

Seven Month Unpaid Suspension Imposed for Risky Planer Feeder Infraction



A supervisor and worker saw a planer feeder operator put a small piece of broken board on chains moving it toward rollers. As it neared the rollers, the operator jumped back. The employer fired him for engaging in unsafe conduct. An arbitrator rejected the argument that the operator was trying to sabotage the workplace and this process. The operator admitted putting the broken board on the chains, intending to remove it before it reached the rollers. But he was too late and so jumped back to protect himself. This conduct was reckless and endangered himself and others in the workplace and thus warranted discipline. And the operator had previously shown poor judgment as to safety. However, given that he took responsibility for his actions and no one was hurt or property damaged, a seven month unpaid suspension was more appropriate, concluded the arbitrator [*West Fraser Mills Ltd v. United Steelworkers, Local 1-425*, [2014] CanLII 38242 (BC LA), July 9, 2014].