



## Official Release

# Logging Survivor Turns Lifesaving Volunteer

**For release: Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> August 2024**

Giving back to Hawke's Bay's rescue helicopter through volunteering whenever he can is the least that Ian Sime says he can do, after almost losing his life and limbs in a horrific forestry logging accident.

Driving trucks and logging is in Ian's blood, a career that had become 'second nature' for him and spanned 25 years. That all ended three years ago when a one tonne log was knocked off a stack before being loaded at a skid site near Te Pohue, devastatingly pinning Ian underneath.

At 3:40am amidst the noise of machinery and in the dark, Ian regained consciousness and says he started screaming for help.

"I remember coming to and trying to pull my legs out from under this six metre log and knew straight away that I was in serious trouble. I saw my hat almost completely embedded in the mud next to me and thought, this is it. I'm going to die."

After seven painstaking minutes that Ian recalls 'felt like an eternity', the next truck arrived and the loader driver caught sight of Ian. Hawke's Bay's rescue helicopter was radioed and arrived on site 35 minutes later.

When the log was craned off, Ian immediately phoned his family.

"I rang my partner Roni to say goodbye to her and the kids, in case I didn't make it. I knew my legs were pretty banged up, but I could still breath okay. The best sound I've ever heard

was the sound of that chopper arriving. It gave me hope of survival and I knew at that moment that help was on its way and I had a fighting chance.”

Following four months in hospital (six weeks being in rehabilitation), Ian has made an almost full recovery from his injuries which included: compound fractures to his left tibia and fibula, right femur fracture below the hip, triple fracture to his pelvis and liver lacerations.

A total of three surgeries that extended to Ian’s ankle, knee and shoulder have left him with a slight limp and the devastating news that he’s unable to drive trucks again. Yet despite losing the ability to do what he loves, Ian remains optimistic about the future.

“I’m alive aren’t I! My body might not be a hundy but I’m alive and I’m grateful for that.”

Nowadays, volunteering for the lifesaving service has become Ian’s new driving force, helping donate his time at events to help promote the work of Hawke’s Bay’s Rescue Helicopter.

“This is my chance to give something back to the service, it was my lifeline when I critically needed it and has been saving countless other lives for years. My Mum was a huge supporter and that has certainly rubbed off on me. Only now have I felt ready to tell my story but I feel it’s important to share what I’ve been through so others realise that these things can happen to anyone, at any time.

“There’s no doubt in my mind, if the chopper wasn’t there that day, I wouldn’t be here. What they do is simply amazing.”

**Hawke’s Bay’s Rescue Helicopter relies on grants and donations to operate. If you’d like to make a donation to help keep this lifesaving service free and available 24/7, please visit their website [www.hbrescuehelicopter.org.nz](http://www.hbrescuehelicopter.org.nz) or call (06) 878 1630.**

**ENDS.**

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