



## Media Release

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### Forestry safety blueprint required – WorkSafe NZ

WorkSafe NZ says there's an urgent need for a forestry sector-led Safer Forests Blueprint for Action to be developed and implemented.

In a submission to the Independent Forestry Safety Review released today, WorkSafe Chief Executive Gordon MacDonald says the sector must take full responsibility for putting in place systems, process and behaviours which prevent dangerous situations occurring at the bushline.

"Sustainable change in forestry will not happen without everyone committing to a plan, holding each other to that commitment and, critically, working together rather than in the current fragmented way.

"WorkSafe is prepared to act as the catalyst to ensure this happens in the absence of a cohesive sector-wide commitment to health and safety" Mr MacDonald says.

WorkSafe has provided a wide-ranging response to the Independent Forestry Safety Review canvassing the failings and the potential health and safety solutions for the sector in which 10 were killed last year.

"It is clear from the Review's preliminary views, and our own analysis, that there is no 'silver bullet' that will transform health and safety performance in forestry. There is a series of closely interlinked problems that must be addressed together if workers in the sector are to have confidence they can go home safely after a day's work,

"We are concerned, and make the point strongly to the Review members, that they and the sector as a whole turn too often to the regulator to solve problems that are properly the sector's to resolve. It is our strong view that responsibility for resolution of health and safety issues lies where it is created – in the workplace and with the duty holders," Mr MacDonald says.

"We have identified five critical problem areas that require urgent addressing – there is not enough support through the supply chain for frontline workers; an obvious undervaluing throughout the industry of safety; competency deficits; and insufficient investment in forestry infrastructure, all of which lead to a poor safety culture.

“There is early evidence that the work of the regulator and the sector to date is having a positive effect on the level of harm being suffered in our forests, but it is questionable whether this is evidence of a deep-rooted, sustainable change.

“More must be done, and a Safer Forests Blueprint for Action is the tool. We urge the Review to support this initiative,” Mr MacDonald says.

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