



Highest number ever of SAFE certified companies

By Cherie Whelan
Director, SAFE Companies

The BC Forest Safety Council (BCFSC) has reached a new milestone with the number of companies SAFE certified. 3,029 companies were SAFE certified as of December 31, 2019. Every year at year-end, the total number drops slightly with companies who haven't submitted their annual audit package and then rebounds later in the year; but the 2019 number is the highest number to date.

Over the last couple of years, BCFSC has made a number of administrative improvements to make it easier to obtain and maintain SAFE Companies Certification. These improvements will ensure that the program continues to be accessible and flexible to support the diverse needs of the industry. In addition, SAFE Companies training is now available online 24/7, with the exception of Individual Owner Operator which should be available in the second quarter of 2020. This means that anyone who wants to get SAFE Certified will be able to do their training anytime, anywhere with an internet connection.

Our "behind the scenes" administration team has been working hard to improve

how we accept, process and review the SAFE Companies audits. "Shaving off seconds in the process, turns into significant time savings when you are looking at tasks that need to be done over 3,000 times", says Cherie Whelan, Director SAFE Companies. "Just like the companies that we give SAFE Companies Certificates to, we are always looking at opportunities for continuous improvement. When we are able to free up time in these processes, it gives us time to do more value-added work".

This year, there was a focus on notifying SAFE Companies about their audit due date. "With competing business priorities and current industry conditions, we understand an audit date can be overlooked. We endeavoured to provide timely notices to companies to prevent a lapse in their certification and in some cases were able to provide an extension" says Laurel Laturnus, SAFE Companies Administrative Team Lead.

On top of the regular processing of SAFE Companies audits, the SAFE team has also been working hard to develop a



SAFE Companies online audit submission form. They are working with the vendor on the final configuration to ensure that it is intuitive, easy to complete and streamlines some of the current processes with the audit submission and review processes. "One benefit will be data to help guide us in planning which areas require deeper evaluation in verification audits. Knowing the challenges of the average IOO submission will allow us better target areas that help actual on the ground safety activities" says Martin Ridgway, SAFE Companies Quality Assurance Supervisor. SAFE Companies will always be able to submit their audits in paper, but online submission forms will provide more efficiency for the many of you who have been asking for this capability. More to come on that in the next Forest Safety News! 🌲



Getting Back to Work Safely

By Mike Sexton Supervisor, SAFE Companies Field Services

Break up, weather, market conditions, labour disputes. There are many reasons why your company can be off for multiple weeks. Getting back to work in a smooth and safe manner is essential for your business and your workers and good preparation is key. Start-up can be an upset condition, so any little stress that can be eliminated before you start is a good thing. The following are some ideas to help you get back to work efficiently and safely:

- Do your best to make sure that all equipment and gear is ready to go.
- Check all trucks and machines to ensure they are in good operating order, are fueled and start easily.
- Check portable radios and ensure they are charged and working.
- Check that saws are in working order and good to go.
- Do your best to give as much notice to your crews as possible. If people have been using the time off to catch up on their rest, they may not be in tip-top physical condition. Even a couple of days of extra notice can help crew members get themselves physically and mentally ready for back to work.



Acknowledgments to SAFE Company External Auditors

We would like to acknowledge several external auditors who retired this year or have notified us they are no longer available to perform audits for the BCFSC. For decades, these auditors have been instrumental in their support of the forest industry and we would like to take this opportunity to formally thank them for their service:

- Gary Veitch
- Kevin Bonnett
- Robert Volkman
- Scott Overland

The BCFSC would like to extend our deepest condolences to Ronald Tramer's family, friends and clients following Ron's passing in December 2019.

Due to additional external auditors taking full-time industry positions and are now auditing only part time, SAFE Companies is offering training to new external auditors in March 2020. Please visit our website for training dates. 🌱



79% Electronic SAFE Audit Submission

In 2019, 79% of all SAFE Companies audits were received electronically. This included the upload tool, emails and the occasional thumb drive or disc. The remaining 21% were received via mail, courier and some hand delivered packages. 100% of BASE audits and 100% of SAFE Conversion audits were electronic again in 2019. The planned start-up of the online submission tool later in 2020 will give people even more options for electronic submissions. 🌱



Orientation – You may not need to do a complete orientation again, but it's a really good idea if workers have been away for six weeks or more. New and/or young workers should be re-oriented regardless after that much time. A new online course that may assist in new young worker orientation to forestry can be accessed here: www.bcforestsafesafe.org/node/2904

Safe Work Procedure (SWP) – A SWP review is always a good thing. The BCFSC has a number of SWPs available online: www.bcforestsafesafe.org/node/2650#swp. Reminders and positive reinforcement of safe work requirements and expectations helps focus everyone after a break in normal routine.

Pre-work / Initial Safety Meeting – It's very important to review pre-work and safety procedures with all workers prior to starting back. Even the most experienced workers can forget some of the trickier parts of a worksite if they've been away for a while. Always share, discuss and practice the Emergency Response Plans (ERP) and ERP back-up. See resources: www.bcforestsafesafe.org/node/2585

Supervision – It's important all of the time but absolutely crucial at start-up time. Closely watch all workers until you are sure they are working well. Watch for fatigue or less than stellar physical condition.



The BCFSC has a number of resources for getting your crews fit for work at: www.bcforestsafesafe.org/node/3013. Watch for new / young workers that may have forgotten what they need to do. Make sure the company procedures are being followed. Remember, you're not going to make up the lost production in the first day or even the first week. Slow and steady wins the race. Every time! 🌱