



## Prime Contractor Responsibilities

Everyone working in the forest industry needs to be **qualified** to do their job. This includes anyone undertaking the role of **prime contractor**.

**Qualified** means being knowledgeable of the work, the hazards involved and the means to control the hazards, by reason of education, training, experience or a combination thereof.

**Prime contractors** are responsible for coordinating the health and safety activities of employers, workers and other persons at **multiple-employer workplaces**.

The **definition** of prime contractor is:

- a. the directing contractor, employer or other person who enters into a written agreement with the owner of that workplace to be the prime contractor, or
- b. if there is no agreement (referred to in paragraph a), then the **owner** of the workplace.

Multiple employer workplaces are created when the workers of two or more employers are working at the same location on the same project.

Prime contractor requirements apply only when there is a **multi-employer workplace**. If there is only one employer or contractor working on the site, prime contractor requirements do not apply.



## Prime Contractor Responsibilities

The **owner** (e.g., woodlot or community forest agreement licence holder) is an important part of the process. If the owner hires more than one contractor to conduct forestry operations (e.g., a harvesting contractor and a trucking contractor), the owner must assign prime contractor duties to a qualified contractor (or other party) through a written agreement. **If that agreement is not in place, the owner is the prime contractor.**

## Key Steps

When assigning prime contractor duties, the **owner** must:

- **Assess** and confirm that the contractor has the knowledge, capacity and control to successfully coordinate worksite activities
- **Establish** a signed agreement explaining what the prime contractor must do
- **Conduct** an onsite pre-work meeting with the prime contractor
- **Inform** the prime contractor of any changes to the work or worksite that might affect their duties
- **Release** (in writing) the prime contractor from their duties once work is done

The **prime contractor** of a multiple-employer workplace must:

- a. **Ensure** that the activities of employers, workers and other persons at the workplace relating to occupational health and safety are coordinated, and
- b. **Establish** and maintain a system that will ensure safe operations.

To do that, the prime contractor should:

- **Establish** and maintain a system or process that will ensure compliance with the OHS provisions and the regulations
- **Compile** information necessary for work to safely proceed, and **share** it with supervisors (e.g., logging plan identifying hazards and control measures, emergency response plan, safety meetings, etc.)
- **Communicate** to the contractors and their supervisors at the worksite any changes in the work or worksite and any necessary actions (e.g., changes to plans, work procedures, new hazards, etc.)

## Resources – click on the links below

[BCFSC - Prime Contractor Guide and Poster](#) (inc. agreement template)

[BCFSC - Woodlot Safety Program](#)  
[Workers Compensation Act - Section 24](#)