



# RUMBLINGS

FOR SAFE ROADS, LOADS AND DRIVERS — ACROSS BRITISH COLUMBIA  
FORESTRY TRUCKSAFE



BC Forest Safety Council

 PRINTABLE VERSION

February 2012 – ISSUE 136

## Confused About Resource Road Policy Direction?

Given discussions and developments around drafting a new Natural Resource Road Act (NRRRA) and with WorkSafeBC's Resource Road Compliance initiative underway (and proceeding along Phase 2), a lot of us are wondering what direction resource roads are headed, especially with respect to **safety management policies**. It's fair to say there are a lot of unanswered questions, since many of the key decisions have not yet been made. But there are a few things happening that can shed some light on developments, and possibly the direction moving forward.

On February 29, the Ministry of Forest Lands and Natural Resource Operations (MFLNRO) and WorkSafeBC (WSBC) issued a joint communiqué referring to several meetings that have included the Ministry of Labour. The 2-page letter was forwarded to Road Safety Management Committees, and included the following statements.

... the NRRRA *legislation offers an opportunity to clarify government expectations regarding resource roads.*

*Recognizing that differences of interpretations are raising concerns and some confusion, WSBC and MFLNRO are working together towards a safe outcome.*

This says at least one important thing – MFLNRO and WSBC are thinking about, and **talking to each other** about resource road safety policy. Some folks have expressed concerns that the NRRRA process had purposefully excluded WSBC from discussions, and wondered if doing so would pose limitations for successful implementation of the eventual NRRRA legislation. With this dialogue occurring at the executive level, we can be hopeful that the NRRRA does not legislate a mandate for WSBC that it cannot accomplish, and vice versa.

*A valuable tool for achieving clarity of expectations is the Road Safety Management Committee (RSMC) and The Committees would continue to have a **key role under the NRRRA.***

Government and WSBC are expressing their gratitude for the efforts and accomplishments of the RSMC's, and their confidence that these groups can provide a central role in resource road operations and safety as we move forward under whatever new policies are developed. Bottom line – **support your local Road Safety Management Committee!**

*WSBC will be circulating a new proposed policy to clarify the status of resource roads as “workplaces”. This policy is not intended to be provocative, but rather to provide clarity to the application of existing legislation and regulation.*

### Other Resource Road Developments

WSBC has been working hard to develop a **Resource Road website**. Once WSBC brass have viewed and approved the site, WSBC plans to run a 1 to 3 month pilot, probably using the Peace area. I have not seen the latest version of the site, but when I did look at it months ago, it looked like a product with clear layout plus information that will be of value to industrial and public resource road users. The NRRRA process has identified a similar need for an informative place to keep road data. For the sake of efficiency, it may be advantageous for MFLNRO and NRRRA participants to have a close look at the WSBC product, and contribute to what WSBC has **“ready to go”**.

Resource Road **compliance assessments** conducted by WorkSafeBC officers across BC resulted in nearly 100 interviews with contractors / employers / owners. Unfortunately, not all planned interviews were conducted by the December 31, 2011 target date, so that information has not yet been submitted. But as the information is received, WSBC is working to compile it into a report about the observations, **trends, strengths**, opportunities for improvement, etc. That report will be **openly shared with industry** and should be available within the next 2 months.



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## Disagreement with Changes to ABS and Slack Adjuster Requirements

One Vancouver Island trucker voiced his disagreement with recent Commercial Vehicle Safety and Enforcement (CVSE) circulars regarding Anti-Lock Braking Systems and Air Brake Slack Adjusters. His e-mail said:

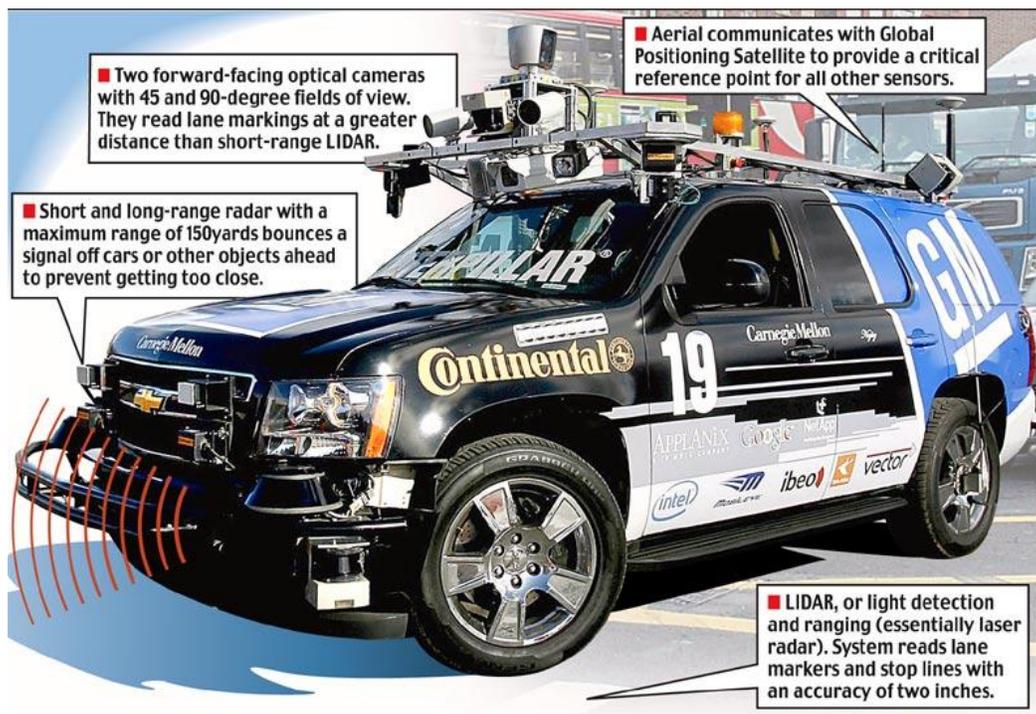
*Changing the rules regarding abs and auto slacks is a cop out. It's just another example of cowering to the forest industry. The maintenance issue is bs!*

He went on to question how inspection facilities and inspectors would determine if a truck was being "operated primarily on industrial roads or forest service roads". I asked a local CVSE rep, and he indicated his interpretation would consider if the unit was **spending most of its time** operating on industrial or forestry roads, but added that that was not an *official* CVSE interpretation. What is your experience in your neck of the woods? Have you had any issues with your truck inspection? Have you received any confirmation on the interpretation?

## Nevada Approves Autonomous Cars for Public Roads

They are not at all like KIT the black Trans-Am in the 1980's TV series Knight Rider. But on February 15, 2012, Nevada's Legislative Commission approved regulations that allow **self-driving vehicles** to operate on the state's roads. Nevada (maybe it's a gambling thing) is the first state to grant this approval for autonomous vehicles, which are being developed by Google and some automakers. Self-driving vehicles will display a red license plate for the time being; when the technology is ready for general use by the public, the vehicles will display green plates.

"Nevada is the first state to embrace what is surely the future of automobiles," Department of Motor Vehicles Director Bruce Breslow said. Nevada partnered with Google, manufacturers, testing professionals, insurance companies, universities, and law enforcement to craft the regulations. Several states are currently weighing bills to allow them.





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## Mill Yard Inventories Building

In speaking with a few woodlands managers around the province, it sounds like they are quickly approaching their **delivered volumes / inventory targets**. Some of those chaps were not feeling very confident in early January but with coordinated efforts by truckers and loggers (and favourable weather), they are a little more relaxed now. Depending on how the weather holds, some north-central mills plan to close their scales by March 23; others are hoping for a mid-April wind-up. With some road restrictions in place in the southern Interior, things are already winding down there.

With night shift in place, and after a very busy hauling season, here's a gentle reminder to keep focused as you bring 'er down the home stretch. It's tough to sleep during the day, but make sure you get enough sack time. If you feel a nap coming on, pull over and do exactly that. Don't let a crash or injury ruin your well-earned vacation time.

## BC Interior Seatbelt Use and MVA Fatalities

The B.C. Coroner's Service is urging people to wear seatbelts after a study of **fatal crashes in the Interior** found too many people weren't buckled up. The study of 85 deaths from 2010 found that **53 per cent** – more than half - of the people involved **were NOT wearing seatbelts** at the time of the crash. Most of those who died were male drivers.

Chief coroner Lisa Lapointe says studies throughout North America have consistently shown that wearing a seatbelt is the best way to avoid death in a motor vehicle crash. She says there are many examples of people dying when they were thrown through windshields, ejected from a vehicle or tossed around inside. Lapointe acknowledges some people die even if they are wearing a seatbelt, but in those cases crashes are often so severe that no amount of safety equipment could have saved the occupants.

## ... Try a Little Surfing Over Break-Up?

Do you ever wonder **how many m<sup>3</sup> you deliver**? There's a nifty website available that can help you figure that out. Based on Ministry of Forests scale data, the WoodX site provides free access (for next 4 months) to a summary of information from BC Scale sites. As long as you know the stratum owner (e.g. licensee) and the stratum (should be on your scale slip), you can use the conversion ratio to figure out how many metres of wood there are for each tonne of weight you haul into that stratum. Check it out at: [http://www.woodx.com/New\\_WoodX/SaleData/W\\_Scale.asp](http://www.woodx.com/New_WoodX/SaleData/W_Scale.asp)

## Upcoming Events

Western Conference on Safety	April 23 - 24	Vancouver, BC
Bridging the Divide: A Multi-Sectoral Approach to Natural Resource Labor Needs in Northern BC	April 24 – 25	Prince George, BC
PG Library – Touch a Truck Day	April 27	Prince George, BC
Global Softwood Log & Lumber Conference	May 9	Vancouver, BC
Interior Logging Association Conference & AGM	May 10 – 12	Vernon, BC

**RUMBLINGS** is produced to help keep you informed on what's happening in BC forestry transportation safety. If you have best practices you would like to share, concerns you want to discuss, or topics you and others would like to learn more about, please give us a call at **250-562-3215**.