



Certification to be required by BCTS

In a little less than six months, certification with the Council's SAFE Companies program will be mandatory for work done under timber sale licences awarded by BC Timber Sales (BCTS).

Licenses advertised after December 31, 2008, will require employers or firms directing workers or contactors to be SAFE certified. In addition, BCTS contracts advertised after that date will expect bidders to be SAFE certified.

"We are committed to improving the safety of forest workers," said Minister of Forests and Range Rich Coleman as he announced the government decision in early June.

"Making safety certification a requirement will help ensure that forest operators have effective health and safety programs for their employees."

The change is a logical progression from BC Timber Sales' current requirement that companies be registered to become certified by the Council.

That requirement has been in place since April 2007 for the agency's contractors in road building and reforesta-

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\$2 million to companies

An estimated \$2 million should start arriving in July at more than 500 forestry operations that were SAFE certified in 2007 and meet requirements of WorkSafeBC's Certificate of Recognition program.

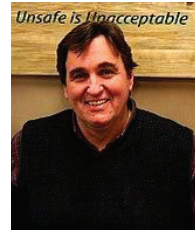
"The rebates recognize the efforts and achievements that these companies have made around safety. The payments are timely, too, in the current industry downturn," said SAFE Companies Director Krista Bax.

"We're looking forward to 10-per-cent rebates for the 2008 year."

As of early June, 639 companies were SAFE-certified, with 3,543 registered and working toward certification.

Bax also praised ongoing certification support by BC Timber Sales and licencees across the province (story above).

Measuring safety



"Don't give me statistics, give me information!" Every manager makes this plea at some point, surrounded by a glut of facts and figures, but often lacking a full understanding what they mean.

At the same time, we face this reality: "You cannot manage what you don't measure."

The lack of meaningful information was certainly an early challenge for the Council.

Within months of our formation, it was clear that no one knew with any certainty how many forest workers had died or been seriously injured in the previous year, or ever. Nor could we assess whether safety performance was improving, holding steady or getting worse.

But substantial progress has been made in improving necessary information and our ability to assess performance at all levels.

First, we have improved the reporting and dissemination of information on incidents as they occur. The results are more higher-quality and timely incident reports, safety alerts and safety bulletins — all on our website.

Second, we have advanced our ability to assess the safety performance of our industry, of specific sectors within it and of individual companies. Our metrics and performance measures will improve further, as we continue working with WorkSafeBC, the B.C. Ministry of Forests and Range, the B.C. Coroners Service and others.

This fall, we plan to issue the first *State of Safety in the BC Forest Industry* report.

Our overall goal is a better understanding of forest safety needs to direct programs to the areas of greatest need.

Tanner Elton, CEO



Resource road alert

A late spring tree planting start means silviculture crews, loggers and early recreational users are crowding B.C.'s resource roads. This prompted a joint safety alert in early June from the Council and the Western Silviculture Contractors' Association.

Coming within a month of a tree planter dying in a rollover near Vanderhoof, the alert urges extra caution. See http://www.bcforestsafe.org/content-nav-alerts/2008/alerts-08-06-01-road_changes.pdf.

"You can never be too careful on those roads," said WCSA Executive Director John Betts. "It should save lives if everyone observes the rules of the road," added Forestry TruckSafe Director MaryAnne Arcand.

Less forestry red tape

The government moved in late May to reduce red tape affecting forestry.

"We will continue to look for ways to help our forest industry, both short-term and long-term," said Forests and Range Minister Rich Coleman as he unveiled changes resulting from the review. They are summarized at www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2005-2009/2008FOR0082-000787-Attachment1.htm#.

The changes followed a 90-day regulatory review announced by Premier Gordon Campbell in January.

Certification a must

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tion, and for forest companies conducting on-the-ground work on timber sale licences.

"The earlier endorsement and support of the provincial government have been critical to the successful launch and implementation of the SAFE Companies Program," said Council CEO Tanner Elton. "This month's development continues concerted efforts by industry, government and others to improve safety in the forest sector.

"The province is not only 'talking the talk' of worker and worksite safety, they are also 'walking the walk' by requiring certification of their contractors and regional operations," he added.

"The government is treating worker safety as an overriding priority."

A new council chair

The Council's Board of Directors is recruiting an individual to succeed current Co-Chairs Lee Doney and Ron Gorman when their terms expire in the near future.

Expected to be in place by September, the new chair will have experience working with boards of directors, serious interest in and commitment to worker safety, and leadership skills and experience motivating and mentoring senior executives. Liaison with Council management is key, as well as excellent communication skills, both internally and externally to the organization.

Anyone interested in making a nomination or discussing this position further should contact Ken Werker at executive search firm Ray and Berndtson. Phone 604-685-0261, or email ken.werker@rayberndtson.ca.

Remembering Cary White

We are sad to announce that Council Safety Advocate Cary White passed away from cancer on June 10.

Based in Parksville, Cary worked with small employers preparing for their initial SAFE Companies audits. He joined the Council in early 2007, after four years as a safety consultant and 23 years as a WorkSafeBC officer specializing in forestry.

"Cary was a devoted safety professional with the highest integrity and professional ethics. When he observed any situation that needed attention, he used all available channels to improve worker safety," said SAFE Companies Audit Services Manager Andrew Chan.

"He was making a real difference and the industry is safer as a result, and will be missed by his family, friends and colleagues."

Donations in memory of Cary White may be made to the Canadian Cancer Society, BC & Yukon Division, or the Heart and Stroke Foundation of BC & Yukon.



SAFETY ADVOCATE CARY WHITE

