



## **FOREST INDUSTRY SAFETY ALERT**

### **Close Call/Serious Incident**

**Location:** Silviculture Operation

**Date of Incident:** June 2007

**Details of Incident:** **IMPORTANCE OF CURRENT DRIVER'S ABSTRACTS**

Foremen staff had been hired from previous years employees both returning foremen and one new planting foreman. Foremen are responsible for driving their crews in company supplied "crew" vehicles. All foremen were asked to provide current Drivers Abstracts at the beginning of the season. Abstracts came in after a push by management after having too many – "too busy" & "I forgot" excuses.

One foreman in particular continued to avoid the process and management traveled to the site to have the driver/foreman produce their license on the spot. A 1-800 number was to be called from the site to have the abstract faxed to the office. The license produced was an "N", with the restrictions of only 1 passenger that was not a family. This driver was fully aware of his license restrictions and the fact that he was driving outside of his "scope" and illegally, but directly told management that he it was their "due diligence" to ensure he was legal and that he had no problem taking the chance.

This truck was returned to town with a "valid" drivers license holder and was parked. The driver in question was terminated immediately for breaching several of the criteria for "immediate termination" as laid out in the company's health & safety program and its discipline model.

The employee in question had worked the prior season for another company in the province in the same capacity (as a crew foreman – responsible for driving). In his dealings with management he was asked how he was able to drive for the other company, which he responded that the license issue was known by his prior employers and that they had contacted ICBC to get clearance. A call to both the prior employer showed that this was a lie – the ICBC agent laughed and the it was the first the prior employer had heard that this employee did not have a valid license.

**Recommended Preventative Actions:**

- 1. All employees that will be or may be driving company vehicles, are required to present a current drivers abstract prior to driving company vehicles. A deadline will be set prior to the next season's operational start up.**
- 2. A 1-800 number is available during business hours and if an employee is not able to physically attend a local licensing branch, a copy will be faxed to the fax of choice within hours of the request being heard.**
- 3. Internal policy that company vehicles will not be operated without a current abstract on file.**
- 4. Abstracts to be updated annually, with the employers discretion to request an abstract at any time.**

**The employee in question was 28 yrs old – an age that makes it easy to assume they would have a valid license. References were checked regarding their foreman duties the prior season, which made it easier to assume they had a valid license.**

**For more information, please call:**