

March 9, 2016

Dear BC Certified Faller,

FTAC Faller Survey 2015-2016: Summary Results Report: March 2016

The Falling Technical Advisory Committee (FTAC) is pleased to provide you with the attached summary report of the results received from our 2015-2016 faller questionnaire. FTAC reviewed the results for the first time at our March 4, 2016 meeting. Following discussion at this meeting, FTAC took a vote to distribute the attached report to all fallers as soon as possible, to ensure that the whole falling community has the opportunity to review the findings.

The complete survey results and comments are contained in a 176-page report which has been posted on the BC Forest Safety Council (BCFSC) website: www.bcforestsafe.org/2016ftacsurvey. (The BCFSC provided administration support for the survey at the direction of FTAC.)

FTAC thanks all the fallers (and bullbuckers/supervisors) for taking the time to complete the survey, and for sharing detailed comments and opinions. The information gathered from the completed questionnaires is being used to inform FTAC's future work plan items and priorities.

If you would like to receive a print (hard) copy of the full 176-page report, please call toll-free 1-877-741-1060 to request a copy. Please allow three weeks for mail delivery of the report.

Updates on FTAC's workplan and other initiatives related to the survey findings will be shared broadly going forward including in future editions of Forest Safety News.

If you have any questions or comments, please email FTAC@bcforestsafe.org.

From the Falling Technical Advisory Committee

Notes:

FTAC Faller Survey 2015-2016

Summary Results Report March 2016



FTAC Faller Survey 2015-2016

In summary, some preliminary points:

- A solid 18% return (429 completed surveys received as at February 25; 14 more were received between February 26 and March 8). *Note: 10% response rate is considered good for general paper-based survey returns*
- Fallers from across the province participated, most from Vancouver Island
- First benchmark survey out to all fallers certified by the BC Forest Safety Council in BC
- FTAC already on track to address some of the key themes/issues raised in the feedback, including, in no particular order:
 - Cost of new faller training and the fact that new fallers who pass the 30-day course do not automatically benefit from long-term mentoring relationships with seasoned fallers (related FTAC initiative: industry training); consistent theme to get young fallers trained out in the woods by experienced, trusted and safe performing fallers as part of regular work.
 - Phase congestion, production pressures on fallers; machines operating too close to fallers
 - Quality of supervision and/or supervisors having to be full-time fallers and supervise, spreading thin and perceived no reward (few \$ more, but much higher risk/responsibility)
 - Road building issues re: road debris
 - More readily available blasting options
 - Back barring small trees
 - Pre-screening and prior industry experience for new faller trainees (i.e. not green and the right candidates – because not everyone can be a faller)
 - Less focus on the stump and more on quarter management
 - Forestry engineers/planners need to spend time/more time in the woods – lack of practical knowledge and experience makes for dangerous situations for fallers
 - Continuous improvement in ERP back-up plans and testing would be valuable
 - Supervisors/contractors/licensees/land owners are not created equal: variability in experiences – e.g. some fallers feel safe, some don't; some feel they can refuse unsafe work, some don't, etc. all depending on the issue, the situation, the supervisor, the contractor, the licensee.
- BCFSC and WorkSafeBC roles
 - Some not aware of roles; confusion between where BCFSC begins and WorkSafeBC ends
 - Some not aware of support BCFSC can provide via the falling safety advisors
 - Some not aware that falling safety advisors are still active fallers/past production fallers
 - Would like less bureaucracy, less paperwork
- Reinforcement that variabilities of experience depend on geographical location, stands, terrain, employer, contractor, BCFSC and WSBC/officer
- FTAC thanked numerous times for the survey and for giving fallers an opportunity to share what they think and feel. Comments also encouraged FTAC to keep it real – get more active fallers involved at all levels (same for BCFSC and WSBC) in context that retired fallers have little idea how quickly things have changed in the past 5-10 years and there may be a disconnect from the fallers' day to day reality; as well as would like to see younger faller representation included on FTAC. Several personal letters and a photo were included. Some surveys required requests for follow-up on the services that the BCFSC offers and some had questions about challenging (arborists and wildfire) which are being followed up where contact details were provided. Overall the fallers took the questionnaire very seriously (less than a handful expressed that they were either suspicious or

untrusting of the questionnaire) and the majority of fallers put a great deal of effort into answering the questions and sharing their views in detail.

- And some fallers shared that their personal experiences with industry, bureaucracy, injuries and claims' fights have left them very "bitter".

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Background to questionnaire

About FTAC

The Falling Technical Advisory Committee (FTAC) consists of approximately 30 fallers and others, representing coastal fallers, interior fallers, small and large falling contractors, union fallers, licensee representatives, BC Timber Sales, Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations, Silviculture, BC Wildfire Service, utility arborists, Enform, WorkSafeBC and BC Forest Safety Council (BCFSC). The key objective of FTAC is to support initiatives in industry that will improve faller safety, reducing serious incidents and fatalities.

Context for questionnaire

FTAC has not previously had the opportunity to survey all fallers in BC to gather their views on the status of falling in BC. FTAC wanted to establish a benchmark of opinion from as broad a cross-section of fallers possible to help shape, inform and support future initiatives undertaken by FTAC. FTAC's objective is to ensure that its ongoing and new initiatives are appropriate, responsive and meaningful to best support fallers; and to help improve faller safety and reduce fatalities and serious injuries.

The questionnaire

At two FTAC meetings, members of FTAC discussed the possible questions that they felt would best help secure comment and opinions from the fallers in BC. The final draft questionnaire contained 57 questions. The BC Forest Safety Council (BCFSC) directed by FTAC administered the survey – collating copies and mailing out 2,412 surveys with pre-addressed, pre-paid return envelopes. Print copies were selected knowing that this was the best format to reach the target audience given logistics, age and previously expressed preferences for communications. Reminders to complete the survey were run in the falling section of Forest Safety News and tweeted via @bcforestsafes and some emails were sent as reminders, encouraging fallers to complete the questionnaire. FTAC and other members of the falling community also promoted the survey via Facebook faller groups, and through word of mouth.

The surveys were mailed out to all fallers in BC certified by the BCFSC in the second and third weeks of December, 2015. By February 25, 2016, a total of 429 completed surveys had been returned (417 print copies and 13 soft copies). While it was not the intent to have an online version, other than for data input and analysis, the internal online survey input link was discovered by someone (searched) and shared with 12 other people. For data collection purposes all these surveys were deemed valid. Of the 2,412 surveys distributed 25 were returned to sender "address unknown". The total return rate was $429/2387 = 18\%$ return. Subsequent to "closing" the survey to generate a report of data for the March 4 FTAC meeting, another 14 surveys have been received (but are not included in the first draft data report).

Beyond the statistical quantitative validity of a solid 18% return, the overwhelming majority (close to all surveys) included comments from the individual fallers, providing detailed personal experiences, opinion and feedback. This input provides immense value beyond the statistics.

All surveys received after the generation of this report will still be reviewed and kept as an addendum to the survey results. All feedback continues to be as valuable.

Tabulating the results

Lime Survey software was used to collate and tabulate the results as well as generate the report containing all the content and feedback of the surveys received.

In a few instances total percentage responses within a question do not add up to exactly 100% (may be more or less) due to the fact that some questions and respondents allowed for multiple choices rather than just one choice within a question. For the intent and purpose of this survey, the statistical error rates are not deemed significant.

Summary results

1. Who responded?

288 respondents (67.13%) are active fallers – some full-time, some part-time; and 96 fallers (22.4%) are working in another occupation such as arborist, fire-fighting, residential tree care, tree topping and falling on weekends, forest technician, some danger tree falling, and ad-hoc falling as needed. 85 fallers (19.8%) said they were not actively working as faller. In addition, 12 fallers (2.8%) are retired; 36 fallers (8.4%) said they were actively looking for work as a faller and 18 fallers (4.2%) said they were currently injured. Injuries specified included hip replacements and wear and tear from 40+ years of working.

2. Where do they work as fallers?

Surveys were completed by fallers working across the province. The largest concentration was from Vancouver Island: 160 fallers (37%) followed by Kootenays: 53 fallers (12%) and Cariboo: 53 fallers (12%); Lower Mainland: 51 fallers (11.9%); Okanagan: 46 fallers (10.8%); Peace Thompson: 25 fallers (5.85%); Skeena: 22 fallers (5%); and Omineca: 13 fallers (3%) as well as 36 fallers (8.4%) identifying that they work in Haida Gwaii, Sunshine Coast, Saltspring Island, Quadra Island, mid coast, north coast, various areas depending on fire season, Alberta and as far afield as South America, and their own private BC forests, as well as all over the province.

3. How long have they been falling?

The overwhelming majority of respondents (63%) have been falling for more than 20 years; 35% for less than 20 years. One faller said he had been falling for 50 years this year; and one for 48 years. Breakdown as follows:

1-5 years:	18 fallers	4.2%	
6-10 years:	38 fallers	8.9%	
11-15 years:	42 fallers	9.8%	
16-20 years:	54 fallers	12.6%	35.5% = 20 years or less experience
21-25 years:	74 fallers	17.3%	
26-30 years:	72 fallers	16.8%	
31-35 years:	45 fallers	10.5%	
36-40 years:	42 fallers	9.8%	43.6% = 26 years or more experience
more than 41 years:	26 fallers	6%	

4. Terrain type currently worked in?

Fallers are pretty evenly spread between currently working on less than 30% gradient (191 fallers; 44.73%) and between 31% to 50% gradient (192 fallers; 44.96%); 144 fallers (33.7%) are currently working on greater than 50% gradient and 29 fallers (6.79%) chose “other” due to the nature of their work that includes heli-logging; all types; everything; swamps; fires; and BC hydro lines; etc.

5. Types of timber felled?

269 fallers (63%) are working in old growth; 153 (35.83%) in secondary growth, interior and 164 (38.41%) secondary growth, coastal; 23 fallers (5.39%) said “other” including all types, jungle, mixed, danger trees, seismic, fall and burn, Mountain Pine beetle, bug kill, dry belt fir, etc.

6. Size of falling crew?

Small crews of 1 to 10 fallers are in the majority with 334 fallers (78.22%) followed by 48 fallers (11%) in 11-20 person crews; 7 (1.6%) fallers in 21-30 person crews; and, just one faller each in the 31-40 and more than 41 faller crew sizes.

7. & 8. Rates and payment, and a fair wage?

Majority of respondents are production fallers (253 fallers; 59%) of which there is an almost even split of set day rates either including travel and other expenses or not including travel and other expenses. 49 fallers (11%) are union fallers with a set hourly rate while 74 fallers (17%) indicated that they were “other”, including, rates set job by job; part-time rates dependent on the type of job – e.g. fire-fighting/danger tree/seismic; owner/self-employed; cubic metre/hectare rate; Ministry or city employee salaried staff; work own land; BC hydro rates; professional forester who falls trees as needed; contract bids; and other variables.

Over 57% (245 fallers) said yes, they feel they are getting a fair wage for their work. 34% (145 fallers) said no. Even those who said yes made comments that included that the rates have not gone up or met inflation. Comments from fallers who said they didn’t feel they were getting a fair wage consistently expressed the opinion that the risk and danger of falling is not/no longer reflected in the pay rates and not kept pace with other trades, actual costs, or inflation.

Please see over three full pages of verbatim comments in the complete report for details.

9. What is the morale in your operation?

The responses were overwhelmingly positive with 344 fallers (81%) saying that morale was either: “Excellent. Love going to work. Feel safe. Feel what I say matters. I am happy” (158 fallers; 37%) or: “Good. I feel safe. I believe I matter.” (186 fallers; 44%). However, 22 fallers (5.15%) said: “Not so good. I don’t feel like I can speak up. I feel unsafe at times.” And 18 fallers (4.22%) said: “Needs improvement. I am worried there is going to be an incident. We work under threat of being fired or not having contracts renewed if we raise safety concerns. 13 fallers (3%) chose “none of the above”, with comments that included showing a range of experiences from good to bad and everything in-between. Some also noted that they always feel safe, but poor morale was due to other issues re supervision and/or issues perceived as coming from further up the hierarchy; and one faller shared he’d walked off the job because he was/is worried there is going to be an incident.

10. Did the faller training you received properly prepare you for the work you do?

A total of 257 fallers (60%) said yes with supporting comments including that the training took place before there were faller courses. They were trained in the forest by a family member or other apprentice relationship – “old school break in”. 77 fallers (18%) said their training had “mostly” prepared them; 17 fallers (4%) said “no”; 35 fallers (8%) chose “other” and 7 fallers (1.64%) said “not sure”. Comments reflected that the vast majority of respondents had not gone through formal faller training (confirmed by the number of years most respondents have been falling); many were taught by other fallers, self-taught or grandfathered in. Other comments included: learned on the job; spent time with old-timers; prior industry experience before learning to fall is valuable; no replacement for real falling being taught in the forestry out of the classroom and learning by experience mentored by competent fallers; value of one-on-one for a long time; can’t make a faller out of a green guy; etc.

11. Do you feel that safety is the #1 priority in your company?

A total of 301 (70.5%) fallers said “yes” safety is the #1 priority; 65 fallers (15%) said “sometimes”; while 26 fallers (6%) said “no”; and 13 fallers (3%) said “other” with their comments including that it comes down to the employer; room for improvement; sometimes it doesn’t feel like it’s the #1 priority; employers not always walking the talk; production trumps safety; perfect balance; no one purposefully

wants to be unsafe; should be able to finish the blocks before the grapple crew of log loaderman comes; not all incidents are reported; and for company safety is #1. Some supervisors place production #1; etc.

12. Are there barriers to following safe work procedures?

Over 64% (274 fallers) said there were “no” barriers to following safe work procedures, but 27% (114 fallers) said there were barriers and 41 fallers (9%) did not select yes or no. There were a lot of comments (over two-and-a-half pages) which included a few consistent themes. For the “no” barriers these comments included: if I don’t like it I don’t do; right to refuse unsafe work; using common sense; and, comments on barriers to safe work included: phase congestion; production pressures (biggest issue consistently identified among fallers commenting in this section.); etc.

13. What prevents you from reporting close calls?

Over 74.5% (318 fallers) said “nothing” prevents them from reporting close calls; 5% (23 fallers) said “I don’t think the supervisor/company wants to hear”; 6% (26 fallers) said “culture of workplace”; 3% (14 fallers) said “production comes first here”; 5% said “fear that I will be blackballed” and 6% chose “other” and provided comments including: close call is ambiguous; what is a close call; has not been encouraged; not sure of procedure; takes too much time; involves too much paperwork; and then there is an expensive investigation and the faller takes the blame; close calls are discussed by the crew, but not reported to management. Other comments included: I report all close calls. Makes me feel that my work place is safe; we report calls so others will know and make a difference at work; etc.

14. Have you ever been pressured to cut corners or compromise safety to achieve plan objectives?

Almost 53% (225 fallers) said that they had never been pressured to cut corners or compromise safety to achieve plan objectives; while 103 fallers (24%) said that “more than once” they had been pressured to cut corners or compromise safety. 21 fallers (5%) said they were often pressured and 15 fallers (3.5%) said they had been pressured “once” to cut corners or compromise safety to achieve plan objectives. 25 fallers (6%) said “other” including that they cut concerns but without compromising safety. A consistent theme in the comments was that this appears to have been a bigger issue in the past with many citing past examples, but not recent ones; however, others also included current examples and other comments such as: not pressured, more supervisor looked the other way; if I fell to the standard, I’d never work; not pressured, but layout of block did not put safety first; falling against lean for Right of Way; being pushed to work in too much wind.

15. Do you have an avenue to talk about safety concerns and close calls?

364 (more than 85%) fallers said “yes” while 22 fallers (5%) said “no” and 10 fallers (2.34%) said “other”. Examples shared in the comments included: with employers and fellow fallers; every day; at all safety meetings; at some companies, but not all; with BCFSC and WSBC, but feel that will open a way bigger can of worms so usually go to a senior faller I look up to; talk among ourselves; discuss with my partner; bulls*** meetings that are rarely as beneficial as a beer with another serious guy; but they turn a blind eye; etc.

16. What makes you feel safe at work? Please explain.

373 fallers (87%) provided comments (eight pages). 56 fallers (13%) did not provide an answer. Key themes in the comments included: having a good work plan and working the plan; being prepared; having an ERP, SAT phone, ETV & heli-vac in place; confidence in self; confidence in own skills, training and experience; confidence in supervisor, falling partner/bull bucker, employer; confidence to refuse unsafe work; not being pressured; good equipment (including speaker in ear muffs and sharp saw); good crew; good conditions; when there is no multi-phasing; when I can take my time doing what I do safely; safety meetings, right to refuse unsafe work; responsible for own safety; a good crew; good company culture; good morale on the site; good communications; safety meetings to address issues; being able to call for help and a second opinion; my attitude; knowing my limits; my guardian angels; being focused,

clear head, good health, alert; trusting my partner and everyone I work with; perhaps best summed up in one comment provided: “Who I work for and who I work with matters. But at the end of the day I make myself feel safe.”

17. Are you comfortable bringing up concerns?

342 fallers (80%) said “yes”, 38 fallers (9%) said “it depends” and 10 fallers (just over 2%) said “no” to are they comfortable bringing up concerns? Reasons provided supporting the yes answers included: if you cannot talk about concerns you shouldn’t be falling; every tree is different; there is no other way; concerns have always been heard and dealt with; not a problem when you have years of experience but different in the first few years of starting falling; if they don’t listen I can go work somewhere else but what about the kids with no experience that don’t have that freedom of choice because of fear of losing their job. “It depends” comments included: depends on the type of concern and which company I am working for; if a supervisor allows unsafe practices i.e. working too close, I fear repercussions if I express my concerns; it’s hard if it is confrontational; like painting a bullseye on your back; no concern is too small to bring up; I rarely bother; company doesn’t care that feller bunchers make our job dangerous as they cut what they can; if I brought it up much of what is said is disregarded; it depends if I can find a solution on my own or if additional input is needed; etc.

18. Are there production pressures at work that compromise your safety?

While 254 fallers (almost 60%) said “no”, 93 fallers (22%) said “sometimes” and 51 fallers (12%) said “yes”. Yes comments included: certification hasn’t changed anything; push is for production; get it done or don’t come back to work. “No” comments included: I am in control, I don’t play games with my safety; good boss; some pressure always exists; have to work it so it doesn’t compromise safety; nobody ever complains about how much gets done. “Sometimes” comments included: machines in the block before falling is done; weather conditions; they need the wood down for machines to keep working; depends on the job; depends on the company; happened more in the past. “Other” comments included: comes back to a good work plan; all depends on who you work for; can’t really plan properly due to production pressures; trying to meet BS deadlines set mostly by Government; too many phases, people forget; it’s not too bad where I work but it’s there in the industry; put these pressures on myself; congestion from market phased logging and permits; unsure; clients ask for projects to be completed faster and cheaper; not from the falling company – prime/wood owners; I won’t be pressured; etc.

19. Do you feel comfortable voicing your concerns at regular safety meetings?

341 fallers (almost 80%) said they are comfortable voicing concerns at regular safety meetings, with just over 6% (27 fallers) saying “no” and 23 fallers (just over 5%) saying “it depends”. The consistent theme in the comments is it depends on what the concern is, recognizing that some contractors/employers are more receptive than others and so some won’t voice concerns depending on who the prime contractor is. A sample issue shared: a faller said he told licensees to have a dedicated chopper but they never do. Several fallers who completed the survey noted in their comments to this question that they were the safety officer or ran/wrote up the safety meeting. One comment shared was that safety meetings were only held if they were being audited or if WorkSafeBC shows up on site; all phases should be at the safety meeting to raise/hear concerns but they never are; etc.

20. When you have safety concerns or recommendations, are they addressed?

290 fallers (68%) said “yes”; 92 fallers (22%) said “sometimes” and 10 fallers (2.34%) said “no”. Comments included variable experiences depending on the issue, the cost to fix, some contractors/employers being more receptive, time delays in implementing the fix and quality of supervision; some supervisors commented that they were receptive and passed concerns from tailgate meetings to monthly meetings with licensee; etc.

21. Are you willing to speak to your falling partner if you feel they are doing something unsafe?

358 fallers (84%) said “yes”; 20 fallers (4.7%) said “other” and 6 fallers (1.4%) said “no”. Comments included several that indicated the faller worked alone or didn’t have a falling partner or was the supervisor, but overwhelmingly the theme was if you didn’t trust and work well with your partner you shouldn’t be falling or you need a new partner; etc.

22. Is their adequate time to do a hazard assessment prior to falling?

342 fallers (80%) said “yes”; 34 fallers (8%) said “no” and 22 fallers (5%) said “other”. Comments included: take whatever time is needed to do this critical practice and do it well; to some variability depending again on the how soon maps are received, the size of the block, the production pressure, not always doing the whole block; shift changes; doing it most of the time/sometimes; etc.

23. Do you think safety has improved for fallers? Have safety initiatives of the past eight years made a positive difference?

153 fallers (36%) said “yes, definitely”; 134 fallers (31%) said “yes, somewhat”; 51 fallers (12%) said they were “unsure”; 39 fallers (9%) said “no” and 37 fallers (8.7%) said “new issues need to be addressed” and 14 (3.28%) said “other” (*note: the % don’t add up to 100% as some who chose “yes” also chose “new issues need to be addressed” too*). Comments included: faller training improved safety; heli-assist is used for a lot more blocks; less production pressure and more attention to removal of existing hazards; overall professionalism has improved; initiatives have improved, but terrain has not; fatalities dropped off dramatically because of the recession; walk is not being walked; blasting needs to be more accessible; phase congestion; expensive training course for young kids and they still have no idea what they are doing (need longer break-in periods with guaranteed work); BCFSC has made it more stressful for fallers – every other month you’re making a new course to replace an old course; we’ve addressed some issues and not others while creating some new ones; feel falling has always been a safe occupation if you have the right attitude and ability; **congestion issues (consistent thread)** re phases and machines not being addressed by WSBC and BCFSC; initiatives set a bar but made a bunch of unnecessary paperwork for already safe guys and put **too much focus on a stump (consistent thread)**; no difference in safety performance; drug and alcohol concerns; always room for improvement; shift from stump focus to quarter management and better supervision is helping; still lots of issues with road building; difficulty level exceeding the skill level; safety meeting every morning helps; etc.

24. Is there a barrier to exercising the right to refuse unsafe work?

248 fallers (58%) said “no”; 80 fallers (19%) haven’t had an issue personally; 61 fallers (14%) said “yes”; 12 fallers said they “don’t know”; and seven fallers (1.64%) who said they had experienced a barrier explained what it was. Comments were varied from what is ordinary for some is difficult for others; to new contract supervisor/junior fallers doing jobs that a faller has personally refused; if I don’t feel I can do the job safely I won’t do it; one way or another you will be out the door; falls on deaf ears; a few fallers sharing that they did refuse unsafe work and it either got them fired or otherwise didn’t end well for the faller; and if one faller refuses then another falls the mess; I just tell the bullbucker and it’s good; most fallers as so-called “independent contractors” and have “NO” “right of refusal” protection from being fired; it depends on the company; etc.

25. Would you feel comfortable refusing unsafe work?

358 fallers (84%) said “yes” they feel comfortable refusing unsafe work; while 41 fallers (9.6%) said “no”; and 30 fallers (6%) did not select an option. Comments reflected concerns that fallers may be viewed as inexperienced, incompetent or a slacker if they refuse and therefore don’t feel comfortable refusing; overwhelming comments supporting that one has to be confident in oneself and one’s own safety and just say “no” no matter what.

26. Do you have access to another qualified faller for qualified assistance?

293 fallers (69%) said “yes”, 66 fallers (15%) said “some of the time”, 37 fallers (8.7%) said “no” and 1 faller said this is a dumb question because I am the qualified assistance. Comments included that qualified assistance should be written into WSBC regulation and a question: what do you do when you are the most qualified person there and it needs to be done?

27. Have you utilized qualified assistance?

280 fallers (65.6%) said “yes”, 113 fallers (26.5%) said “no”, 36 fallers (8%) did not answer. There were very few comments on this question. Comments included: fairly regularly in steep old growth cedar; many times; rarely; haven’t asked for it, but have given it; not that often, only if it’s really serious.

28. Do you feel comfortable asking for qualified assistance?

366 fallers (85.7%) said “yes” they are comfortable; and 18 fallers (4%) said “no”. There were a few comments to this question and these included: four eyes are better than two; teamwork is key to falling safely; depends on the falling partner or boss; SOP.

29. Do you feel there is adequate supervision of fallers?

267 fallers (63%) said “yes”; 90 fallers (21%) said “depends”; 32 fallers (7.5%) said “no”. With three pages of comments some recurring threads included: seeing falling supervisors that never fell a tree; when the CFS is supervising machines and fallers I feel there isn’t enough supervision; supervisors are often also falling full-time; bull buckler impaired; my grandmother can get a bullbucker ticket as you guys give them out like candy – should not be allowed to take the course until you have at least 10 years’ experience; each job is different; no supervision in our operation, up to fallers; not all companies comply; on small fires there may only be one faller on site; sometimes lacking, sometimes overkill; every employer and contractor is different; burden and pressure on supervisors is a concern; etc.

30. Do you feel bull bucklers/falling supervisors are supported by owner/licensee when his workers refuse to work under the unsafe work clause?

163 fallers (38%) said “yes”; 149 fallers (35%) said “don’t know”, 49 fallers (11.5%) said “no” and 17 fallers (4%) said “other”. A page and a half of comments included: owner supports but bull bucklers do not want to hear refusal to unsafe work; not all the time, some just want yes men; never happened with me; don’t know; generally not, but sometimes; depends on the licensee; when logging managers have never been fallers they often do not understand; it varies; not applicable to me; etc.

31. Does your supervisor have the time to supervise you well?

262 fallers (61%) said “yes”, 41 fallers (9.6%) said “no”, 34 fallers (8%) said “not sure” and 21 fallers (5%) said “other”. Comments included that many were both a faller and a supervisor or owner/operator so not applicable; depends on who you work for and how they see things; not when we are spread over multiple blocks; not all the time; just enough to make a difference; depends on terrain and number of fallers; not all fire incidents have a faller supervisor (yet); I am the supervisor too; they have a big workload for not much more \$; partner and I supervise each other; lots of not applicable comments; etc.

32. Do you feel that management/supervisors are communicating at appropriate times? (e.g. safety plans, ERP, company plans, expectations, discipline, etc.)

241 fallers (56%) said “yes”; 105 fallers (25%) said it “depends on the supervisor”; 25 fallers (6%) said “no” and 14 fallers said “other”. Variables included the company; room for improvement on timeliness of some communication, e.g. weather; once job is started, very little communication; need supervisors on site more rather than off filling in paperwork; etc.

33. Do you feel that you can communicate openly with your supervisor and/or management?

321 fallers (75%) said “yes”; 25 fallers (5.9%) said “as long as I only have good news”; 24 fallers (5.6%) said “other” and nine fallers (just over 2%) said “no”. Comments included: depends on the individual;

depends on what the issue is; trust/lack of trust issues; supervisors yes & management no; yes, but he was terrible in following through; etc.

34. Do you feel that your bull bucker/falling supervisor would “go to bat” for you?

265 fallers (62%) said “yes”, 51 fallers (12%) said “other”; 34 fallers (8%) said “no”. The rest (18%) left the question blank. Comments included variables such as depends on the supervisor; the situation; what the issue is; concern that a supervisor would go to bat, but then that might get the supervisor in trouble; some would; some wouldn’t; not applicable or doesn’t apply (i.e. don’t have a supervisor or bull bucker); not if my supervisor’s neck was in a noose; had some that did and some that didn’t; etc.

35. Do you feel that your bull bucker/falling supervisor addresses safety issues/concerns proactively?

282 (66%) of fallers said “yes”; 36 fallers (8%) said “other”; and 28 fallers (6.6%) said “no”. Comments included, if applicable: some are very good at it; and general variable comments of being site/supervisor/issue dependent; etc.

36. Is the block layout creating a risk for fallers?

160 fallers (37.5%) said “no”; 109 fallers (25.5%) said “yes”; 45 fallers (10.5%) “don’t know” and 52 (12%) said “other”. 15% of fallers did not complete the question. Comments included: had to ask to adjust at times; sometimes deal with it with supervisors; limited engineering skills/lack of knowledge / inexperience; it’s a chainsaw, not a magic wand; sharp corners, narrow corridors, inexperienced engineers; sh***y terrain, unskilled surveyors, profit margins reduced = more risks; chasing trees along boundaries; small pockets targeted for high quality trees with no place to lay the wood out; steep slope falling. There were a notable number of “sometimes” comments. There were also “rarely” comments or n/a; etc.

37. Is the harvesting plan and sequence of operations creating additional risk for fallers?

138 fallers (32%) said “sometimes”; 119 fallers (28%) said “no”; 94 fallers (22%) said “yes”; and 31 fallers (7%) said “don’t know”. Comments included: need knowledge on how to control it; over the years lot of phase congestion; they leave block below the road to last so all the brush above is pushed to below the road into standing timber; riparian/gullies/steep+40% inoperable, left to end when the push is on to get to the next block; it can be an issue when fallers, hoe chuckers, loaders, processors and logging trucks are all working on one block; not experienced so far; if it is done right the falling and/or bucking is done first. Too many phases sometimes in same block; on very rare occasion, but we make adjustments to smarten things up; can be challenging and more work; when the bottom side of road is brushed in bad; not enough RoW developed to avoid road crew and fallers working in same block or to avoid blasting debris into settings; many n/a; etc.

38. Do you as a faller feel you have influence in the work plans that directly affect you?

260 fallers (61%) said “yes”; 79 fallers (18.5%) said “sometimes”; 43 fallers said “no”; and 16 fallers said “it depends”. Comments included: if I get to see the block prior to the plan being made; yes on RoW but not on production block; I have options if there is unsafe conditions near boundary; if it is with our own falling plan then yes; supervisor takes concerns to other phases; depends on who, where and what it is; feedback is respected on fires; safety concerns everybody; good logging contractors know to include the falling in the planning; most just tell you how to do your job, how they want the wood down; if any other phases affect my safety we talk and make a new plan; it’s good until the machines come in; I go directly to the licensee when there is not enough information on the logging plan; have no control when we start areas and how soon yarders follow; sometimes you can have a better way to do it, more productive, better for other phases; etc.

39. What does phase congestion mean to you? Please explain?

358 fallers (83.45%) provided comments. These included broad references to production pressures;

pressures from one phase on another; time crunches to complete blocks; much more complicated clearance and communication measures needed; etc., summed up as “constricted, pressured work/site that increases the risk for potential unsafe conditions putting increased pressure on fallers and requiring constant vigilance in place of just focusing on falling safely.”

In seven plus pages of comments, poor planning and management were identified in different comments including “too many cooks in the kitchen” and disruptions that create hazards with faller safety being impacted by non-faller activities.

Subsets of comments related specific to road construction and how those negatively impact faller safety; seismic work pressures where drills catch up with the fallers; as well as a small number of not applicable comments; etc.

40: Is phase congestion an issue on your site?

223 of fallers (52%) said “no”; 76 fallers (17.8%) said “yes”; and 48 fallers (11%) said “other”. Comments included: that phases are worked out ahead of time when the work plan is addressed; not anymore, sad another good faller had to die; if done right the machines can be a big help opening up stand and removing hazards; depends; sometimes (several comments); rarely; took a fatality to get other phases out of our area; not on heli jobs but on conventional jobs (a couple of similar comments); challenges around shift changes that second shift might not always know the plan; depends on the licensee and the contractor; not applicable; sometimes, but usually not; approximately 15% of the time; etc.

41. Does planning allow safe working distances from other phases?

312 fallers (73%) said “yes”; 33 fallers (7.7%) said “other” and 28 fallers (6.6%) said “no”. Comments included: good planning allows for safe working distances; yes, but not always as other phases might cut corners; as long as everyone respects the plan; stupid question – of course planning helps, just have to do it and communicate it with those involved; can’t rely on people following the plan; some operations try to push the distance rule and when we stand our ground and refuse we are called pricks because of it; not always; sometimes (several); depends on who is doing the planning; proper planning isn’t always followed; if you have proper planning and phases have the time to create proper distance; plans can change very fast for a faller and it always needs to be clearly communicated; it should, but not always; proper planning and forest site phases and logging supervisor need to work as a team; and several n/a; etc.

42. Do you find that your pre-works address all concerns and hazards?

186 fallers (44%) said “yes”; 158 fallers said “mostly”, 29 fallers (7%) said “no”, 17 fallers (4%) said “sometimes” and 14 fallers (3%) said “other”. Comments included: in general; no, because all hazards cannot be identified prior to starting a block; it has to be done daily; mostly, but always be on lookout for unexpected; new hazards can develop; still run into feller buncher or hoe messes; keep reassessing; only do a pre-work when we know that we are going to be audited or WSBC is in the area; it’s a dynamic plan that changes as hazards change; this is logging, hazards and concerns different every day; often pre-works are just generic paperwork, sign it without having time to read; etc.

43. What alternate methods are available at your worksite for dealing with hazards? Please check all that apply.

323 fallers (75.8%) said they had access to machine assist; 173 fallers (40.6%) said they had access to danger tree blasting; and 1 faller selected “other”. Comments included many no work zones (NWZ); stop work and ribbon off; special tools; call partner to have a look; line pulling, ropes, rigging, climbing; qualified assistance; available most of the time, but not always; call in climbers; helicopter; skidder, loader, hoe or cat; etc.

44. Do you feel the ERP is effective and that medical assistance is readily available?

330 fallers (77.3%) said “yes”; 33 fallers (7.7%) said “no”; and 16 fallers said “I don’t know”. Comments included: yes, and tested regularly; this is one of the things that is readily available depending who is in the area you are working; not always; holes in the plan; mostly; not since WSBC regulation was downgraded for first aid coverage; depends on the job; not high enough first aid requirements for distance and location; could always be better; we rely on a private heli company; feel SAR tech could be better equipped, experienced and should be available to us; worksite is remote and medical assistance difficult to coordinate; we have a plan and when somebody gets hurt everyone helps but due to the distance to hospital or the weather there is nothing written in stone; not all the time, usually very good; it can never be good enough; weather and time to hospital an issue (several similar comments); level 3 attendants should be mandatory no matter number of fallers; etc.

45. Do you feel that the established ERP is adequate every day?

289 fallers (67.7%) said “yes”; 50 fallers (11.7%) said “no”; 34 fallers (8%) said “not sure” and 18 fallers (4.2%) said “other”; and 38 fallers (9%) didn’t complete the question. Comments included: sh** changes, so should ERPS; if the level 3 is sick does everyone stay home?; weather changes; depends on if all crew is on site; an ERP is effective only when it can adapt and address changing conditions and issues; most days, but we do rely on heli-vac so you never know; sometimes not enough people on site to conduct an efficient medivac; not when snowing; sometimes weather compromises ERP; we should practice more and I am unsure that heli will be available and ready; depends on where we are working and if other crews are within radio communication; most of the time; as long as crew and equipment are available to execute the ERP; you have to change if it isn’t; everybody has an adequate ERP these days. Making sure the plan can be enacted upon is key; need dynamic ERPs to match changing conditions; only as good as support you have from radio contact. Not always reliable; it has to be or I won’t work; etc.

46. What do you think would make your ERP more effective? Check all that apply:

225 fallers (52.7%) checked: “review the plan and discuss it”
215 fallers (50.4%) checked: “practice it regularly”
207 fallers (48.5%) checked: “have a back-up evacuation plan if the heli-vac cannot get in”
190 fallers (44.5%) checked: “testing that all equipment is ready and working”
156 fallers (36.5%) checked: “having a back-up Level 3 first aider”
137 fallers (32%) checked: “better coordination with other phases”
34 fallers (8%) checked: “other”

Comments included: sat phones/second sat phone on site (a few such comments); establish good communication with all in the area prior to starting; more practice; we do all of the above/have a good program (several similar comments); I think all of the above; plan the work, work safe, don’t get hurt; have a copy of the ERP in our radio harness; if no heli-vac, shut down; plan is solid but more help is always better; sometimes other dept. leave and falling/bull bucker crew doesn’t know; call helicopter companies every day to ensure they are not fogged in; more heli-pads; check it over and over again; and several n/a; etc.

47. What do you find are the most common breakdowns in ERP?

281 fallers (65.5%) provided answers. A small selection follows in no particular ranking: Communication (sat phones/radios not working properly; contacts not picking up the calls) and weather related issues; crew not paying attention during discussions; panic/confusion in real event; outdated names and numbers in the ERP; too much chatter on radios; new crew members not understanding; dead batteries; old trucks; complacency; rely on helicopter too much; too much paperwork. After a while people give up on caring; time/access; practice; changes in worksite conditions; not knowing the location of the ERP; lack of clean, up to date, adequate equipment, not prepared before work starts; never encountered a

breakdown in ERP; assumptions; evacuation from the incident site to the road or helipad; terrain and distance; lost or wet ERPs (put in ziplocks and secure); moving the phases to another block; uncontrollable circumstances – bad weather for helicopter, mudslide on road, snow slides; discuss daily; alternative methods/routes and back-ups; too much info, make it simple and clear; reluctance to call a chopper; being too generic; fire escapes; etc.

48. How do you feel about the BCFSC?

210 fallers (49%) said “generally positive”; 131 fallers (30.7%) said “they don’t know where BCFSC begins and WorkSafeBC ends; 89 fallers (20.8%) said they “have had good experiences with falling safety advisors from the BCFSC; 83 fallers (19.44%) see the BCFSC as an unnecessary bureaucracy; 60 fallers said they are “unsure of what the BCFSC actually does”; and 24 fallers (5.6%) selected “other”.

Comments included: are there officers that attend sites?; previous fallers with experience in conjunction with WorkSafeBC would be beneficial; too much bureaucracy and pencil pushers; have had good experiences with falling safety advisors from the BCFSC; have had bad experiences; great voice for fallers; see it as a necessary bureaucracy (a few comments like this); do not help or advise workers, they apply the generic; money grab for what purpose?; very unorganized; hard on my back carrying so many; faller training should never have gone the way it did; it was a cash grab and not everyone is meant to be a faller; I have worked with trainees from the course and I am not a big fan of the course; BCFSC seems slow at seeing issues causing injuries; who represents ministry fallers?; self-regulation sucks; big companies are taking advantage of workers, loop holes, no supervising by WorkSafeBC; good overall but “witch hunters” for fallers. Need to improve faller certification making it an apprenticeship; a disconnect at times but more good than bad; just a place where you can make money doing an unnecessary job; falling course is unnecessary, have them work with hand fallers for couple of years; seems very top heavy overall; I like it; you’re a necessary evil I guess; a little extreme on some parts; thinks it’s hard for a young applicant to become a faller now so most fallers are older; dictated by WorkSafe; BCFSC is needed but a bit too much paperwork/time. WSBC does physical checks and has authority; etc.

49. Is this the same as you felt about the BCFSC five or six years ago?

226 fallers (53%) said “yes”; 106 fallers (25%) said they felt “more positive now” about the BCFSC; 40 fallers (9.4%) said “no”; and 34 (8%) said “less positive now”. Many comments related to too much bureaucracy; too much paperwork, getting away from the reality of falling, one example provided: falling exam; many “other” comments related to “about the same / unsure / ambivalent”; a couple of comments about not enough focus on the managers and the safety differences between BCFSC certified fallers vs fallers re Enform/BC Wildfire Services. The same people trying to reinvent falling haven’t worked in 20-25 years as production fallers – they don’t realize the world has changed; BCFSC has lost sight of its objectives; SAFE audits are a waste of time, true or false documentation is not an indication of safety; annual fee removal was an improvement (a couple of comments); I have learned the BCFSC is an advocate for fallers and employers; I grow more cynical about the direction of safety programs all the time; focus/support is for industry, not the so called independent faller or union faller; the idea of creating safe standards and training is and was a good idea; etc.

50. Are you aware of the free services the BCFSC provides to fallers? Please check all that you know of:

219 fallers (51.3%) checked: “falling supervisor certification preparation”

200 fallers (47%) checked: “in field training to support certified fallers and falling supervisors”

190 fallers (44.5%) checked: “faller and supervisor visits”

158 fallers (37%) checked: “incident investigation assistance”

124 fallers (29%) checked: “remedial/skills upgrade training”

107 fallers (25%) checked: “faller/blaster coaching and mentoring”

105 fallers (24.6%) checked: “confidential company review”

96 fallers (22.5%) checked: “management coaching and mentoring”

Comments included: I was not aware/unaware/never knew/hadn't heard (many comments) of the services provided; thought there was a cost; nothing is free; all jobs that are unnecessary so the faller can pay for them (a couple of comments); my experience is nothing is confidential; all safety advisors need to be on the exact same page and give feedback on site; no unknown reports afterwards; well-kept secret; in my case BCFSC was no help at all!; good website and newsletter; I know now; fit to log book was good; great resources available; great to have BCFSC in industry; really like the online videos; advocate for fallers that are unreasonably, unfairly having orders written on them by WSBC that have to justify their job; happy with the chance for feedback; etc.

51. What would you like to see BCFSC, as forestry's health and safety association on behalf of industry, do to support fallers and faller safety going forward?

250 fallers (58%) provided more than five and-a-half pages of comments in total. These included (grouped in similar themes/contents for easier reference below):

Accountability/industry structure

Start holding companies/licensees accountable for their actions when an injury or fatality occurs and not let them pass the buck to the independent fallers; make it clear to management that fallers can make it easy or hard for yarding, make it safe and easy for us; companies go back to hiring fallers as employees and pay WSBC coverage; keep supervision off the saws; conflicts of interest – a lot more BCFSC could do if not just big industry – not one faller on board of directors, but numerous CEOs; get rid of bad contractors, stop work place bidding where lowest bidder gets the job, safety costs money so what do you think the lowest bidder cuts first; etc.

Certification and training and ongoing reviews

Make sure when a faller is certified he can actually do the job on the worksite; have more check-ups and evaluation on fallers; have free training; reduce the cost of training; more hands-on training; upgrade training; scrap the 1 month course where trainees feel as though they are fallers and let us train co-workers more thoroughly on the job; make training more affordable; quit making new courses to make you look like you're needed; focus more on tree tops and limbs; continue good work on nutrition, very important; go back to apprenticeship model and forget training new fallers in the gym; listen to actual fallers as too many ex-fallers/retired fallers/old boys making decisions; educate prime contractors; only take people for faller training who already have experience in industry; put training back in the woods; abolish the stump audit/stop focusing on stumps (several comments); etc.

Interactions with BCFSC

Stay out of active cut blocks: meet with fallers and trainees at the cook shack; keep up the good work; listen to the fallers not WSBC; reduce paperwork; BCFSC needs to check on companies (beyond paperwork); use sphere of influence to have companies pay fall contractors rate to do job proper; would like active fallers working for BCFSC and more consultation with current/young fallers than just asking the old timers what they think; publish all available info of all falling accidents, not just selected ones, including clear descriptions, history; show more sincere concern; continue helping faller think safety; feel that you support us; was annoyed paying certification each year; revise the SAFE Companies program so that supervisors aren't spending the majority of their time doing paperwork; continue making safety #1 and supporting resources (e.g. alerts); keep up what you're doing; etc.

BC Faller Training Standard

Sensible review of BCFTS would be a good start; allow non production fallers to challenge the fallers certificate; etc.

Injury / WorkSafeBC

Every faller has bad back/knees/hips/hands/shoulders but WorkSafeBC denies most claims and I would

like BCFSC to stand up and help fallers in their work safe injury claims; work closer with WorkSafeBC; WorkSafeBC inconsistent; make regulation for regular mandatory snack periods; focus more on long term health issues; make WSBC ensure that prime contractors are qualified; drug and alcohol testing needed (three related comments); etc.

FTAC & programs

Keep FTAC recommendations moving forward; reports like this one; listen to a cross-section of fallers regularly and support them on their concerns (several comments); fallers feel there is no-one supporting them; don't allow the certified bull bucker program to get watered down; etc.

Costs of safety vs rates

A handful of comments re costs of safety and rates make for choices that may/do compromise safety.

52. Do WorkSafeBC inspections help prevent serious injuries and fatalities?

173 fallers (40.5%) said "yes"; 98 fallers (23%) said "don't know"; 86 fallers (20%) said "no" and 27 fallers (6.3%) said "other". 10% didn't complete the question. Comments included: yes, in the generic way; yes, where I work, where your TFL is attached to pavement; more so than not; don't care to help – come to fine (a couple comments); no because as soon as they leave, they will resume unsafe practices; no because WSBC warns companies or visits giving time for last minute corrections; no because individual attitude; up to the fallers and WorkSafeBC isn't there every day; we apply Safety 1st; safety procedures are in place but there is the human error factor. Within the don't know comments: I have never seen one on a job site in 14 years of falling; yes they help sometimes; inspections should be seen as supportive and educational; they are so focused on your stumps telling you that you will not have a job if they see your stumps like that again. Other comments included a real range of either never seeing an officer or seeing an officer more times than I can count – and still had a fatality; they are not liked but have a role to play; depends on the officer/inspector – some are very practical; some promote safety, others just want to find something wrong; it creates a lot of stress; they help weed out companies that don't play by the rules; and less than a handful of comments expressing frustration/anger with regulatory enforcement; and, it forces employer to keep to a safety standard; etc.

53. Do WorkSafeBC inspections create upset conditions?

131 fallers (30.7%) said "yes"; 125 fallers (29.3%) said "they don't bother me", 92 fallers (21.6%) said "no", 67 fallers (15.7%) said "they bother me, put me off my focus" and 21 fallers (4.9%) selected "other". Comments included: yes, but not for me but for the site; sometimes; some of them come in with the wrong attitude (e.g. I'm God); yes, but maybe we get too laxadaisy in our everyday work that we get too comfortable working in unsafe conditions; of course it does!; for some people; necessary; had a WorkSafeBC inspector tell my boss that I was in good ground and production should be high on a job that was falling exclusively danger trees; depends on the officer/methods/attitude/feedback provided (a few comments); they don't bother me but to does make me lose my focus when you are trying to do such a safe nice job and something so little is dragged out of it – such as your stumps; only 1 confrontational officer; sometimes give conflicting info; it's part of the job; we need more WSBC inspections to function up to and above regulations not below the standards; no-one likes to have someone looking over their shoulders; too much attention is spent trying to make everything perfect; uneducated officer with no falling or experience; I understand the need for them but they do make me nervous; often fear that inspections are looking for problems (fines) instead of simply trying to help; nervous or spooked by pressure; I have not had a problem but I know the feeling of anxiety about feeling judged; they sweat the small stuff instead of things that really matter; 30 year faller and have never seen an officer; I like to see them out there, we have a lack of inspectors; backbaring issues; when they show up unannounced in the morning and you have to drive them around all day it creates an upset condition; I have seen first-hand an experienced safe faller become unsafe during an inspection, most time it is due to the WSBC rep's aggressive attitude; love to see WSBC; part of the process and

should continue; should be separate standards for fallers in the Kootenays; undercuts can't be 100% all the time, don't need a fine for two bad undercuts over 10,000 trees felled; the licensee inspections create more upset conditions; stumps and market snags the only thing they can see, quarter management is a better gauge; etc.

54. Do you feel WorkSafeBC regulations address your safety concerns?

244 fallers (57%) said "yes"; 78 fallers (18.3%) said "no", 42 fallers (9.8%) said "don't know"; and 20 fallers (4.7%) said "other". Comments included: some need addressing still; in most cases; the safety concerns are still out there and there are the same ones that have been there since I started falling – phase congestion, blasting debris, machine hazards; not really because it's the 2 tree rules that caused most of the death and injuries to fallers since 2004 while falling and bucking; because most of the planners never really worked before; it is not possible to plan or be a boss when you do not know how the work feels; long butts on steep hills they just look the other way; he left and I really was off focus. He left saying nice work but I will have to write you up for that one stump. Just that we discussed. It was a nice stump I didn't even use a wedge. All the others were perfect. So really?; I really don't have any concerns. I know my work and can do it safely; regulations are only part of dealing with safety concerns; some do; not all; mostly; some are necessary, some are ludicrous; to a point; regulations address the concerns of WorkSafeBC and licensees not the actual worker; they give a minimum for companies or they would not have any guidelines; different inspectors have different interpretations of the code i.e. progressively falling snags; regulations can get complicated and confusing at times due to different interpretations and views; stump grading issues came up a few times in the comments; why are road builders allowed to over blast rock, make a mess, blow tree tops off on the low side, no use of blast mats and WSBC turns a blind eye; etc.

55. When was the last time you had/saw a WorkSafeBC officer on your worksite?

157 fallers (36.9%) said "in the past year"; 68 fallers (16%) said "in the past two years"; 61 fallers (14%) said "in the past month"; 42 fallers (9.9%) said "never that I know of personally"; 34 fallers (8%) said "other" and 4 fallers (0.9%) said "in the past week". Comments included: we get regular visits as they can drive to our sites; the area I am working has seen WSBC officers more than in all my 25 years in the falling industry; Aug2015 WSBC, June2015 BCFSC; three times on last job in one month, they couldn't find anything wrong so they kept coming back, talk about harassment; too much is not good; a few times, four unannounced visits; I try to work as though they are always there; 5 years ago; 9 years ago on notch hill fire, had a good visit; never; past 10 years; regularly on some sites but not on sites they can't easily access; many comments with varying degrees of frequent to very infrequent and no visits; etc.

56. Can the BC Faller Training Standard be improved?

225 (53%) of fallers said "yes"; 88 fallers (20.6%) said "no"; others never checked the boxes one way or the other, but many still provided comments. Five pages of comments included: always room for improvement (several comments); costs and good support HAVE to improve or there will be no fallers!; this is a huge issue; don't have time to write all the changes that need to be made (a couple of similar comments); old school – start at bottom of the logging pole and work your way up to becoming a faller (many comments on improving effectiveness of training and costs; getting young fallers out in the woods with experienced fallers, learning on the job); need to give young new fallers more experience and confidence – can only happen with experienced fallers to help them learn how to identify risks and hazards and build confidence; industry has to pay for it; need for better screening; better alignment with Enform and BC Wildfire Services; more focus on planning; more focus on quarter management; the standard itself is good, I think more field work and less classroom and admin; need more input on terrain; keep reviewing and make small changes that suit real-time situations in very different landscapes of province; don't know/not sure (several comments); less focus on the stump (several comments) and more on safe bucking practices, lean of tree, overhead hazards; more importance to

mental and physical health; make safety a higher priority than procedures; pre-screen for super high alertness, peripheral vision and sixth sense if that's possible; don't allow people in just because they can pay the fee; not everyone is meant to be a faller; seems to me there's a group of experienced people working on this right now; faller standard is excellent, better than anywhere I know of; need to bring Wildfire Services fallers into program; keep it relevant and keep it with the times (several references); drug and alcohol checks during work; all fallers freedom to use methods that appear safe as books can't foresee everything; things appear to be very well regulated; seems adequate; unsure; etc.

57. In closing what would you like to share that worries you about being a faller, about the future of falling in BC and what you would like to see changed or not changed. What do you think needs to be done to help fallers become safe productive fallers? Please comment as much as you want below:

291 (68%) of fallers provided comments. These comments run over 28 pages (in small print). Comments include: tougher operational conditions than 10-15 years ago; biggest concern is WorkSafeBC re claims being declined from injured shoulders/hands/knees/hearing/hips; BCFSC and WorkSafeBC have lost sight of reality that falling is not a perfectly engineered trade; reality is falling is a dangerous and strenuous job – not enough credit goes to the people who fall trees; pressure of other phases; where I have been for the last several years it is still “hurry up and get the wood on the ground” and not knowing if/when you get paid; have to get off this fallers have to be perfect in all aspects; several comments re back barring in small timber is not “unsafe” and should be allowed because it is safer in the appropriate conditions and some comments asking for WSBC to revisit the related regulation; sometimes the production push does not balance with safety; right of way wood left against timber on the low side of a road is still an issue; communication with truckers can be improved – they don't always have the fallers' channel; inexperienced fallers cost industry more than paying experienced ones; bothers me when bull buckers do not call for clearance and sneak up on me. Bullbuckers should have 10 years + experience; I think things have improved greatly since the 80s: tech, new ideas, attention to detail are all important. The best safety is knowledge, experience and paying close attention to your job and surroundings; amount of paperwork needs to be streamlined; number of visits from numerous people: BCFSC, WorkSafeBC and the licensee; let's keep professionals safe training a priority; road builders should stay on the centerline, when they go off it leaves more debris on the lower side and more exposed roots on the highside; companies don't give contractors maps quick enough so they can plan better to save congestion later; fallers need to learn to control human emotions to stay calm in upset conditions – need tools to stay focused not distracted; the committee does a great job trying to ensure all fallers return home safe and sound!; thank you for valuing my opinion/reaching out to us (several comments); listen to people who are doing the work rather than from other organizations; with the new falling standards you have created a whole generation of poor fallers; safety begins with each individual; most of the people on FTAC haven't fell for years and are out of touch with current falling industry challenges; my certification was taken away after 10 years and will not recertify but will remain a faller; falling day should be reduced to 5.5 hours for standard 6.5 rate (same pay). I think this would reduce injuries and fatalities given the extreme terrain we are now working in; I am pretty much satisfied on how things are going; fallers need to quit falling when your age does not let you do the job safely; too much supervision, always looking over your shoulder; worry about that marking of stumps; we want to go home to our families and make steady good income to provide like machine operators can. Sadly doesn't happen enough; better planning on different phases; too much emphasis on production; we all have good ideas but are they the right ideas?; alcohol and drug testing should be mandatory; I'm not worried about being a faller from a safety standpoint. I don't like that guys spend a day in a loader or any machine (for longer hours) but take home about the same as a faller; see safety paperwork being done in the office but doesn't translate out on the block; need to stay vigilant to eliminate phase congestion; more extensive review of ERP on a regular basis; WSBC officers need to understand we take pride in our work and a little positive reinforcement goes a long way to improving

mental well-being; loss of jobs to machines; BC has a vast variety of trees and conditions and they are trying to cover it all with one program; bitter faller/I am very bitter (a couple of comments); as a whole think falling community is quite safe. However, I am seeing a recent trend with new faller trainees having emphasis on production. My understanding is the training is focusing on doing as many under cuts and back cuts as possible during their training period; trainees should be in stands that resemble where they will likely be working; I think big licensees are controlling too much and putting pressure on contractors with low rates; address bullbucker burnout; several more comments on need for practical affordable training/modules; stumps (many comments); concerns that there are some unsafe licensees/contractors; work shortages, minimal communication; no close call reporting; wages do not balance out; worry about working around drug and alcohol users; working around machinery within 2 tree lengths, ERP failure, idiotic engineering, being fined; when a faller is injured they should have someone in their corner to ensure proper care is supplied by WSBC; there are many horror stories about WSBC; someone needs to be there for us not just say they are; concerned when the licensee hires some sub-standard subs, they can influence poor practices; need to bring back more fun and enjoyment with job/worksite; take more short time-outs; would make it mandatory for fallers in blocks to be finished before any other phases are permitted; have not heard one BCFSC officer explain where the financial incentive comes to run safely; double standards in hiring SAFE certified companies; not rocket science; we need a fallers union organized so we actually have a say; it was a hard life; all survey information is only useful if used correctly; falling supervisors should make considerable more for the headaches; fallers do not go to work with the intent of getting hurt or dying. Give us a bit of credit; bean counting and rules do not make fallers safe; always keep an eye up – no safety equipment should compromise your vision!; fallers need good habits, on and off the job; it's cheaper to never have accidents or injuries and it maximizes production also; why do you give bullbucker tickets to anyone?; thank you for hearing me out; hope this helps; I don't trust you or WSBC; higher levels of first aid needed; higher wages for level 3s; quite often falling contractor under bids the job, resulting in unrealistic production expectations which puts pressure on the faller; licensees don't care about the falling companies safety record, they care more about their bottom line; need to get away from treating fallers as sub-contractors and get back to hiring them as employees; if we were treated like employees there would be less pressure on us to produce and we would have more rights as a worker to reject unsafe work practices; would also like to see WorkSafeBC adopt a code of ethics; several comments about bitter experiences with WSBC; most forest supervisors have no concern of what is safe or achievable in the working forest; more surveys like this so we can voice our concerns; fallers need an organization to represent their interests; several more comments about training need for being inexpensive and allow for real conditions and situations in the woods; don't like where the industry is at right now: too much negativity and no \$\$ rewards; timber and terrain is the worst it has ever been for hand fallers and that trend is going to continue; when I started in industry I worked on heli-jobs and the helicopter stayed on the site so dealing with an emergency vac was fast while today there is too much cutting corners putting fallers' lives at risk; thinking faller training is excellent, new fallers I've been working with have great safety attitudes and habits. If we could couple that with increased contractor rates we would be in a good spot; BCFSC needs to understand the financial impact it puts on companies. Who pays?; you've made it easier for companies to get rid of guys; all good!; due to work shortages there can be long layoffs; peer mentoring in program will create better fallers; WSBC officers need to be educated in falling, not just a book; some of the teaching going on is wrong; extend faller program to 60 days; weekly audits are a joke (ass covering for the majors); licensees are not worrying about liability and shareholders; they are still using the lowest rate to choose their contractors and then pass on all responsibilities to the low baller. This doesn't create a good safety base; I think all good, keep up the good work; worried that I see a dying profession in the Kootenays; small company fallers need more resources available; system is geared to larger company fallers; laying out blocks where roads into blocks are littered with dead and green danger trees; danger tree assessors that don't know how to assess green trees, only worrying about dead trees; standards are good and getting better but BCFSC needs to stop pretending that the standards are actually being applied in the

bush; concerned I may not be able to finish my career in one piece due to production pressures; fallers do not have the right to refuse unsafe work except in the sense that they have the right to refuse employment as a faller; better surveyors, the roads and blocks we encounter are increasingly worse; certify more phases like road builders to take responsibility for hazards and bad road building; etc. *(Please note: in the couple of days between closing the survey and the FTAC meeting, there was insufficient time to do a fair and accurate summary of the comments in this final question within categories/topics. The above comments, however, do reflect a good sample of the breadth and depth of comments).*

A few housekeeping notes

Confidentiality and anonymity

FTAC assured questionnaire participants that all survey feedback was confidential and anonymous. A number of fallers chose to provide their names and or company names; some named the contractors they work for or the licensees, and in a couple of instances safety violation and other comments were made against an individual or company. To protect the privacy and confidentiality of all individuals, as assured, the administrator of the survey has removed all personally identifying characteristics. In this way we protect all the survey participants as well as other third parties, while ensuring the credibility and trustworthiness of FTAC and all its members. The information is still as valuable without the personal/company identifiers. A handful of fallers also took the time to write personal letters and attach them to their returned surveys, sharing personal stories about what went wrong for them in the industry – their frustrations (some are in arbitration/other action) and concerns.

Manual input of paper survey content into analysis program

Every effort was made to ensure accuracy in transferring the data received in the paper survey copies into the online analysis and report generation tool. We accept that a 2.0% margin of error is possible where handwriting may have been illegible or unintended data input errors have occurred.

Rounding up

For the purpose of ease of use, some percentage totals have been rounded up to the next percentage point e.g. 65.87% has been rounded up to 66%. Where percentages are close (e.g. one faller makes the difference) within a category, actual percentages have been provided. All detailed percentages are provided within the full report and should be consulted for actual numbers.

Further analysis

FTAC may direct additional cross tabulation of data e.g. if FTAC would find it valuable to know if there is a geographic factor influencing responses to a particular question, that data can be run; or if it is valuable to cross-check comparisons such as years of falling experience against specific data, that can be done too. There is little limit on the ability to cross-run data, but given the time/review needed, it was not practical to run everything out the gate.

Thank you to all the fallers who participated

FTAC would like to thank all the fallers who participated in the survey. This is the first time that fallers in BC have had the opportunity to formally document their opinions on topics that affect safety and the future of falling in BC. Thank you for your time and willingness to share your personal and invaluable insights and opinions.

Got questions about the survey?

Email FTAC@bcforestsafe.org

Full report

To view the full survey results, please see a digital copy here: www.bcforestsafe.org/2016ftacsurvey.

