



# Learn




<b>Outline the Scene</b> 	<b>Incident</b>	<b>Fingers partially amputated with skill saw</b>
	<b>Subject</b>	Portable power tools
	<b>Incident Date</b>	28-10-2021
	<b>Business Unit</b>	Fletcher Living - Central Branch

<b>What happened</b> 	<p>A 3rd year plumbing apprentice was creating a checkout in the nog in the bathroom. The nog was in the corner, approx. 500mm off the floor. He was using a circular saw to make the cuts.</p> <p>The saw kicked back and severed both his little finger and ring finger between the first knuckle and nail on his left hand. He was taken to hospital, but they were unable to reattach his fingertips.</p>
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## We believe all injuries are preventable, here are some questions to help us learn

	<p><b>Was this the correct way to perform the task?</b></p> <p>It is common practise in the building industry to use a circular saw to create checkouts by cutting slits into the wood, and then breaking the pieces out with a hammer and chisel. However, there will be situations when this is not the safest way to perform the task, e.g. nog is difficult to reach or when there is not enough space to hold a circular saw securely.</p> <p><b>Was the tool used correctly?</b></p> <p>We need to ensure users are trained and competent to use the tools. An alarming number of tradespeople were not aware of the availability of left sided or right sided blades on battery operated circular saws. Are you aware of the pros and cons of left vs right sided blades? Are you following the manufacturer's instructions?</p>
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**Have you selected the correct blade for the task?**

During our investigation we discovered that there are plenty of tradespeople unaware of the importance of selecting the correct blade. There are many factors to take into consideration when selecting a blade e.g., task (ripping, crosscut), speed, material to be cut, etc.

**Have we considered all hazards?**

How confident are we that the SOPs and TAs effectively deal with all the hazards? When was it last updated, and has it been communicated to all employees? Do employees have enough training in hazard awareness and identification to stop work when things are not going according to plan to re-assess?

**Is it possible to eliminate this task completely?**

Elimination is the highest level of control and would be the best method to prevent a similar incident. Can we change the works order to eliminate the need to cut checkouts in situ?

**For more information, please contact;**

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