

SELF-ASSESSED PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING RECOMMENDATIONS



Report 5, 2008/09 – Preventing Fatalities and Serious Injuries in B.C. Forests: Progress Needed

As at July 2010

Introductory comments from *Ministry of Labour and Ministry of Forests and Range*

Thank you for the opportunity to update you on our progress in implementing the recommendations from your report on forest safety. This status report provides an update on the five outstanding recommendations, and was prepared jointly by the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Forests and Range.

Recommendations addressed in previous follow-up report(s)

RECOMMENDATION	STATUS
<p>Recommendation 1: Government assign one ministry to lead in issuing policy direction including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ initiating regularity change; ♦ closing jurisdictional gaps; and ♦ assigning resources to meet government’s safety commitments. 	Alternative action taken
<p>Recommendation 2: The Ministry of Labour and Citizens’ Services consider how best to ensure that a robust safety infrastructure is directly supporting every forestry work site.</p>	Substantially implemented
<p>Recommendation 4: The Ministry of Labour and Citizens’ Services ensure that a mandatory prequalification requirement for all firms is put in place, ensuring that forest industry firms, regardless of the size of the entity, be required to demonstrate safe operation and organization as a precondition for working in the industry.</p>	Substantially implemented
<p>Recommendation 6: Existing health and safety regulations be more vigorously enforced by WorkSafeBC through inspections, follow up on infractions and punishment of non-compliance.</p>	Fully implemented
<p>Recommendation 7: Government leadership on safety seek direct input from other natural resource-based industries having better safety records, such as mining.</p>	Fully implemented
<p>Recommendation 10: WorkSafeBC enforce the requirement that supervision be in place for all forest workers, including fallers and truckers.</p>	Fully implemented
<p>Recommendation 11: The Ministry of Forests and Range use its powers to enforce safe use of resource roads. The Ministry should establish and participate actively in resource road user committees.</p>	Fully implemented



Recommendations addressed in previous follow-up report(s) continued...

RECOMMENDATION	STATUS
<p>Recommendation 12: Training relative to known risks should be made mandatory. For example, drivers who lack specific experience and training in driving large loads off-highway should be required by ICBC to demonstrate competency before being given independent control of such a vehicle. Fallers should be required by WorkSafeBC to demonstrate competency in danger-tree recognition, non-destructive tree evaluation, and blasting, so that they have a wider range of tools and techniques available when specific risks are present.</p>	Substantially implemented
<p>Recommendation 13: The Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services identify, through credible third party research, safe work hour limits for high-risk forestry occupations and then regulate and enforce those limits accordingly. These limits should be made applicable to self-employed forest workers as well as those employed in the industry.</p>	Substantially implemented
<p>Recommendation 14: The Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services consider ways to better protect all forest workers during work-time travel.</p>	Substantially implemented

Outstanding recommendations

RECOMMENDATION AND SUMMARY OF PROGRESS	STATUS
<p>Recommendation 3: The Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services bring self-employed forest workers under the province's occupational health and safety regulations.</p> <p>Actions taken, results and/or actions planned</p> <p><i>An amendment to the Workers' Compensation Act is under consideration to address the accountability and protection of self-employed forest workers.</i></p>	Partially implemented

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Outstanding recommendations continued...

RECOMMENDATION AND SUMMARY OF PROGRESS	STATUS
<p>Recommendation 5: Government consider economic incentives, outside the workers' compensation system, for rewarding safe operators. These should reach down to the smallest firms and the self-employed, to encourage faster progress toward achieving the forest worker safety goals of government.</p> <p>Actions taken, results and/or actions planned</p> <p><i>An Options Paper was drafted that examined economic incentives for rewarding safe operators outside the workers' compensation system. Paper was reviewed by the Interagency Committee on Forest Safety (ICFS). The Interagency Committee on Forest Safety agreed no other economic incentive program would be as effective as that provided by the Workers' Compensation Board's Certificate of Recognition and Injury Management/Return to Work (COR). This incentive program entitles a qualified employer i.e. a Safe Certified Company up to a 15% rebate on the injury insurance premium the employer has paid to WorkSafeBC. No further action to be taken.</i></p>	Alternative action taken
<p>Recommendation 8: Robust safety planning in all aspects of forest operations should be made mandatory by the Ministry of Forests and Range.</p> <p>Actions taken, results and/or actions planned</p> <p><i>MFR has created a Forest Worker Safety Strategy which provides strategic direction and mandate for the Ministry with respect to forest worker safety. An Action Plan to implement the strategy and the detailed plans to accomplish goals has been prepared. MFR has developed a draft Forest Worker Safety Policy to clarify and advance MFR's role in supporting a positive safety culture in the forest sector as a whole. It is currently being circulated internally for comment and to commence dialogue throughout the ministry regarding our cultural influence. The Forest and Range Evaluation Program report on Worker Safety Impacts identified a need for increased understanding of roles and responsibilities among forest workers and professionals. Many phases/components to overall forest operations exist and many parties must take on appropriate roles to address safety planning. This spectrum of engagement ensures appropriate skills, experience and knowledge are applied to the circumstance.</i></p>	Alternative action taken
<p>Recommendation 9: The Ministry of Forests and Range seek two amendments to the Foresters Act:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Make forest worker safety an explicit object of the Association of Forest Professionals under section 4 (2) ◆ Include in the definition of 'practice of professional forestry' explicit mention of competence in forest worker protection. <p>Actions taken, results and/or actions planned</p> <p><i>The Association of BC Forest Professionals (ABC FP) has amended By-law 12.7.1 which now states "members maintain safe work practices and consider the safety of workers and others in the practice of professional forestry". Section 4 (2) of the Foresters' Act provides for ABCFP members to be governed by the Act, the bylaws and its resolutions. Bylaw 12.7 has the status of provincial regulation, which makes safety consideration an obligation of ABCFP members. The ABCFP has produced Interpretative Guidelines to support its membership in the achievement of professional standards regarding consideration of the safety of workers and others. The Ministry of Forests and Range supported the ABCFP in drafting these Interpretive Guidelines, which serve as guidance to forest professionals in carrying out their legal obligations for safety.</i></p>	Alternative action taken

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Outstanding recommendations continued...

RECOMMENDATION AND SUMMARY OF PROGRESS	STATUS
<p>Recommendation 15: A lead ministry coordinate sharing and consolidation of information on fatalities, serious injuries and near-misses to support more extensive educational and enforcement activities to promote safety. The lead ministry should consolidate fatalities and injuries data and ensure that a system of comprehensive research and reporting is in place, one that covers the activities of all forest workers including the self employed. That ministry should report meaningful information to the Legislative Assembly on a regular basis to provide legislators and the public with a basis for knowing whether safety improvements are working.</p> <p>Actions taken, results and/or actions planned</p> <p><i>In fall 2009, a report was prepared which includes injury and serious injury rates covering a ten-year period in the province and in the coastal and interior regions by harvest volumes. Forest injury statistics by employer size were also provided, in addition to the frequency of types of accidents and causes of fatalities. The information was compiled from WorkSafeBC and MFR data. Also included were links to WorkSafeBC's Hazard Alerts and the BC Forestry Coroner's Office. Starting in fall 2010, this report will be updated annually.</i></p>	<p>Alternative action taken</p>