

## Safety Alert - May 2016 - Felling Near Hit



**(Note – Not the tree in question, but you get the idea)**

### **Background:**

A faller came across a partially uprooted tree leaning on a standing tree. After an initial assessment the faller requested an observer to assist him. The two men assessed the situation and developed a plan. An escape route was cut, and the standing tree was felled under the watch of the observer. The partially uprooted tree held firm.

The two men reassessed the partially uprooted tree over a 10 to 15 minute time period to see if it was likely to fall under its own steam. They determined that it was not going to fall, so the faller proceeded to fell the tree under the watch of the observer. The tree was scarfed, and then a bore and release cut was started. At this point, and before the faller noticed anything, the observer yelled for him to “GET OUT”. The faller retreated along his escape route and the tree uprooted taking a 3m root bole with it.

### **Potential Severity:**

There was plenty of potential for something to go wrong here, firstly with the tree that the partially uprooted tree was leaning against, and secondly with the partially uprooted tree itself. It is unsure exactly what would have happened had the faller not been alerted so quickly to the situation, but it would not have been the minor incident it was on this occasion.

### **Learnings:**

- The role of the observer is a valid role, and works well if used appropriately.
- Tree felling plans are important, and must be completed properly each day with all required information, including who the trained observer is and how he can be contacted.