

PHASE CONGESTION

REVIEW BY THE BC FOREST SAFETY OMBUDSMAN, MARCH 2018

Please find attached an 8-page review on phase congestion in the BC forest industry by the BC Forest Safety Ombudsman, Roger Harris. The report was presented to the Coast Harvesting Advisory Group (CHAG) at a meeting last month (March 2018).

CHAG addressed phase congestion in 2013 at the request of coastal contractors who had become concerned about practices that could negatively impact worker safety when logging phases were not properly managed and became too close together or stacked for a variety of reasons that may include production pressures, poor planning, permit or other unexpected delays.

Work was done by CHAG in 2013 and 2014 to reduce phase congestion with increased awareness created through the development of a phase congestion guiding document, phase congestion hazard assessment form, poster and video to help industry better manage multiple phases, recognize the risks in multiple phases, take appropriate actions and remind all workers of their responsibility to refuse unsafe work.

As a result of this work, some positive impacts were seen in field. Phase congestion, however, was still identified as an issue in subsequent faller surveys as well as in anecdotal evidence shared back through industry safety working groups, or directly with the BC Forest Safety Council (BCFSC). As a result, the BCFSC requested an independent review by the Ombudsman to establish the current state of phase management / phase integration / phase congestion to help inform any future actions that might still be required to improve safety outcomes.

After initial receipt and reading of the report CHAG working group members made two decisions:

1. Share the report broadly to increase awareness about the findings and
2. To review and carefully consider the Ombudsman's six recommended considerations to determine what actions are required and commit to implementing any actions CHAG determines will best allow the coastal industry to continuously improve the safe management of logging phase integration. CHAG will then look to share these decisions, actions and materials broadly with industry.

If after reading the attached review, you would like to share practices that you have found work well to ensure that phases are managed safely and no worker is put at increased risk, please share in confidence via email: CHAG@bcforestsafe.org. Similarly, please share what doesn't work.

The CHAG steering committee is made up of industry senior leadership from coastal licensees, timberland owners, United Steelworkers, and contractors (Truck Loggers Association). The CHAG working group consists of the following licensee, contractor and union representatives: Mark Leitao, Aaron Racher, Ralph Friedrich, John Bulcock, Noel Poulin, Craig Fredrickson, Adam Wunderlich, Bill Nelson, Norm McLeod and Ron Corbeil.

CHAG is committed to securing safety solutions that save lives. Until our next update on phase integration, best wishes in safety,

The CHAG working group