

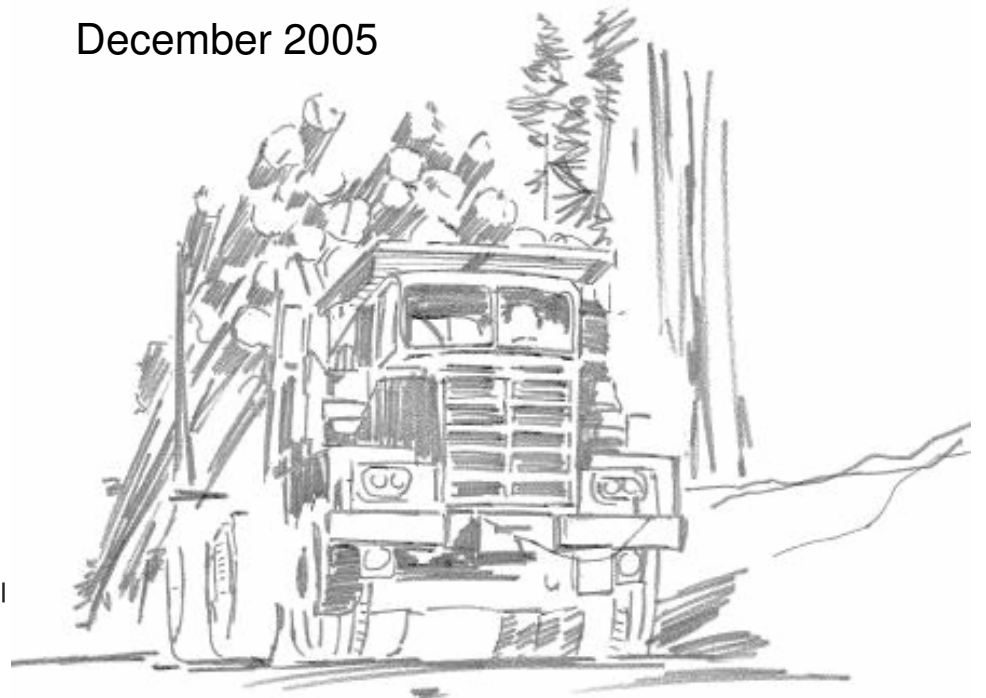


ON THE ROAD TO SAFETY

AN ACTION PLAN

to encourage safe drivers, safe trucks,
safe resource roads and safe highways
in the Forest Sector

December 2005



BC **Forest Safety** Council
Unsafe is Unacceptable

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

The first Forestry TruckSafe Summit was held in Prince George in June of this year. Its purpose was to pull together individuals from industry, government, communities and associations to consider what to do about the number of serious vehicle crashes that were routinely occurring in our industry.

We knew we had a problem and that it wasn't getting better.

As a result of that first meeting, we set the objective to develop an Action Plan to reduce vehicle crashes in our industry by improving the safety of drivers, vehicles and roads. We built on the many current projects and the substantial work that had already been done. We encouraged and learned from the advice and experience of those working in the industry.

We learned that concerns within the forestry sector were shared by others, and we established working relationships with the general trucking community, WorkSafeBC, ICBC and regional health authorities.

The result is this Action Plan. We consider it a good start. There remains much to be done.

I would like to personally thank the many individuals who gave of their time and expertise to assist our leadership teams and the many others who are involved in efforts to improve safety locally, provincially and federally.

The BC Forest Safety Council will continue to be actively involved to ensure that the Action Plan makes a difference. We will continue to be involved through our Forestry TruckSafe program and we will work with all other participants to move forward on the actions set out and to deal with new issues and concerns as they arise.

Our first and most important finding was that vehicle crashes can be avoided. By working together we can move toward the time when fatalities and serious injuries in our industry are not considered common place or inevitable.

We must all do our part.



Keith Playfair
Chair, TruckSafe Summit
Vice Chair, BC Forest Safety Council

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

As a result of the Summits, Forestry TruckSafe has been established as a long term initiative of the BC Forest Safety Council and I am honored to be its second director.

Janine Elo was the first, and her work in establishing the Initiative was vitally important to getting us to where we are.

We have also benefited from the work of WorkSafeBC and the broader TruckSafe initiative they have launched. In particular, we would like to acknowledge the tireless efforts of Roberta Sheng-Taylor.

Finally, we have benefited and will continue to benefit from the on-going work of the Forest Safety Council. The Council's work on training and certification and the development of the Qualified Companies Initiative will provide significant support for key areas of the Action Plan will become a reality.

The Forestry TruckSafe Initiative will also continue to be directly involved in the promotion of driver, road, and vehicle safety. Our Forestry TruckSafe Hotline (1-877-324-1212) is a first for the Council and will put us in the front line to assist with the identification of safety issues and get them to the right people.

I also look forward to working closely with Council members, particularly the logging associations, as to assisting in the development of safety programs and awareness among your members.

We expect to be working closely with our colleagues in other sectors and organizations to combine our efforts wherever possible particularly in those areas where forestry and other resource industries are part of our communities and frequently, our highways and municipal roads are resource roads, resource roads are community roads and living with each other takes on a very different meaning than it does in cities.

We will also be working closely on a number of regional initiatives as set out in the action plan and we expect that there will be others in the near future.



MaryAnne Arcand
Manager, Forestry TruckSafe
BC Forest Safety Council

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“On the Road to Safety” sets out an Action Plan for the forest sector in BC to “*promote safe drivers, safe vehicles, safe resource roads, safe conduct on public highways, and vehicle safety awareness generally in the forest sector*”.

Critical Findings:

The Action Plan first sets out eight critical findings that were used to guide its development. These are:

- Forestry vehicle crashes are preventable!
- Economic pressures and structural changes to the forest industry are having significant and adverse impacts on forest safety
- Insufficient coordination and cooperation are creating unsafe situations.
- Driving complex resource vehicles is not recognized for the skilled occupation that it is.
- The current system for managing with resources roads, highways and community roads is inadequate.
- The management and policing of resource roads is not effective and creates unsafe situations.
- The Mountain Pine Beetle Infestation is creating safety issues that are not being adequately addressed.
- Current and emerging technologies can improve safety within the forestry transportation sector. Their use and deployment should be encouraged.

Areas of Focus and Actions:

Actions have been organized into the five areas of focus followed by the Leadership Teams.

Responsibility and Accountability: This section deals with those actions affecting other areas of the BC Forest Safety Council’s work and other areas of government policy. Key Actions include:

- The need to develop a guidelines and procedures to make clear how shared responsibility for safety is to be managed within the sector.
- A review of forestry legislation to consider safety impacts, including measures that create unnecessary congestion and shorten the harvesting season.
- Development of key alliances with other organizations to promote the safety of drivers and roads.

- A review of the current Mountain Pine Beetle strategy to ensure that the safety impacts of the infestation are properly represented.
- The development of a Workforce Development Strategy for the Forest Sector.

Roads and Maintenance: This section deals with the safety of resource roads. Key Actions include:

- The need for a BC Resource Roads Act
- A review of First Nations issues related to community access and safety for their communities located on resource roads.
- A 1-800 Hotline to deal with immediate safety issues on roads.
- A number of immediate actions to clarify jurisdiction on resource roads and cost sharing of maintenance.

Compliance and Enforcement: This section deals with the need to ensure effective policing and interagency communication. Key actions include:

- The need to immediately clarify responsibility for the policing of resources roads.

Education and Communication: This section deals with driver training and qualification and public education. Key actions include:

- Support for higher driver standards and a graduated licencing for commercial drivers generally.
- The development of training and qualification standards for drivers of logging trucks, Articulated Rock Trucks (ART), All Terrain Vehicles (ATV's) and driving on resource roads.
- Programs to educate the public on sharing the road with resource vehicles and driving on resource roads.

Vehicles & Technology: This section underlines the importance of technology for improved vehicle and road safety.

The Way Ahead

This final chapter sets out how the Council will follow-up on the Action Plan, and keep it current.

ON THE ROAD TO SAFETY

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INTRODUCTION

Origin and purpose

Origin: This Action Plan is the result of thoughtful collaboration by many engaged and committed individuals. Over the last several months more than 70 people, representing all industry sectors, met in two major Summits and also spent countless additional hours before and after contributing time, expertise and experience. The work of the Summits and the leadership teams is set out in several companion documents.¹

Purpose: The purpose of the Action Plan was set at the first Summit:

“To develop a comprehensive action plan to promote safe drivers, safe vehicles, safe resource roads, safe conduct on public highways and vehicle safety awareness generally in the forest sector.”

The longer-term goal, consistent with the mandate and goal of the BC Forest Safety Council, is to significantly reduce the number of forestry-related crashes, fatalities and injuries.

An Ongoing Process: The Action Plan is much like the forest sector itself — dynamic, resourceful and a work in progress. It is not a static document. We will add to it and make adjustments as we move forward.

It’s important to emphasize that this was not just another initiative that would meet, consider, recommend and disband. Forestry TruckSafe is an ongoing initiative of the BC Forest Safety Council, and the Council is committed to ensuring the Action Plan does not sit on a shelf. Our commitment is to rigorous and systematic follow-up.

Structure

An Overview: The Action Plan starts with a chapter setting out the critical findings which emerged from our deliberations. The overview provides context and direction for the following substantive chapters.

Where the rubber hits the road: The Plan then sets out specific actions organized on the basis of the five focus areas identified at the Summits and used by the leadership teams. These are:

- **Responsibility and Accountability**
- **Roads and Maintenance**
- **Compliance and Enforcement**
- **Education and Communication**
- **Vehicles and Technology**

¹ These companion documents are available on our website at http://www.bcforestsafesafe.org/trucksafe/reports_publications.asp

Under each area of focus, there is a mix of immediate, near-term and long-term actions. Each action is clearly described, the responsible organization, agency and/or group is identified and a timetable for implementation/action is set out.

The actions that have been identified are diverse, from recommendations for broad policy and legislative changes to calls for action on specifics such as forestry road maintenance and vehicle/equipment requirements. Some matters relate only to a particular region. Some actions are part of broader initiatives that are being dealt with by the Forest Safety Council, while others raise issues for the trucking industry in general.

Responsibility for follow-up is being organized as follows:

- **The BC Forest Safety Council** will assume responsibility to follow-up with those matters that are referred to government, regulatory agencies, companies and associations that have the mandate to take the recommended actions. The Council will also take direct responsibility for a number of specific actions that would be best pursued as part of its ongoing activities.
- **WorkSafeBC TruckSafe** is a broader initiative being managed by WorkSafeBC, who will assume responsibility for those matters that would be best dealt with as part of the broader trucking sector.
- **Local and Regional Initiatives** are currently being managed by local groups in partnership. The Forest Safety Council will be taking the lead to encourage more support for local initiatives.

Where do we go from here?: This final chapter sets out the steps that are underway to ensure the Action Plan is taken into account and that there is systematic follow-up of its proposed actions.

CRITICAL FINDINGS

During Summit deliberations, common themes and concerns surfaced in our general discussions and in the more focused work of the leadership teams. As these were raised and repeated, it became clear there were a number of shared conclusions — or, as we refer to them here, “critical findings” — that had to be taken into account in developing the Action Plan.

These eight “Critical Findings” informed our discussions and provide a foundation for the Action Plan. Except for the first one, they are not presented in any particular order or rank.

First Critical Finding:

Forestry vehicle crashes are preventable!

Ours is a dangerous industry and forestry vehicles contribute to this danger. Currently, it is also an industry where drivers are frequently injured, often seriously, and sometimes killed. This need not be the case. Ours can become an industry in which worker safety is an overriding priority, and this is nowhere more apparent or important than when it comes to our drivers and the roads they drive on. By taking the actions in the critical areas listed below, we can start to move from where we are to where we want to be.

We need to start by refusing to ever accept that vehicle crashes, injuries and fatalities are inherently part of our industry. **A “culture of safety” must develop in BC’s forest industry.**

A culture of safety and good safety practices are not one and the same.

Good safety practices are actions that can be regulated and enforced, such as wearing safety gear, certification of skills, or having safety policies in place. Forest industry workers comply because of the risk of penalty for non-compliance. However, no amount of enforcement can create safe conditions for our workers.

A true safety culture operates quite differently.

A culture of safety is established when people involved in the forest industry engage in good safety practices because they want to, because they believe in the value of safety. They practice safety. They breathe safety. They speak freely to others about doing the same. Managers will not create unsafe conditions for workers, and workers refuse to work unsafely or work in unsafe conditions.

A culture is based on shared values. It is supported by guidelines, regulations and laws, but its origins are much deeper. Adherence to a culture of safety is essentially voluntary, because the people involved personally see the value in it, resulting in changes of attitude and safer choices being made.

We have a lot of work to do. The forest industry must put good safety practices and industry-wide standards in place before the cultural shift can take place.

For truck safety, we also need to deal with mythology and misinformation about safe practices, such as the widely-held belief among truckers that seatbelt use is unsafe. As well, there are many other contributing factors related to road construction and maintenance, enforcement and compliance, hours of work, rates, jurisdictional gaps and much more. But it all starts with the belief that fatalities and serious injuries can be prevented — and the resolve to do something about it. Forestry TruckSafe's mandate is to turn that around, to consider crashes as being preventable, and to create a working environment that's safe and healthy for all concerned. Unsafe IS Unacceptable!

Second Critical Finding:

Economic pressures and structural changes to the forest industry are having significant and adverse impacts on forest safety.

Throughout our deliberations, frequent references were made to issues and situations that went well beyond the Summit's more immediate focus on drivers, vehicles and roads. While these are linked to broader concerns and trends, they are nonetheless important and need to be taken into account if we are to fully understand the complexities and causes of the industry's unacceptable safety record.

First among these were economic concerns. When asked at the Summit the single most important change that would contribute to safety, several people said: "End the softwood lumber dispute with the United States." We must not underestimate the impact and ongoing pressure this trade dispute is having. Many of our companies have had their markets disrupted and their margins shaved to the bone. Uncertainty and financial pressure affects everything, including safety. This has gone on for too long, and we must acknowledge that safety has been negatively impacted.

The changing nature of the industry is also a factor that is having an indirect, but nonetheless significant, impact on safety. Drivers and many other workers in the sector are now employed as contractors with more responsibility, less certainty and less return. This multi-layered industry, with fewer large companies at the top and more small contractors on the ground, is creating issues about how to effectively deliver safety programs and ensure worker safety. It begs the question: "Who is responsible for what?"

Finally, the rate of unrelenting and ongoing change within the sector is also a factor. Continuous change and crisis management has become the industry norm. This has consequences in terms of competing priorities and demands on the industry. The resilience of the industry is constantly being taxed and tested. We have to ensure that worker safety gets the priority it requires and doesn't get sidelined or lost in the mix.

**Third Critical Finding:
*Insufficient coordination and cooperation are creating unsafe situations.***

This applies to coordination, communication and collaboration among companies, levels of government, regulatory agencies and industry associations.

Far too frequently participants described situations where the left hand does not know what the right hand is doing — or, in some cases, that there even is a left hand. When one organization is convinced that safety responsibility lies with another, and that second organization just as clearly neither accepts nor assumes that responsibility, we have a problem.

With many different agencies and decision-makers, drivers moving between regions and multiple users from different companies, effective responsibility for the safety of drivers, vehicles and roads has become clouded or even lost entirely.

This confusion is not limited to communication and coordination within industry. We need to do a much better job at linking our forestry safety issues with those of our communities, regional government and health care providers.

**Fourth Critical Finding:
*Driving complex resource vehicles is not recognized for the skilled occupation that it is.***

Our drivers should be recognized and treated as the skilled professionals they are, supported by appropriate training and certification.

Driving large and complex vehicles over often difficult roads in frequently adverse conditions requires skill, experience and judgment. Loading a logging truck, taking the load from a steep, gravel resource road through a local town onto a highway to a mill yard and then unloading, should be treated as a skilled activity that requires training and qualification.

We must recognize the stresses and pressures that are routinely put on our drivers and ensure they are taken into account. We need to treat our drivers with respect.

We also need to recognize that the stress and conditions of driving create issues related to fatigue and substance abuse. We need to be frank and open about these issues.

We must also start to pay attention to the many reports that have called for higher levels of qualification, better testing and targeted training.

Fifth Critical Finding:

The current system for managing with resources roads, highways and community roads is inadequate.

Roads dominated much of the discussion at the Summits. If we can ensure safe roads and safe behavior on roads, we will have gone a long way toward reaching our goal of zero crashes.

The forest industry's transportation infrastructure now includes resource roads, regional/municipal roads and public highways. Increasingly, resource roads also connect communities, support recreational use and are used by other resource industries.

This new reality has created safety issues that are not effectively dealt with by current systems and procedures. Greater interaction between resource vehicles and the general public has dramatically increased the potential for crashes, fatalities and injuries.

Unprecedented increases in hauling logs, chips and wood products — in part due to the Mountain Pine Beetle infestation — coupled with expansion of the oil, gas and mining industries, has exacerbated an already dangerous situation to the point of being unmanageable and unsafe under current regulations and practices. Multi-user resource roads have little to no enforcement when it comes to driving-related issues like speeding, levels of maintenance, "Rules of the Road" and radio protocols.

The forest industry also shares roads, on and off highway, with private vehicles, other industry transport, recreational users, support and crew vehicles, tourists and others.

Of particular concern are the many First Nations communities for whom resource roads often provide the only access to service centres. Statistics on crashes and injury, already high in rural areas, are much higher for First Nations. This should be a matter of concern to us all. The industry must develop ways to safely share use of resource roads and highways with all other users.

We must also acknowledge that road safety in the forest sector is about much more than "bush" roads and resource-hauling vehicles. Statistics show that more members of the public have been killed in "interface" crashes with forestry hauling trucks than truck drivers themselves. As public highways become more and more part of the forest industry's infrastructure, we need to ensure the public understand how to respect these large vehicles and avoid dangerous and potentially lethal interaction with them.

Sixth Critical Finding:

The management and policing of resource roads is not effective and creates unsafe situations.

Clear and well-understood procedures for the construction, maintenance and policing of resource roads are essential. Responsibility should be clearly assigned and understood. In some cases the current system is working reasonably well, particularly on roads that are being looked after by the area licensee and where the only use of those roads is for that company to get its vehicles and crews in and out, and then deal with the road when the job is finished. There are, however, many other instances where the current system is not working.

For those roads with multiple resource users, community and recreation use, the lack of accountability for policing is, frankly, alarming. It is of little good to have a posted speed limit for resource roads if there are no signs, radar guns or police.. It's of little comfort that the RCMP will attend and investigate when a fatal accident occurs. This is a situation that must be addressed

Seventh Critical Finding:

The Mountain Pine Beetle infestation is creating safety issues that are not being adequately addressed.

The enormous implications of the havoc wrought by the Mountain Pine Beetle on the forests of the BC interior are only now beginning to be fully understood. It is important that the safety impacts are taken into account.

Dramatic increases in the allowable cut result in increases in harvesting, and traffic on forest roads and highways. In turn, this is resulting in overuse of certain road systems, increasingly compressed schedules, a shortage of skilled drivers and more vehicles on the affected area's community roads and highways. These circumstances, combined with jurisdictional gaps and a lack of uniform road construction and maintenance standards, have created a deadly environment for forest industry workers and the public.

While details of government's response are still being developed, it is clear the beetle infestation is going to have profound and lasting effects on virtually everything in the affected regions. It has also created a number of immediate safety concerns that need to be better taken into account as we move forward.

Eighth Critical Finding:

Current and emerging technologies can improve safety within the forestry transportation sector. Their use and deployment should be encouraged.

Trucks are getting bigger, more complex and more powerful. Available technology can play a significant role in ensuring that vehicles are safely maintained and operated. Technology can be used to track and monitor vehicles, improve awareness of driver fatigue, ensure better communication and much more.

Technology can also be used to increase the length of the harvesting season.

We need to be systematically considering new and emerging technologies, and adopting them where practical.

WHERE THE RUBBER HITS THE ROAD

The critical findings provide the foundation for the Action Plan. The following sections set out the many and varied actions that need to be taken if we are to achieve our objectives. These have been organized into five areas of focus: Responsibility and Accountability; Roads and Maintenance; Compliance and Enforcement; Education and Communication; and, Vehicles and Enforcement.

Responsibility and Accountability

“Shared responsibility” was the focus area that dealt with the broader issues of concern that are important to be included in the Action Plan but either touched on other Council initiatives or were part of initiatives being pursued elsewhere.

The following are considered:

- **Shared responsibility must become a reality;**
- **Healthy and safe workers and communities require a healthy industry;**
- **Laws and regulations governing the forest sector must be reviewed for their potential impacts on safety;**
- **The Mountain Pine Beetle strategy must incorporate measures to deal with the safety impacts of the infestation;**
- **The safety of drivers, trucks and roads requires collaboration and alliances with communities and other sectors; and**
- **The forest sector needs a workforce development strategy.**
- **We need to frankly and openly discuss and deal with substance use and abuse in the forestry sector.**

Each of these areas is considered in turn.

Shared responsibility must become a reality.

“Shared responsibility and accountability” has been regularly discussed and mentioned in reports on what needs to be done. It now must be put into practice.

Far too often discussion of shared responsibility is a preface for a call for someone else or some other organization to do something. Finger pointing is common, but never in front of a mirror.

Some managers point to worker error as a primary cause for the current situation without any consideration of their responsibilities for those same

“Far too often discussion of shared responsibility is a preface for a call for someone else or some other organization to do something. Finger pointing is common, but never in front of a mirror.”

workers. “He’s not my employee”; “He works for a contractor” — the descriptions may be accurate, but they are merely factors to take into account and do not absolve anyone of their safety responsibilities.

We also hear, “Don’t blame the worker!”, as if there are no circumstances where worker behavior and conduct can be taken into account. Workers must share responsibility for their safety and those with whom they work.

And everyone wants the government and the Workers’ Compensation Board to tell others to shape up.

*The Health and Safety Accord of the BC Forest Industry*² got it right. The section on “Shared Responsibility” is set out in the box in the margin.

We are all in this together: owners, licensees, contractors, workers, government agencies, industry associations. If we’re going to change the safety culture of our industry and make safety the overriding priority, we must work together, and we must develop a clear and unambiguous understanding of what — in practical terms — this collaboration means.

IMMEDIATE ACTION: Clearly define safety responsibilities in the forest sector.

DESCRIPTION: The BC Forest Safety Council, through its Qualified Companies project, will accelerate its work on “Shared Responsibility and Accountability”. Working with all sector stakeholders, the Council will develop clear and detailed descriptions of the roles and responsibilities of key parties within the sector and set out how safety responsibility is to be managed.

Responsibilities will be expressed in a series of Industry Recommended Practices (IRPs) that will include input and review by WorkSafeBC and government agencies.

TIMING: This work is currently underway by the Council and is key to industry taking a greater role in assuming direct responsibility for its safety record.

Shared Responsibility:

- We are, collectively and individually, responsible for the safety of all workers and all worksites.
- Individuals must assume responsibility for their own safety and the safety of co-workers by: following all safety rules, procedures and practices; refusing to perform unsafe work; and taking collective responsibility for the unsafe conduct of others.
- Tenure holders, licensees and prime contractors must take a leadership role in ensuring worker health and safety and assuring accountability for safety on the worksite.

Healthy and safe workers and communities require a healthy industry.

Economics affect everything, and safety is no exception. While part of a much larger picture, we must recognize that the severe economic pressures being absorbed by the sector can and are affecting safety.

The softwood lumber impasse has gone on for too long. The uncertainty permeates every part of the sector, including workers. A healthy sector allows for longer-term planning, and that includes matters affecting safety. While not obviously a direct consideration, our governments, negotiators, and their myriad of advisors must understand that there is more than just tariffs at stake. Worker and worksite safety is also affected.

² The full text of “The Health and Safety Accord” is presented on the back cover of this report.

Economic pressures and uncertainty have impact

At the end of the first TruckSafe Summit, participants were asked what they considered the single most important change that would positively improve safety. Several stated: “Settle with the Americans.” Clearly, the concern is that the current situation is potentially killing more than companies. Economic uncertainty and the demand for efficiencies is also adversely impacting worker safety.

The forest sector is often referred to as the engine of the BC resource economy. Most recently, we are sharing this designation with a rejuvenated mining industry and a growing oil and gas sector. Taken together, the clear message is that our resource economy is vibrant and will be key to our future prosperity for years to come.

With this also comes responsibility to ensure the employment that is created and maintained by the sector is capable of sustaining workers, their families and the communities in which they live.

As the sector moved to more piece work, shorter contracts, greater demands for productivity through different shift arrangements and the extension of the workday, and the compression of the available work into increasingly short periods, the quality of the work has been affected.

And so has safety.

While we understand that the link to safety is perhaps indirect, it is there nonetheless.

IMMEDIATE ACTION: Take steps to ensure that the impact of the current economic uncertainty on safety is understood and taken into account. Governments and the forest industry must work together to create meaningful employment capable of sustaining workers, their families and communities.

DESCRIPTION: Direct action on these issues is difficult. The Council and others concerned with the sustainability of resource-dependent communities should avail themselves of every opportunity to make the connection between safety, economics and community stability.

Laws and regulations governing the forest sector must be reviewed for their potential impacts on safety.

During Summit deliberations, two concerns were raised that related to the inadvertent creation of potentially unsafe conditions through the management of the harvest.

Quarterly stumpage rate adjustments have resulted in the artificial compression of harvesting activities into narrow timeframes that could, under a different system, be spread out over a longer period of time. This has been referred to as “stumpage bingo”. Concern with the current situation has been raised on several occasions with the Ministry of Forests.

We also need to do everything possible to extend the operating season and to spread the work out over longer periods of time. The longer the season, the less need for extended daily hours.

While it’s understood that the setting and administration of stumpage rates is complex and is tied up with trade concerns and other issues, this situation can no longer be ignored. Deal with it now.

Forestry traffic greater than ever on resource roads and highways

Timber extraction due to the Mountain Pine Beetle infestation has put 10-to-20 times as many logging trucks and other forestry traffic on some interior resource roads and highways than was the case just a year or two ago.

Many resource roads now carry more logging and industrial traffic per hour than highways in the region; highways have become resource roads where loaded logging trucks, other commercial traffic and private vehicles compete for space. And along those roads are First Nations and other small communities – people and families.

The key to sharing our roads and highways safely is to stretch out hauling seasons, distribute log-hauling more evenly over the road network, and coordinate projected road traffic volumes with construction and maintenance requirements.

IMMEDIATE ACTION: Address “stumpage bingo” and the extension of the season as part of the review of forestry regulations.

DESCRIPTION: The Ministry of Forests and Range has undertaken to review its legislation, regulations and practices to determine if there are direct or indirect impacts on safety. This review should include an analysis of the impacts of “stumpage bingo” and the consideration of alternative systems for the determination of stumpage rates that will not result in creating conditions where harvesting activities are unnecessarily compressed. Consideration should also be given to how current regulations may impact the length of the harvesting season.

TIMING: This work is currently underway by the Ministry of Forests.

The Mountain Pine Beetle strategy must incorporate measures to deal with the safety impacts of the infestation.

The full impact of the Mountain Pine Beetle on the interior and northern forestry industry cannot be underestimated. While this impact is confined to one region of the province, its impacts are so enormous as to affect the entire sector.

Much time and effort has been spent developing a comprehensive plan; not enough attention has been paid to the safety impacts of the infestation.

Some of these impacts are dealt with in the Action Plan under other areas of concern. However, a review of the current strategies and the allocation of resources is needed that takes safety impacts into account.

A separate report on this issue was prepared and should be reviewed with the provincial and federal officials responsible.

In particular, the following areas are of concern:

- The impact of increased harvesting levels on infrastructure that was not designed or resourced for these volumes.
- The impact of these increased activities on the workforce, and the need for accelerated training and development.
- The impact of increased volumes on regional highways and community roads.

The strategy should:

- Allocate resources to deal with immediate infrastructure requirements to ensure that roads are able to deal with the additional traffic.
- Support training of drivers specifically for the affected areas.
- Assign resources to support community efforts to create road-use committees to coordinate efforts in areas where increased activities will be the highest.

IMMEDIATE ACTION: Amend current Pine Beetle strategies to deal with the safety impacts of the infestation.

DESCRIPTION: Current plans and resource allocations are under review. The BC Forest Safety Council will work with the Ministry of Forests and Range and review the Action Plan and the assessment of the impact on safety. The Council will involve those member associations most directly affected in this review.

TIMING: Preliminary discussions have been held. A copy of the assessment of safety impacts will be completed and sent to the ministry. A meeting with the Ministry of Forests will be arranged for early January. The necessary adjustments to the current plans will be set out.

The safety of drivers, trucks and roads requires collaboration and alliances with communities and other sectors.

During development of the Action Plan, it became apparent that our concerns were shared by others outside the industry and that we needed to work more closely together. Two areas of potential collaboration were particularly evident: the health authorities in resource areas of the province and ICBC.

On a regional basis, the increased activity of the oil and gas sector has brought the TruckSafe initiative into contact with ENFORM, the health and safety organization of the oil and gas industry in Canada. Potential for coordinated action exists in areas where the two industries are now sharing the same territory and infrastructure, particularly in the region around Fort St. John.

IMMEDIATE ACTION: Develop strategic alliances with the Northern Health Authority, ICBC, WorkSafeBC and ENFORM.

DESCRIPTION: The BC Forest Safety Council will develop collaborative efforts to further the objectives of the Action Plan.

In the case of ICBC, the agreement will focus on increasing ICBC's work to promote safety on resource roads and to extend its activities on highways to include steps to educate the general public on sharing the road with resource vehicles.

With WorkSafeBC, the agreement will focus on collaboration and cooperation re: issues common to trucking in general, such as fatigue, hours of service and compliance with existing regulations, as well as other unsafe working conditions being addressed through the larger provincial TruckSafe program.

The agreement with Northern Health will focus on collaboration to reduce the number of crashes in the north, including on resource roads, and to deal with issues that overlap with their crash reduction strategy.

With ENFORM, the focus will be on developing a Resource Industry Safety Coordination and Improvement Committee in the Fort St. John area, targeted initially at resource road safety.

TIMING: This work is currently underway by the Council.

The forest sector needs a workforce development strategy.

The forest sector workforce is aging. There is a shortage of qualified drivers and loggers, and too much turnover. Trained workers are moving to other sectors, and there is trouble attracting younger workers. These comments and more were made during the Summits, and worker development and worker shortages have been identified by several industry associations.

But there is currently no workforce development plan for the industry. We have only limited information on workforce demographics, experience, turnover, etc. Basic information is needed by the industry.

The linkage to safety is clear. With a renewed emphasis on workforce training and development of worker certification and qualification requirements, we need better information on the potential impacts on the sector.

A strategic plan for workforce development — including recruitment, quality training and professionalizing of the industry — must be developed. Potential “pools” of entrants into the forest-sector workforce need to be identified and recruited. Part of this plan should consider the greater involvement of First Nations in the sector.

This is not a short-term undertaking — similar plans for the construction and hospitality sectors took several years to develop. Once developed, the plan must be kept current.

IMMEDIATE ACTION: Develop a comprehensive workforce development plan for the forest sector.

DESCRIPTION: The BC Forest Safety Council, working with industry associations, will put together a proposal for preparation of a workforce development plan for the sector. This will involve discussions with the Industry Training Authority, Ministry of Labour and Ministry of Forests.

TIMING: Some initial work has been done on workforce development, but this is a new area for the sector and will take time to prepare both the approach and the ultimate plan.

We need to frankly and openly discuss and deal with substance use and abuse in the forestry sector.

Frequent references were made at the Summits to substance abuse as an important contributing factor to the number of crashes. The issue of substance use and abuse has also been raised as a concern in other parts of the industry.

There appears to be a consensus that drug and alcohol use needs to be addressed as we take action to improve worker and worksite safety. There also seems great reluctance to do so.

This is an issue important to vehicle safety, but it needs to be looked at on a sector-wide basis. It also needs to be considered broadly to take into account the circumstances that contribute to the use of substances, legal and illegal, in the industry. We also must reflect on how best to provide assistance and support to workers and employers.

IMMEDIATE ACTION: Develop a strategy to deal with the safety impacts of substance use and abuse in the forest sector.

DESCRIPTION: The BC Forest Safety Council, working with industry associations, health authorities, WorkSafeBC and government agencies, will initiate a thorough review of substance use in the forest sector. The review will include consideration of current efforts in BC and the experience of other industries and jurisdictions. The intention is to develop a better understanding of the issue and prepare options for the consideration of the Council, industry and government on practical steps that can be taken to reduce the incidence and impact of substance use in the industry.

TIMING: This review will be initiated in early 2006, to be completed later in the year.

When public roads become resource roads

“Is it just me, or are there more logging trucks than there used to be?” That’s a question being asked all across BC.

In terms of numbers, there are no more logging trucks than there were 10 years ago. The change is in the visibility of those trucks, and how often they’re now interacting with the general public on municipal streets and highways.

Logging trucks used to be “in the bush”, hauling from the harvesting site to sawmills close by, and were not often seen on public roads mingling with everyday traffic. Changes in the forest industry — including the softwood dispute, government timber sales processes, the Mountain Pine Beetle infestation, wood use and much more — have radically altered the way forest products are moved around today.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the use of public roadways for log hauling. Heavy, long trucks are lined up at city intersections amidst commuters, bicycles and pedestrians. City infrastructures are incompatible with heavy industrial use, and resulting routing issues can turn residential streets into resource roads.

The potential for catastrophic interaction between resource vehicles and the public is enormous — for drivers, their passengers and property owners. This year alone there have been several incidents where loads of logs have ended up on someone’s front lawn in the middle of a town. What if the kids had been playing there? What if the homeowner had been out mowing the lawn?

Roads and Maintenance

The design, care and keeping of resource roads stood out as being the area of most concern and critical importance during the Summits. In many circumstances, the current system for maintaining and managing resource roads is not adequate to ensure user safety.

Far too often organizations and individuals must cope with a creaking system that is showing its age. We need to ensure that these roads are maintained and managed with the safety of all users firmly in mind. We also need to ensure that we acknowledge the significant differences among resource roads, and we must encourage flexibility, innovation and responsiveness into the current system.

It’s time for a thorough overhaul of the system.

That, however, will take time. While the overhaul is occurring, a number of immediate measures are required to compensate for some of the issues currently being experienced.

This is an area where a good deal of creative action has already been taken by individuals and companies. Notable are:

- Implementing road marshals (Canfor, Babine, others)
- Standardized signage efforts
- Vehicle Identification Number plates in some regions
- Standardized radio-calling procedures in some regions

In terms of the Action Plan, the following are considered:

- **A new Resource Roads Act for BC**
- **A First Nations resource road review**
- **A safety hotline to identify areas of critical and immediate concern**
- **Maintaining a compendium of “good practices”**
- **Finalizing and distributing Top 10 Rules of the Road**
- **Creation of Resource road maintenance standards**
- **Creation of immediate road maintenance cost-sharing mechanism**
- **Adopting vehicle identification plates for trucks on resource roads**

A BC Resource Roads Act.

We need to sort out the confusion. A clear regulatory regime for resource roads is essential to supporting safety.

When a resource road becomes a highway

Resource roads tend to be managed by the major user, usually the licensee with cutting rights in the area. This is changing. With the take back of 20% of current tenures, there are more roads being used by multiple users from different companies, and with mining and oil and gas activity increasing, there can be traffic from these users as well.

In addition, in some locations the resource road is used by other users. Often it provides access to recreation areas, or back country access. And for some, it's the road home. In many areas, First Nations communities are situated at the end of a resource road — a route which provides their only access to medical services, education and basic supply needs.

With multiple resource users and others on the road for recreation and community access, there is little the licensee can do beyond controlling their own vehicles. Ultimately, responsibility for policing the roads appears to fall to the Ministry of Forests, but there is little attempt to police the roads. A speed limit with no enforcement is of little effect.

However, it's clear that if there is a fatal crash, the RCMP will be there to investigate.

Consideration of pulling all of the diverse provisions dealing with resource roads into one Act has been on-going for some time. Most recently, the Forest Practices Board in a special report on access roads, called for new resource roads legislation.³ It's time to turn discussion into action.

As a matter of priority, the Ministries of Forests and Transportation need to develop a new Resource Roads Act. This Act must deal with the following issues:

- Classification of resource roads
- A workable system for sharing maintenance costs
- Clear responsibility for policing and how it will be paid for
- Maintenance standards.

In developing the Act, the ministries must involve the following stakeholders:

- Licensees
- Contractors
- BC Forest Safety Council
- Other resource sectors
- Local communities
- First Nations.

IMMEDIATE ACTION: The Ministries of Forests and Range, Transportation and Highways, Agriculture and Lands, and others will develop a comprehensive Resource Road Act for British Columbia.

DESCRIPTION: The Act will pull together all provisions dealing with resource roads and attend to the issues set out above. Development of the Act will be preceded by a round of consultations that will ensure input from all relevant stakeholders.

TIMING: Development of the Act should begin immediately. Target for introduction into the Legislature should be the fall of 2006.

Review of First Nations and resource road issues.

During the Summits, it became clear there was one group for which interest in the safety of resource roads was more significant than all others — First Nations. First Nations communities situated on resource roads experience the issues related to resource roads on a daily basis. Indeed, the existence of those communities is, in many cases, a key

³ Special Report: "Access Management in British Columbia -- Issues and Opportunities" FPB/SR/23, November 2005

B.C. has more than 400,000 kms of forest roads compared to approximately 45,000 kms of provincial highways, a ratio of almost 10 to 1. The Mountain Pine Beetle infestation and other resource expansion will see the development another 20,000 – 30,000 kms of forest roads per year for the next 10 years

This extensive network of roads ... is managed inconsistently and with little coordination between resource sectors.

Currently seven different laws govern the authorization and monitoring of resource roads, all with different rules, standards and fees for road users. It is possible to have two roads side-by-side in the same area, with completely different safety, environmental and access standards to govern them.

Forest Practices Board, December 7, 2005: Board Recommends Improved Management of Resource Roads

contributing factor to the industrial use of the area, as the access was already there.

In almost all cases, the First Nations community was there first, and the original road was built to accommodate their traffic. Logging and other resources developed later, using roads that were designed for light private vehicle traffic, not multitudes of heavy loads of logs and ore.

The interface between resource-related vehicles and private citizen vehicles has increased substantially over the past 10 years, but little to nothing has been done in terms of education and prevention for First Nations communities.

Exacerbating the situation is the fact that many First Nations are now logging contractors themselves, holding timber licences and providing employment for their own community members and others. Traffic flow on the resource roads now goes both ways, with forestry workers being residents coming and going from the community, as well as coming and going from the nearest town to work for the First Nation. In addition, treaty settlements, such as Nisga'a, are including road building and access in their negotiations. The Nisga'a road to Kincolith has connected that community by land to the outside for the first time in history, creating a corridor for tourists, industry, hunters and fishers that simply did not exist five years ago. Few people in Kincolith had vehicles or even knew how to drive; now they have a three-hour commute to Terrace over rough road, in harsh conditions, between logging trucks, road building equipment and other vehicles.

Not enough attention has been paid to the consequences of increased resource road usage to First Nations communities. The BC Forest Safety Council and Forestry TruckSafe will work with First Nations toward safety on resource roads for their community members by including First Nations representatives in discussions and initiatives, and advocating for resource road standards, better maintenance and enforcement. Safety on resource roads is not just for log truckers.

IMMEDIATE ACTION: The BC Forest Safety Council will consult with a number of Tribal Councils that have communities on resource roads to develop a strategy for issues specific to these communities.

DESCRIPTION: A joint strategy engaging First Nations governments, Tribal Councils and the forest industry at large will be facilitated by the BC Forest Safety Council, with the goals of advocating for better resource road standards, enforcement, maintenance standards and practices, and improved communication and consultation with First Nations communities prior to granting harvesting licences that increase traffic on roads leading to First Nations communities. The ultimate objective will be a reduction in deaths and injuries for First Nations people living on BC resource roads.

TIMING: Consultation and engagement of stakeholders will begin in January 2006.

A Forestry TruckSafe Safety Hotline to identify areas of critical and immediate concern.

People see unsafe actions and behavior all the time, but don't know who to report it to. Numerous calls and inquiries to the Forestry TruckSafe office have led to the conclusion that there is a need for a safety hotline, which people in the industry and the general public can call to report concerns about roads, working conditions or unsafe driving practices by forest-related vehicles, without threat of repercussion or being labeled a "whistleblower". As well, the hotline needs to be staffed and maintained by an objective agency, one that has no vested interest in anything other than safety in the industry.

IMMEDIATE ACTION: The Forestry TruckSafe office in Prince George will open a toll-free safety hotline to receive reports of unsafe conditions or practices in the forest industry and transportation.

DESCRIPTION: The safety hotline will receive calls, screen them for accuracy and evidence, and then forward the information to the appropriate enforcement agency, mill, vehicle owner or other agency or company for further action. Hotline staff will follow-up to see what has been done and, where appropriate or reasonable, report back to the person making the initial call.

TIMING: Started. The hotline number is 1-877-324-1212.

Maintaining a compendium of "good practices".

During group and Summit discussions, references were often made to good practices underway in certain places — from mill unloading procedures to vehicle identification on a particular road system; road monitoring and discipline by a certain licensee to incident tracking and monitoring systems by others. Almost every time someone would suggest, "what we need is a way to...", someone else would know where that practice is successfully being done.

A compendium of "good practices" or "industry recognized practices" (IRPs) needs to be made available to all companies and agencies looking to improve their procedures in order to enhance safety. The compendium should be categorized, user-friendly, and provide quick access to relevant information.

The BC Forest Safety Council website (www.bcforestsafe.org) currently has two sections under the TruckSafe program page – Good Industry Practices, and Information Clearinghouse. Good Industry Practices are practices which have been tried and found effective, and are recommended by not only the company involved, but by others as a good model. The Good Practices page must be kept up to date and expanded in order to become a valuable resource.

The Information Clearinghouse is a little different in that it passes along industry information, new developments, technologies and other pieces of information that may be of interest or helpful. It will include management-

Top 10 Rules of the Road

1. Use your radio as an aid to prevent accidents, but do not depend on it to save lives — nearly all forest roads are radio-assisted not radio-controlled, so not all road users have a radio.
2. All loaded vehicles call (two km. intervals) and empties listen, unless you are positive the vehicle in front of you is calling for you. Loaded vehicles should announce any stoppages and the duration, as well as subsequent starts.
3. Call empty when entering a new road, when there is a posted call sign or when you are unsure of the exact location of oncoming traffic. Wide loaded low-beds call odd, empty kilometres and identify “wide load”.
4. All traffic must drive on the right side of the road.
5. Switch channels only when you can see the road frequency change sign.
6. Observe proper radio use protocols — absolutely no visiting/chatter or foul language tolerated on the road channel.
7. Empty vehicles use designated pullouts to clear loads and allow time to sit if necessary.
8. Use headlights at all times, but point them away from oncoming traffic in the dark when in a pullout.
9. Always drive according to conditions, particularly hazardous ones such as dust, snow, soft subgrade or areas of high non-radio assisted traffic.
10. Expect and prepare for the unexpected — road conditions can change without warning.

type information (e.g. how to save on fuel costs), regulations in plain English, etc., as well as a package for forestry-hauling companies about operating in BC.

IMMEDIATE ACTION: Update the Good Industry Practices page on the TruckSafe website.

DESCRIPTION: Research and verify suggested practices as to their effectiveness and success. Add to Good Industry Practices page, and highlight in Rumblings newsletter.

TIMING: Immediate and ongoing.

Finalizing and distributing Top 10 Rules of the Road.

Standardized “Rules of the Road” are critical because of recent changes in how forest products are hauled, particularly in the north and interior. Trucks and drivers are much more mobile than they used to be, going to different regions to haul, hauling for different mills, hauling across regional and provincial boundaries, and hauling from places they’ve never before been. As well, the shortage of trucks and drivers means that men and equipment are coming from other provinces and jurisdictions. The resulting confusion in radio-calling procedures and road-system hauling procedures has created chaos and demonstrably contributed to crashes over the past couple of years.

In an effort to take concrete steps towards a safer winter hauling season in northern BC this year, northern COFI-member mills have been working on a standardized “10 Rules of the Road” for widespread adoption. The process started in fall 2005 with an examination of the Rules of the Road from 16 different mills — a total of 88 rules in all — and breaking them down into the 10 most common and important.

IMMEDIATE ACTION: Province-wide adoption of a standardized “Ten Rules of the Road”.

DESCRIPTION: The existing draft 10 Rules of the Road will be finalized and distributed across the province for adoption. It’s understood that many mills will have some additions or specific requirements over and above the basic 10, but universal adoption of these basic rules will lead to safer resource roads and drivers having clearer understanding of how to drive them, no matter where they are in the province. Partners include BC Timber Sales, Ministry of Forests, licensees, contractors, trucking groups and drivers.

TIMING: Finalize the draft rules to a format acceptable to all stakeholders by February 2006.

Creation of resource road maintenance standards.

More than any other complaint, we hear about road maintenance — how poor, how inconsistent, how expensive, how inadequate, the slowness of responses to complaints, how nobody wants to take responsibility and so

on. The fact is that in the province of British Columbia, there are no standards for maintenance of resource roads (deemed “industrial roads” under the Highways Act). Although Forest Service Roads are “owned” by the Ministry of Forests and Range, maintenance of these roads is typically delegated to the major area licensee, without set standards. The Forest Practices Code’s “Forest Road Engineering Guidebook” states: “the practices contained in this document are not mandatory, and are not to be interpreted as the only acceptable options...[but] by using the suggested procedures, a proponent will more likely be successful in addressing his or her legal responsibilities”. WorkSafeBC holds licensees accountable to the guidebook, looking for “due diligence” on the part of the licensee to keep the road in “reasonable” condition.

In other words, resource (forest) road maintenance is left to the discretion of the licensee, with no specific requirements, standards or schedules. As well, the cost of road maintenance is borne by the licensee, with no consistent mechanism in place for sharing costs with other road users.

This lack of clear, consistent standards has led to discrepancies in road conditions, repairs and response times, and has created hazardous situations, especially in winter conditions.

Resource road maintenance standards must be developed as soon as possible to reduce the risk to all road users.

IMMEDIATE ACTION: Ministry of Forests and Range, together with industry and the BC Forest Safety Council, will develop resource road maintenance standards.

DESCRIPTION: Resource road maintenance standards will be designed in consultation with relevant stakeholders. The standards will eventually become part of a new Resource Roads Act.

TIMING: Development of resource road maintenance standards should begin immediately, with a target completion date by the end of June 2006.

Creation of immediate road maintenance cost-sharing mechanism.

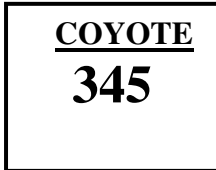
Currently, costs for resource road maintenance are borne by the major licensee in the area. There is no formula for small licensees, woodlots, salvage operators or BC Timber Sales to share the cost of road maintenance. In other countries all road users share costs — recreational users, tourism operators and residents, as well as industry. We need to develop a formula for cost sharing that engages all road users and doesn’t leave the licensee totally responsible for the entire cost.

IMMEDIATE ACTION: The BC Forest Safety Council will work with the Ministry of Forests, Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources and industry to develop a formula or mechanism for sharing the costs of resource road maintenance.

DESCRIPTION: Ministry of Forests and Timber Sales BC representatives will consult with other road-user groups and industry to determine a fair

Draft VIN Plate

Consists of a company name on top with a larger size number on the bottom.



- Company Name (Coyote): at least 1.5 inches tall
- Universal Font
- No more than 10 letters in the name
- Name must be centred
- Name width no greater than 10.5 inches
- 5-7 year durable black letters
- Company Number (345): at least five inches tall
- No more than three numbers
- No hard-to-read combinations — 1&7, 3&8, etc. — adjacent to each other
- Numbers must be centred
- Number width no greater than 10.5 inches
- 5-7 year durable black numbers
- Back Plate: Aluminum with .063 thickness (12 gauge)

and equitable mechanism through which resource road maintenance costs are shared, in anticipation of the mechanism being included in a Resource Road Act.

TIMING: Development of cost-sharing mechanisms and consultation on formulas should begin immediately with a view to being completed by June 2006.

Adopting vehicle identification plates for trucks on resource roads.

Monitoring driver behaviors, and correcting them where need be, requires the ability to quickly and easily identify the vehicle in question. Vehicle Identification Numbers have long been used by fleet owners on highways. On resource roads, however, there are many kinds and sizes of vehicles, from pickup trucks to low-beds, logging trucks to other resource vehicles. It's impossible to read the name on a door or get a licence plate number, especially when they are coated with dust, mud or snow. Vehicle identification plates allow for highly visible, quick reference to who is operating the vehicle, who owns it, which company it's contracted to and so on.

For road monitoring and reporting purposes, vehicle identification plates are the way to go. Standardized plates — the same size and placed in the same position on trucks — allow road monitors and the public to make accurate note of driver behaviors, good and bad.

IMMEDIATE ACTION: The template currently being used in the north-central area of BC should be adopted by forest industry trucks (logging and light service, crew crummies and silviculture vehicles) across the whole province.

DESCRIPTION: The standards being utilized for Vehicle Identification Number plates (including size, lettering and position) will be promoted throughout the industry.

TIMING: Vehicle Identification Number plates should be adopted immediately across the industry, particularly in the northern regions of the province, where the winter hauling season and increased congestion is just beginning, no later than Jan. 1, 2006.

Compliance and Enforcement

Enforcement and compliance to basic safety standards must be significantly improved on resource roads. It is not acceptable that resource roads being used for community access, recreation and multiple resource industry uses have virtually no enforcement compared to highways. This situation cannot be allowed to continue.

More regulations are not the answer. Indeed, most current driving conditions are already covered by existing regulations. At issue is consistent enforcement, and compliance by forest industry workers. The RCMP, WorkSafeBC and Ministry of Transportation's Commercial Vehicle Safety Enforcement branch have begun joint targeted-enforcement efforts on public roadways, with good results. To take the same level of targeted enforcement initiatives to resource roads throughout the province will require a substantial increase in human and financial resources. WorkSafeBC has recently committed to putting more safety officers in the field. But that's still not enough.

We need a clear, consistent and understandable set of regulations that are readily accessible, to help sort out the confusion. We also need enforcement agencies to work together to provide accurate and timely information when changes are made. And we, as the driving public, need to comply with the regulations, whether we agree with them or not.

This section considers the following:

- Policing jurisdiction over resource roads
- Intra and inter-agency cooperation.

Policing Jurisdiction.

Questions around “who is in charge of what?” bring confusion, overlap and multiple sets of regulations, some of which supersede others. For instance, just recently in the Clearwater area a Forest Service Road was modified, creating a risk for traffic along that road. The changes were not made by Ministry of Forests or the licensee, but by Fisheries and Oceans Canada, which was concerned about mud draining into a fish-bearing creek. The decision to save the lives of a few fish put the lives of people at risk. Yet all enquiries to provincial bodies are answered with: “That’s federal Fisheries. They have jurisdiction over all of us.”

WorkSafeBC cannot stop moving vehicles. CVSE only has jurisdiction on public roads. The RCMP does not enforce speed limits on resource roads. The Ministry of Forests’ compliance and enforcement branch enforces Forest Practice Code regulations regarding the forest itself, but not traffic on Forest Service Roads. The gaps in the regulations and enforcement practices are big enough to drive a logging truck through.

IMMEDIATE ACTION: All currently involved enforcement agencies to immediately clarify responsibilities, jurisdiction and regulations.

DESCRIPTION: A Resource Roads Policing Committee of the lead agencies will be struck to conduct an assessment of all current regulations pertaining to forest industry transportation and identify gaps, overlaps and contradictions, as well as the hierarchical compliance requirements.

TIMING: The committee should be formed and start work immediately, complete its assessment and make recommendations to respective agencies by June 2006.

Intra and inter-agency communication

Enforcement agencies don't communicate with each other enough. Agencies often don't communicate internally that well either. The result is a confusing morass of regulations, policies and practices that often conflict or don't make sense to the driver on the road. Changes to regulations or permits are often made without consultation or communication to other stakeholders, resulting in misunderstanding and, sometimes, dangerous situations. An effort to improve joint planning and data sharing at all levels is needed, especially around forest transportation issues.

IMMEDIATE ACTION: Enforcement agencies must develop a strategy for improved communication and information sharing.

DESCRIPTION: Forestry TruckSafe will facilitate a meeting between enforcement agencies to develop a strategy for sharing information, timely communication of regulatory or procedural practices, and inter-agency consultation when regulation or procedural changes are being considered.

TIMING: January 2006.

Education and Communication

The Summits and leadership teams frequently commented on the need for more rigorous training and qualification of drivers, and the need to educate the public on sharing the road with resource vehicles and how to conduct themselves on resource roads. These concerns are dealt with in this section of the Action Plan.

The current level of driver education and training is inadequate. Drivers of complex, specialized vehicles must be effectively trained to understand the particular conditions and risks associated with resource road and highway driving. The public needs to better understand drivers and the conditions under which they work. The public and industry alike must recognize the driving of resource vehicles as a skilled profession that requires specific training.

The above statement was often repeated, in different ways, during our deliberations. Lack of effective driver training has been cited as a contributing cause in many crash investigations, in coroners' reports and in studies of this area.

Yet requirements for basic transport training remain the same as they have been for many years, and there is no requirement — by WorkSafeBC, ICBC or industry — for training or specialized certification to operate these vehicles.

In addition to the broader communication points made earlier in this report, Summit participants identified particular communication needs and committed to resolving them with a targeted plan of activities, outcomes and timeframes. These activities focus heavily on young drivers and “sharing the road” — particularly resource roads.

Actions in the following areas are set out below:

- **Graduated licensing for truck drivers**
- **Driver qualification**
- **Hours of work service regulations**
- **Sharing the road**

Graduated licensing for truck drivers.

This is a matter that has been recommended by many groups to the Motor Vehicle Branch and ICBC. Higher standards, better testing and more training for commercial truck drivers would raise the bar for all involved in the transportation sector, including drivers of logging trucks and other forestry industry vehicles.

The BC Forest Safety Council supports these efforts to increase the level of training and qualification for drivers. Forestry TruckSafe will continue to support and encourage that endeavor, and advocate for specific practical training in forest industry hauling.

As well, the CVSE branch of the Ministry of Transportation enforces driving regulations per the National Safety Code. These two bodies, as well as the RCMP and ICBC, are the decision-makers and enforcers of truck driving conditions in the province. Forestry TruckSafe's role must be one of advisement, advocacy and holding the respective bodies accountable to their mandates.

Forestry Driver Qualification.

In addition to the general requirements for commercial driver licencing, drivers of complex forestry vehicles need to be qualified to drive their specific vehicles. As well, the drivers need to be qualified to drive on resource roads.

The need for better training for drivers has been recommended for years. Lack of training has been cited as a factor in numerous serious accidents and fatalities.

Driver qualifications can be required in a number of ways.

- ICBC could require that in addition to the standard commercial vehicle licence, there could be an additional requirement related to the driving of logging trucks.
- The WCB could require that logging truck drivers be qualified as competent to operate logging trucks on resource roads and highways.
- Companies and agencies within the sector could require that drivers for their operations be qualified to drive logging trucks on resource roads.

There are currently a number of courses that have been designed for the training of logging truck drivers and for driving on resource roads. Many of these are not currently being offered. With a requirement for training, the demand for such courses is too low to ensure that they are offered on a consistent and on-going basis.

A training standard has been developed by WorkSafeBC for articulated rock trucks being used for road construction in the forest sector. This program has been fully developed and was well received by industry when it was piloted. Consideration of how to ensure that this program continues is now with the BC Forest Safety Council.

As part of the Council's BC Safe Silviculture Initiative, standards and courses are being developed for the use of ATV's (All Terrain Vehicles) and driving on resource roads.

Concerns were raised during the Summits that driver training must take into account worker shortages and that any requirement for training and qualifications be done in such a way as to not disrupt the availability of drivers to the sector. The Council was urged to consider the development of apprenticeship type programs which would encourage the training of drivers "in the field".

The Council is currently implementing the Faller Training and Certification Program and has experience with the complexities of implementing a training standard for a large number of workers where none was previously in place. Care must be taken to ensure that those currently operating in the sector are treated fairly and that the introduction of a standard requiring the demonstration of competencies and qualifications is managed consistently.

IMMEDIATE ACTION: As part of its training development program, the BC Forest Safety Council will work with industry to develop training standards for specific forestry industry vehicles. As well, the Council will develop training and qualifications for driving on resource roads.

DESCRIPTION: The BC Forest Safety Council is currently developing its standards and guidelines for required training in the forest sector. As part of this development, training standards and qualifications will be developed in the following areas:

- Logging Trucks
- Articulated Rock Trucks (for use in road building within the forest sector)
- ATV's
- Driving on Resource Roads.

For all of the above, there will be full involvement and consultation with industry, taking into account the needs and concerns raised in the Summits and elsewhere.

TIMING: The development of training standards as set out above will be incorporated into the Council's 2006 Work Plan.

Driver-related issues.

Some issues, such as fatigue, lack of seatbelt use, poor driver health and general driver qualifications are part of the larger WorkSafeBC TruckSafe initiative, and are being worked on across the province in partnership with WorkSafeBC, ICBC, RCMP and the trucking industry in general. Forestry TruckSafe is focused on issues specific to the forest industry and will follow the lead of to the WorkSafeBC initiative for these issues. They have the resources, mandate and legislated authority to make progress in these areas and make lasting changes to working conditions for truckers.

Hours of work service regulations.

This is another area of general concern that came up frequently during our discussions and is one for which there is a particular slant for the forest sector.

Highway hauler regulations are scheduled to change Jan. 1, 2007, reducing legal hours of driving to 13 per day — plus one in service — and

changing the requirements around rest times, under the National Safety Code.

The BC Forest Safety Council and other industry groups will be working with the National Safety Code director in BC to develop the hours of work service regulations specific to logging trucks in the province. Issues such as reporting of incidents, etc., are covered under the National Safety Code and BC's Commercial Vehicle Safety Enforcement division.

IMMEDIATE ACTION: Working with Council Members, the BC Forest Safety Council will consult with industry on the proposed changes to the hours of work regulations and review the current exemptions to develop a sector wide approach to recommend to Government..

DESCRIPTION: The potential for changes in this area have an important safety component that needs to be considered.

TIMING: Consultations are to begin immediately and be completed by the Fall of 2006.

Sharing the road.

Many suggestions and thoughts on the need for public education and communication were raised during the two Summits and in the work of the Leadership Teams. Of these, there are two areas that will be pursued by the Forestry TruckSafe Initiative. These are:

- Public awareness of sharing highways and community roads with resource vehicles, and
- Public awareness of the dangers and constraints of driving on resource roads.

There are potentially many partners to assist in raising public awareness and there is good work going on right now. For example, the Council jointly published a "Guide for Safe Travel" on Forest Roads with the BC Forest Service. There are also regional efforts that have been sponsored by ICBC.

The intent here is to combine efforts and resources to develop a coordinated program with the intention that this will become a longer term commitment by the agencies involved.

IMMEDIATE ACTION: Develop public awareness programs about sharing roads with resource vehicles.

DESCRIPTION: Forestry Trucksafe will work with a variety of stakeholders, including WorkSafeBC, ICBC, RCMP, CVSE, Ministry of Forests, Ministry of Transportation, tourism associations, chambers of commerce, recreational groups and the media, to develop a comprehensive, targeted public education program — aimed at all road users — about sharing the roads with resource vehicle. This will include TV and radio spots, print advertising, truck wraps and other promotional opportunities.

TIMING: One-year project, to be developed and initiated in 2006.

Vehicles and Technology

There are too many unsafe vehicles on our resource roads. We need to take steps to ensure that unsafe vehicles are taken off the road before crashes occur, and ensure that basic maintenance standards are maintained.

Regular inspections of "light vehicles", such as pickups and service trucks, must be made mandatory in the same way that logging trucks are currently.

IMMEDIATE ACTION: Decrease the GVWs of vehicles that can be inspected by CVSE (currently 5,500 kg).

DESCRIPTION: Light vehicles (pickups, service trucks, etc.) used for commercial purposes and/or transporting forestry workers will be included in CVSE spot inspections. Mandatory inspection of these vehicles should be done at least annually.

TIMING: Development of inspection standards and regulations by the end of 2006.

IMMEDIATE ACTION: Designate service trucks, crew hauling vehicles, silviculture crew trucks and other light vehicles (forestry officials, mill supervisors, etc.) as forestry vehicles.

DESCRIPTION: Identify light vehicles used for forestry purposes with a special designation (ICBC). This will ensure they are included in the CVSE and WorkSafeBC criteria for safety audits.

TIMING: Immediate (in time for tree-planting season, spring 2006).

Scheduled replacement of equipment such as stake cables should be made mandatory.

Engineering research is needed on proper tensile strengths, lifespans and security of specific equipment such as stake cables, wrappers, etc. to ensure proper maintenance and replacement.

IMMEDIATE ACTION: Forest Engineering Research Institute of Canada will be requested to examine equipment for logging trucks to determine lifespans and tensile requirements.

DESCRIPTION: FERIC will make recommendations based on research, which will be forwarded to CVSE and WorkSafeBC for adoption upon consultation with stakeholders.

TIMING: Spring 2006.

Existing and new technologies must be tested and implemented to improve tracking, monitoring and safety for forestry vehicles.

GPS and other tracking systems are successfully reducing speeding and hours of service infractions for many fleet owners, including chip haulers. Adoption of this technology in the log-hauling sector would reduce many of the time and speed issues that concern us all.

Other technologies are being developed — everything from self-adjusting breaks to onboard weigh scales to obstacle detectors — and need to be tested and implemented. While there is no immediate action that can be undertaken by the BC Forest Safety Council or Forestry TruckSafe in this regard, we will continue to track the progress and test results of emerging technologies and make recommendations to the industry based on their merit and safety effectiveness.

The BC Forest Safety Council and Forestry TruckSafe will work closely with FERIC in their development and testing of technologies designed to extend the logging season in BC and increase safety in the industry. TruckSafe will have a seat on FERIC's Advisory Council, which meets twice a year to discuss new developments. As well, FERIC and TruckSafe will collaborate on a research project in the near future, and partner in promoting FERIC's training presentations, such as Smart Driving for Logging Trucks (which helps increase safety and reduce fuel costs), the Interior Roads Workshop (development and construction of forest roads in Interior BC – very timely in light of the new road development because of increased harvesting due to the Mountain Pine Beetle) and its Innovative Harvesting Workshop.

Current FERIC development and testing activities relevant to forest hauling include:

- Tire pressure monitoring and adjusting systems, designed to reduce wear and tear on road surfaces and increase the effectiveness of contact between road surface and the vehicle.
- Measurement of in-ground frost levels to determine at which point the roadways become vulnerable and affected by load weights, impacting road closure and axle weight restrictions which affect length of hauling season.
- Axle configurations for trailers, for maximum safety and hauling capacity with minimal negative environmental and road surface impact
- Stability testing for load height, width and lengths.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

For this Action Plan to be successful there must be systematic and forceful follow-up. This will be accomplished by:

- An issues tracking process
- Periodic progress reports on the Action Plan
- A Forestry TruckSafe leadership team.

An Issues Tracking Process

The BC Forest Safety Council will develop and maintain a system to identify and track key issues related to the safety of drivers, vehicles and roads. This will start with actions identified in the Action Plan, with the intention that additional issues can be added as they arise.

The tracking system will become part of the Council's website, and will also result in periodic reports through the Rumbings newsletter.

Progress Reports

We cannot build a safe working environment for workers involved in forest transportation in a day, week or month.

But every day, week and month of clear focus on the issues, of sharing information, of determined and coordinated effort to resolve the problems brings us one day closer to our goal — an industry where every worker can expect to come home safe and healthy at the end of the day.

Forestry TruckSafe will prepare periodic reviews on the Action Plan. A quarterly review will be developed and sent to interested parties as well as an annual report card that will be included in the Council's annual report.

A Forestry TruckSafe Leadership Team

The BC Forest Safety Council must provide leadership to ensure the Action Plan and related efforts move forward.

Drawing from individuals who participated in the Forestry TruckSafe leadership teams, a TruckSafe review team will be established. This team will meet quarterly to review the progress reports and provide guidance to the Forestry TruckSafe initiative.

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The Forestry TruckSafe Action Plan is not just another report to be put on a shelf and left to gather dust. Members of the Council, industry leaders and workers have invested much time and commitment to make this a

living document — a reference to the ills of our industry and a prescription for its recovery. This Action Plan must stay on the desk, not the shelf.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

The following documents support the Action Plan and are available in PDF format on our website. www.bcforestsafe.org The titles, a brief summary and the URL are listed below.

http://www.bcforestsafe.org/trucksafe/reports_publications.asp

Summit I Report

This document captures the work of Forestry TruckSafe Summit I, held June 7-8, 2005 in Prince George.

Forestry TruckSafe Mini Report

This document was produced as part of the preparation for Summit II (Oct. 27, 2005 in Vancouver), and presents an overview of Forestry Truck Crashes in BC.

Progress Update on Forest TruckSafe between the Summits

This brief report outlines the activities that are being pursued by communities, companies and agencies with respect to improving the safety of drivers, vehicles and roads.

Exploring the Health and Safety Implications of the Mountain Pine Beetle Epidemic in the BC Interior

Prepared by Gordon Rattray of CGR Management, this document considered the safety impacts of the Beetle Infestation.