your back. You don't know how bad a bad back is until your back is bad.

(t) Tell and show newcomers about the hazards of the work in the section.

(u) Never bring alcoholic liquor on to the job.

## **2. Protective Clothing**

(a) If you feel your job warrants personal protective equipment—**SEE YOUR FOREMAN.**

(b) It is recommended that hard hats should be worn in the log yard and stacking yard, and by construction and maintenance men and when unloading firewood bins.

(c) Safety boots with steel toe caps are recommended. The soles should be of a type to give a good grip on the surface on which they will be used.

(d) Sandals and sandshoes should NOT be worn.

(e) Thick leather aprons should be worn by men at saw-benches and in saw shops.

(f) Protective glasses or face shields should be worn for all grinding, chipping, saw stripping and other operations where there is danger of foreign bodies entering the eye.

(g) Dress properly for the job. Loose clothing and long neckties can pull you into a machine or wrap you around a shaft. Rings and bracelets have torn many men's fingers and hands off. Gloves are necessary for many jobs, but not where they can pull your hand into a machine.

(h) Impervious gloves and aprons should be worn when working with toxic solutions such as sodium pentachlorophenate. Goggles should be worn when making up the solutions.

### **3. Procedure Following an Accident**

(a) Do what ever is necessary to prevent further injury, but think before you act, as hasty action may do more harm than good. Medical First Aid should be given only by qualified people.

(b) Obtain a Doctor, Ambulance, etc., if required.

(c) Tell the person in charge.

(d) If anyone is killed the person in charge must tell the police and obtain names and addresses of any witnesses.

(e) Assist your safety Committee to ascertain all the facts relating to the cause of the accident.

(f) Minor accidents if not treated can develop into major troubles. Therefore report them all to the person in charge and seek First Aid for splinters, cuts, abrasions, bumps and bruises.

(g) Always seek proper First Aid or Medical attention for foreign bodies in the eyes.

## SECTION B

### MILL LANDING AND LOG YARD

1. Logs already on the landing should be rolled down or securely chocked before unloading commences.

2. Signals to the winchman must be clearly given.

3. The winchman must not act unless he is sure what action has been called for.

4. Jockeyed logs must always be unloaded first. This should be done by parbuckling with the hook attached to the truck or the landing. If the position of the log prevents parbuckling a long anchor rope should be fastened to the hook and tied to the jinker pole. As soon as the hook has gripped the log, the hookman moves from behind the jockey and then signals to the winchman to pull off.

5. The hookman should never stand behind the jockeyed log while it is being unloaded.

6. The hook tail rope must always be used.

7. Don't let your fingers get between the log and the rope or the hook.

8. If forced to unload at night arrange to have adequate lighting.

9. Never stand in the bight of a taught rope—if a block parts the rope is likely to cut you in two.

10. Use properly spliced or ferruled rope eyes. Beware of sprags.

11. Always have an escape route planned in case the unexpected should happen.

12. Keep the landing clear of bark and rubbish.

13. Avoid walking along logs. If it is essential give particular attention to loose bark and greasy sapwood.

14. Always work from the uphill side of logs and, as far as possible, work from the ends of them.

15. If there are any logs on the landing above your work area see that they are securely chocked.

16. See that logs being crosscut are securely chocked.

17. Never move a power saw with the chain or blade running.

## SECTION C

### BREAKING DOWN

1. Make sure that the log is securely fastened to the carriage.

2. The sawyer must see that his assistants are safe before moving the carriage.

3. Nobody should stand near the line of circular saws at either end of the track while sawing is in progress.

4. Never step across from the carriage to the log or flitch deck close to the saws. Don't step across between the moving carriage and the saws.

5. Keep the track clear of bark and debris.

6. When lifting a hemp packing use the tang of an old file, NOT your fingers—they can be drawn in.

7. When removing rubbish from alongside a saw use a stick.

8. When applying fat to a saw use a stick or swab.

9. When feeling the temperature of a saw do it with the back of your fingers in that quarter in which your hand cannot be pulled into a packing box or other fixture. Remember the gullets and that a patch of gum could flick your hand towards them. **IT IS A DANGEROUS PRACTICE WHICH SHOULD BE AVOIDED AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.**

## SECTION D

### SAW BENCHES

1. Nobody should stand behind the sawyer near the line of the saw when timber is being cut.

2. See that guards and riving knives are securely fixed and properly adjusted. Never adjust them with the saw in motion.

3. Never have your hand in line with the saw when pushing timber through.

4. Use a well made push stick when sawing short material.

5. Don't force a cut which is pinching—pull out and re-enter or start a new cut.

6. Bench assistants must be ready to insert wedges after the timber passes the tail of the saw, but if a bench has no riving knife **REMEMBER THAT THE OUTER TWO INCHES OF THE TEETH CANNOT BE SEEN.**

7. Never pull timber or anything else across or near to the back of a saw. It may throw it back and could kill the sawyer.

8. It is recommended that a suitable face shield should be worn when stripping a saw.

9. Wait until the saw has stopped before lifting the packing boards.

10. Don't climb on the bench whilst the saw is still in motion.

11. When moving the bench truck slide bar see that your hand does not get pinched.



12. Always make sure safety chocks or policemen at the end of skids are working correctly.

13. All bark and debris to be kept clear of all bench tracks.

## SECTION E

### DOCKING SAWS

1. Never remove the guards—they are there for your protection.

2. Make sure that the limit chain and counter weights, or equivalent safety devices are always secure.

3. Never stand in front of the saw to pull it out—you may have forgotten to check the limit chain and the saw may ride out into you.

4. Don't overload the saw by pulling it too fast—this encourages riding out.

5. Never remove short dockings from the table until the saw has returned behind the fence.

6. Don't work with your fingers between the timber and the fence—they will get squashed as the saw pulls the wood in.

7. Don't move the timber up towards the saw until the dockerman has completed the act of docking.

8. Don't have your finger over the ends when moving pieces along the roller-way.

9. Give clear signals if it is intended to turn a piece of timber on the rolls.

10. When transferring heavy timber from the rollers to skids or elevator table move one end at a time.

## SECTION F

### OTHER SAWMILL MACHINERY AND DUTIES

#### 1. Waste Elevators

(a) Never stop on an elevator whilst it is in motion.

(b) Stop the elevator before adjusting the waste on it.

(c) Always stop the elevator before attempting any repairs, however minor.

(d) Beware of heat exhaustion and collapse when working at the head of an elevator over a firepit.

#### 2. Saw Shop

(a) Always wear eye or face shields when gulleting.

(b) Wear a protective apron.

(c) Always carry large saws in frames and see that the frames are in good condition.

(d) Know the Safety Rules regarding the use of abrasive wheels and carry them out.—See *Appendix*.

#### 3. Boiler Firewood

(a) Keep the face of the firewood stack plumb so that it won't fall on top of you.

(b) Have securely stayed up-rights to hold each end of the stack.

(c) Remove the firewood evenly from the stack to avoid collapsing it.

(d) Never hold your hand over the front end when throwing wood into the firebox—you may jamb it against the hot door frame.

#### 4. Fitters' Shop, Carpenters' Shop, Mill Greasing

(a) Keep in mind the safety precautions you have been taught in your own trade.

(b) Discuss safety measures for any special job with your foreman.

(c) Use proper eye protection when working on or near grinding, chipping and welding operations.

(d) Don't wear loose clothing, particularly near moving machinery and shafting in confined spaces.

(e) Don't lean over moving shafting—go round and work on the other side.

(f) Rope slings are usually better than chains for lifting heavy loads because it is easier to tell how good or bad their condition is. Inspect all slings regularly for wear and condition before use.

(g) Keep clear of machinery being lifted or moved by overhead tackle.

(h) When jacking heavy machines make sure the jacks are secure and follow up continuously with sound packing.

(i) Use only the correct spanners—don't improvise.

(j) Study the Electricity Commission notice posted in the Mill which tells you what to do if someone is in contact with a live wire.

(k) Give close attention to electric power leads.

(l) Don't use electrical tools that are not properly earthed, or are not in good repair electrically. Note that a double insulated tool must not be earthed.

(m) Use only low voltage tools and lights when working inside or on metal structures.

(n) Inspect ladders for strength and stability before ascending them.

(o) Keep your working area clear of debris.

(p) Keep oxygen bottles away from oil and grease or they will explode. Treat all gas bottles gently.

## **SECTION G**

### **TIMBER SORTING AND STACKING YARD**

#### **1. Galloping Out**

(a) Don't overload the trolley.

(b) Make sure that the load is evenly balanced both lengthwise and crosswise.

(c) Load and unload heavy sections one end at a time.

(d) When sliding a tier sideways move one end at a time.

(e) Don't pull the trolley from the front or side—push it from behind.

(f) Chock the wheels front and back when loading and unloading.

#### **2. Stacking on Skids or with Strips**

(a) Don't let timber get criss-crossed on skids—you can get hurt straightening it out.

(b) Keep the skids greased—it makes work easier and therefore safer.

(c) Watch your mate—only one end is to be picked up at a time.

(d) Keep the pieces in each tier vertically above one another.

(e) Keep the yard stacks vertical. Report any stacks that may have taken on an abnormal lean.

### **3. Turning Sleepers for Inspection**

(a) Have a stopper sleeper on the skids when breaking down a tier.

(b) Breaking down should be done by one man only.

(c) Always edge a sleeper before turning or stacking it.

(d) Don't allow the turning space to get cramped.

(e) Hooks should be kept sharp and with the correct pitch.

### **4. Bundling Timber**

(a) Have the wire reel close to you.

(b) Don't stand with your eyes directly over or in line with the wire being tied.

(c) If a wire gets caught release it carefully—if you merely pull hard the end may fly and pierce you.

(d) Don't leave broken and short ends lying about—put them in a bin.

### **5. Applying Petrolatum**

(a) As this has to be applied hot beware of burns.

(b) Wear gloves and an apron.

(c) Keep a sheet of plain iron under the ends being treated to avoid making the ground or decking slippery.

## 6. Cranes and Fork Lifts

- (a) Don't overload.
- (b) Remember that the driver's vision is limited by the jib.
- (c) Don't stand under the load.
- (d) Don't ride on the crane, the lift forks or the load.
- (e) Watch the balance of the load and of the crane.
- (f) Take care to limit the swing of the load.
- (g) Replace frayed or otherwise dangerous slings.
- (h) Make sure the brakes are functioning properly.
- (i) Leave the jib in the down position when the crane is not manned.
- (j) Chock the crane when working on a slope.
- (k) Keep forks in DOWN position when travelling without a load.

## 7. Rail Trucks

- (a) Before moving trucks make sure that the line is clear.
- (b) Test the brakes before the truck gains much speed.
- (c) Ride at the back of the truck.
- (d) Watch for any timber protruding from the stacks or skids.
- (e) Keep "RA" Government trucks coupled to other trucks if possible, because their side wheel brakes are slow to act.

## SECTION H

### SUGGESTIONS TO MILL MANAGERS AND DESIGNING ENGINEERS

#### 1. Bush

(a) Have all bush vehicles painted a colour that stands out prominently in the bush.

(b) Insist on a properly stocked First Aid Kit and a stretcher being kept at bush landings.

(c) When travelling in the bush alone advise your office as to your expected route and time of return—even managers can have accidents.

(d) Have safety chocks or safety side stakes which have to be released from the opposite side fitted to all your logging truck bolsters.

#### 2. Log Yard

(a) Provide adequate lighting if unloading has to be done at night.

(b) Make the log yard clean up a frequent, not an occasional job.

(c) A rolling hook that has an easily gripped bulge at the back is safer than one that you have to put your fingers around.

#### 3. Breaking Down

(a) Provide an overhead runway with rope tackle hoist and clamp to take the saws to the saw shop.

(b) The Flich turning hook should be in a position that does not bring the hookman into the line of the falling fitches.

#### **4. Saw Benches**

(a) Where it is possible for a saw to throw a piece of wood into another work area a sturdy guard should be erected to prevent this.

#### **5. Elevators**

(a) The drive of an elevator must be arranged so that it is impossible for it to start itself.

(b) The starting and stopping controls must be easily accessible, yet properly guarded against accidental starting.

#### **6. Sorting Yards**

(a) Skids should be set at a suitable height for the handling of heavy sections.

(b) Protruding ends of skids should be painted yellow.

#### **7. Fire Prevention**

(a) All employees should be instructed regarding the location and use of fire-fighting equipment, extinguishers, hydrants, water supply, etc.

(b) The water supply, booster pump, hoses, etc., should be regularly checked.

(c) Booster pumps and hydrants should not be located so close to the building that they become unapproachable in a fire.

(d) In dry weather the mill should be watered down at the end of each day's shift and once a day during non-working days. Due regard must be paid to electrical equipment when this is being done.



(e) The dust should be washed off the top surfaces of the roof and all elevated structural members at the start of each dry season, and as often as necessary during the season.

(f) The buildings, timber stacks and yards should be kept clear of weeds and debris.

(g) Fire box doors of boilers should not be left open whilst unattended.

(h) Managers might consider the banning of smoking some time before shut-down.

## **8. Miscellaneous**

(a) All work areas should be well lit. Corrugated perspex sky lights or similar should be used where necessary. Windows and electric lamps and reflectors should be adequate in quantity and should be regularly cleaned to maintain their efficiency.

(b) Insist that protective clothing be worn on all jobs that require it, and that clothing and footwear generally be suitable and safe.

(c) All employees should be trained in the signalling methods used at the mill.

(d) All employees should be trained to stop the machinery in their section in case of accidents.

(e) Lectures on Safety and on example of neglect should be given to all personnel occasionally.

(f) Make random inspections of the plant with safety in mind.

(g) Make all personnel aware that Good Housekeeping is an all-day all-the-year-round matter.

(h) Encourage suitable employees to take First Aid courses.

(i) Display prominently at the office telephone the call numbers for Doctor, Ambulance, Hospital, Fire Brigade and Police.

(j) Study the literature listed in the Appendix because you will surely be asked about it by your men.

For assistance on safety matters consult:

Industrial Division,  
National Safety Council of W.A.,  
Box 42, P.O.,  
MOUNT LAWLEY, W.A. 6050.  
Telephone: 71 6031.

*or*

W.A. Division of Australian Timber  
Industry Stabilisation Conference,  
C/- Forests Department,  
121 Todd Avenue,  
COMO, W.A. 6152.

## APPENDIX

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