

Choker timber for extraction

Overview

This standard is about chokering timber for extraction with a cable crane or winch. An important aspect of this work is the communication between the choker man and the winch or cable crane operator.

When working with machinery you need to be appropriately trained, and hold current certification where required, in line with relevant legislation.

Your work must conform to all relevant legislation and codes of practice when carrying out this work.

This standard is for all those involved in working as part of a team to pull felled trees or timber within a forest or woodland environment.

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. assess the risks associated with the site and the proposed work
2. select and implement appropriate working methods, in accordance with the assessed risks
3. select and use the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for the work
4. select, prepare and use the appropriate tools and equipment, safely and effectively
5. confirm all equipment has been checked and is fit for purpose
6. maintain the security of the machinery and equipment on site
7. identify and select the timber for extraction, according to the specification and plan how you will carry out the work
8. ensure the cable is of adequate diameter capacity and length for the load to be applied and the distance to be pulled
9. maintain effective teamwork and communication with other team members, using an appropriate method
10. carry out ongoing visual checks on the winch cable and terminal components and ancillary equipment
11. choker timber for extraction, as appropriate, to ensure safe and effective winching
12. ensure timber is in a safe position before releasing chokers, or attaching the load to the winch, if skidding
13. follow environmental good practice as set by your organisation and the industry, and minimise environmental damage
14. maintain the health and safety of yourself and others at all times, in accordance with relevant legislation

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. how to identify hazards and assess risks
2. how to interpret risk assessments
3. the selection, use and care of personal protective equipment (PPE)
4. site procedures including communication systems and emergency planning
5. the types of tools and equipment required and how to maintain and use these safely and effectively
6. the legal requirements for checking equipment
7. why it is important to maintain the safety and security of machinery and equipment on site
8. the current guidelines on machinery operation, risk zones and safety clearances from overhead electricity conductors, and what to do in the event of contact with power lines
9. the implications of terrain, ground conditions, season, weather, type of timber and species to chokering timber for extraction
10. the necessary checks carried out by the operator as required by relevant legislation, before and during use, including identification of the load bearing capacity of the equipment
11. the compatibility, capabilities and limitations of the machinery used and the maximum safe working load, as required by legislation
12. the additional problems, hazards and risks posed by working on steep slopes and the limitations of your own capabilities when chokering timber for extraction
13. how to interpret product specifications, recognise the type of timber and the species and select the product categories to meet required the specification when chokering timber for extraction
14. the various methods of chokering poles, butt first and tip first, including the optimum attachment position for the chokers on the timber
15. the types of chokers and chokering attachments for timber extraction and the cable methods available
16. the additional points to consider when chokering multiple stems
17. the signals and methods of signalling to the winch operator or intermediate banksman
18. how to deal with timber that has encountered an obstacle while it is winched in
19. the effect of poorly choked or awkwardly shaped loads on line wire extraction
20. the potential impact of your work on the environment and how this can be minimised

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21. your responsibilities under relevant environmental, health and safety
legislation and codes of practice

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Scope/range

Timber can be both single and multiple stems

Communicate with other team members using one or more of the following:

- hand signals
- two-way radio
- headsets

Carry out operator checks:

- cable and its terminal
- strops
- pulleys
- shackles
- hooks
- chokers
- use of manufacturer's guidelines

Use wire cable or textile/rope

Glossary

Choker timber – the use of a chain that tightens automatically and will not undo

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