



# Month in Review

# Safety Update

*Unsafe is Unacceptable*

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**FEBRUARY-MARCH, 2006:** This update covers the period from February 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup>. When I started this update in the Fall of 2005, it was called “The “Month in Review”. It was almost always for more than a 30 day period, so it is now a “Safety Update”. I will try to continue to get it out in a timely way. In terms of distribution, it was initially intended for Council members and staff. Due to popular demand, it is now being circulated more broadly and will be put out as a “subscription” email for the next issue. If you would rather not receive the “update” let us know and we’ll take you off the list.

**FATALITIES AND SERIOUS INJURIES:** First things first. To the end of March, the first Quarter of 2006, the Forest Sector has incurred **four fatalities and 19 serious injuries**. All of the fatalities involved vehicles, two on resource roads, one on the highway and one at a harvesting site. For more information on incidents comparisons with previous years, our injury database and safety alerts, go to our website at [http://www.bcforestsafe.org/safety\\_alerts\\_about.asp](http://www.bcforestsafe.org/safety_alerts_about.asp).

**JIM SHEPHERD’S COMPLETES HIS TENURE AS CHAIR OF THE SAFETY COUNCIL:** After our last Board Meeting, Council members and a number of the individuals closely tied to the creation of the Council, took some time to thank Jim Shepherd for his contribution as the first Chair of the Safety Council.

Jim’s involvement with this latest effort to improve safety go back to his membership on the Forest Safety Task Force. At that time he was the President and CEO of Slocan Forest Products. When, as a result of the Action Plan of the Task Force, it was decided to form the Council, one of the critical success factors that was identified was strong leadership from the forestry sector. Jim took on the position at a time when it would have been very easy for him to decline, given everything else that was going on in the industry and the merger of Canfor and Slocan.

But he didn’t decline, became the Council’s first Chair and led the Council through the its formative stages and a very difficult year for the sector in terms of safety performance. He leaves the Council, but not his passion for safety, with the challenges still very much before us, but with an industry that has accepted that safety must become an overriding priority and an integral part of how we manage the sector.

He will be missed at the Council table, but he is not gone and will continue to support the Council and the work of the sector to ensure that all our workers and worksites are safe.

**On behalf of all your colleagues and friends,  
thanks Jim!**

**SUPERVISOR TRAINING:** The Council’s Faller Supervisor pilot courses started on February 6 at North Island College. Six pilot classes were run over a six week period, involving almost 100 people. Participants came from large companies, small owner operated firms and everything in between. The pilot courses were a big success, and we received an immense amount of useful feedback from students and teachers.

The Council is planning to begin scheduled supervisor courses for fallers and other occupations as soon as curriculum can be finalized and trainers brought up to speed to teach the course. The is an important step toward the development of a Certified Forestry Supervisor designation that will be recognized throughout the sector.

**A FOREST SAFETY OMBUDSMAN:** On January 14<sup>th</sup> the Council announced its 2006 Safety Initiative and that included the creation of a Forest Safety Ombudsman. On March 16<sup>th</sup> Roger Harris was appointed to the position.

This appointment has generated a good deal of comment, not all of which has been positive. Frankly, we have been surprised by the adverse comments on both the position and the candidate. The Council considers the creation of this position as important and one part of the Sector much larger effort to improve the safety performance. We are also confident that the value of the position will be demonstrated as we move forward.

The first Safety Ombudsman, Roger Harris, was the unanimous recommendation of our nominating committee and was the consensus choice of the Council. He comes with a breadth of experience and insight that will serve him well in the position. In addition to his extensive career in many different areas in the sector he also sought a nomination, met the electorate, represented his community in the legislature, served his constituents, and was a Minister of the Crown with responsibilities for forest operations. None of his experiences – as a worker, an employer, an injured person, a union representative, an elected official and a Minister – mean that he can not be impartial. Instead, they add to his ability to understand the issues that will be brought to him. We are very fortunate that he has accepted the position.

**IN THE SECTOR:** There are a number of on-going initiatives that will contribute to the sector’s efforts to improve its safety performance. **The High Risk Industries Strategy of**

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**WorkSafeBC** is currently on-going and has resulted in the extensive review of many forestry operations in the Province. This is being carefully monitored and coordinated with the SAFE Companies Initiative.

The Province announced the appointment of a **Resource industry coroner** to focus on forest industry fatalities. Tom Pawlowski will identify common circumstances and underlying factors that could be contributing to forest sector fatalities.

Resource industry coroner duties include: investigating all forest related deaths in conjunction with the local coroner, and making recommendations that will prevent future loss of life under similar circumstances within the forest sector.

The Ministry of Forests and Range has announced work on a new **“Resource Roads Act”**. This was one of the key recommendations of the Forestry TruckSAFE Action Plan. In addition to the Act, the Ministry is working with industry to resolve a number of related matters raised in the Action Plan. The Action plan can be viewed or downloaded at <http://www.bcforestsafe.org/pdf/trucksafeactionplan.pdf>.

**AT THE COUNCIL:** A number of developments at the Council. As a result of Jim Shepherd’s term completing, **Keith Playfair has accepted the position of Co-Chair** and joins Lee Doney as the second Chair. Keith was the Vice Chair of the Council to the end of March. **Ron Corbeil’s appointment as Secretary-Treasurer** of the Council has also been extended. Collectively, Ron, Lee and Keith make up the Executive Committee of the Council.

The Council has undertaken an **Organizational Review** of its structure and governance that is expected to result in changes in the coming months. This review includes a consideration of the Council’s **database requirements and its records management systems** and policies.

We’re moving! We had already outgrown our subleased space with COFI and have been postponing a move. We have

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greatly appreciated that we were able to take space with an well established organization and we have benefited from the collateral contact with the many organizations and individuals that routinely visit our combined offices.

Moving to new space is a sign of the maturing of the organization. We will be moving to the Guinness Building on West Hastings in the same neighbourhood. We expect to be in the new space in early May.

**MAJOR PROGRAMS:** There is a lot going on over there! Some highlights.

**SAFE Companies** continues to develop this program in close cooperation and coordination with the COR Program of WorkSafeBC. We have also been working with **ENFORM** which represents the Oil and Gas sector to ensure the compatibility of our programs. **SAFE Companies Pilots** are currently being set up for the Fall, the **BASE And SEBASE Audits** are nearing completion, the IRP Process is being established, and all training requirements related to the program are under review, with particular attention on Auditor qualification and training.

**The Fallers Program** is hitting its targets and moving forward to complete Mandatory Certification. There is currently a **New Faller Training Course** underway in Campbell River and the Program Director, **Bill Bolton**, has also taken responsibility to develop the Supervisor Standards and training. **All Fallers will either be certified or with a fixed date for certification by the end of July, 2006.**

**Forestry TruckSafe** has been active on many fronts and for a complete review subscribe to our bi-weekly electronic publication “Rumblings”. The principal focus has been on expanding the reach of the program with the **Peace Region Joint Safety Forum** and meetings on the Coast. The Action Plan is being actively pursued and we are coordinating responses from the sector on the difficult issues around **Hours of Service** for truck drivers.

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**COMING IN APRIL, MAY and JUNE:** The Council will be active in April, May and June attending and presenting at a number of scheduled forest sector and related events. This is in addition to the regularly scheduled meetings of the Council. As well, Maryanne Arcand has several Forestry TruckSafe related meetings that are set out in “Rumblings”.

- **Council of Forest Industries (COFI) 2006 Conference.** April 5-7, 2006. Kelowna. Council participating in trade show.
- **BC forestlands Safety Conference.** April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2006. Kamloops. Keith Rush, feature speaker on SAFE Companies.
- **Ministry of Forests Safety Seminar,** April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2006. Prince George. Tanner Elton Presenter.
- **Interior Logging Association (ILA) 48<sup>th</sup> Annual Trades Convention.** April 19-22. Lee Doney Keynote Speaker; Council participating in Trade Show.
- **Canada’s Safety, Health and Environmental Practitioners Conference. Kamloops.** April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2006. Tanner Elton presenter.
- **Helifor Safety Seminar.** May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2006. Presentation on SAFE Companies by Keith Rush.
- **Northwest Safety Summit.** May 13<sup>th</sup> 2006. Terrace. Sponsored by the NWLA and WFA. Council presenters include: Roger Harris on the role of the Ombudsman, Maryanne Arcand on Forestry TruckSafe, Keith Rush on SAFE Companies.
- **Petroleum Industry’s Annual Safety Seminar (PIASS):** May 2 – 5, 2006. Council representatives are presenting during the conference.
- **Vancouver Island Safety Conference – June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2006** Qualicum Beach. Tanner Elton and Bill Bolton presenting.
- **Forest Expo.** June 1-3. Prince George. Council involved in Seminars on TruckSafe, SAFE Companies, Shared Responsibility, and Trade Show.
- **2006 BC Community Forest Conference.** June 2-4, 2006. Keith Rush presenting on SAFE Companies and Council Work Plan.