



History

The BC Forest Safety Council (BCFSC) was created in September 2004, as a direct result of the findings of the provincial government's Forest Safety Task Force. The task force's mandate was to find ways to reduce the high levels of injuries and fatalities in the forest sector. Task force members included representatives of forestry companies, unions, independent contractors, associations and WorkSafeBC.

The task force's two key outcomes were:

- The industry's adoption in April 2004 of the Health and Safety Accord for the BC Forestry Industry; and
- The creation of the BC Forest Safety Council, a not-for-profit society.

We believe

- All forestry fatalities and injuries are preventable
- The safety of forestry workers is an over-riding priority
- Safety excellence is key to the long-term success of our industry
- Injury prevention is most effective when the overall industry owns and leads the change
- Safety is good business.

Governance

The harvesting, hauling and silviculture sectors made the decision in 2004 to fund the BCFSC through a special assessment collected by WorkSafeBC.

In 2011, the organization's bylaws were changed so that all companies that pay for the organization can apply to become members of the society and nominate and vote for Directors to serve on the Board.

The board currently meets four times a year, with the annual general meeting conducted in June of each year.

In 2015, the BCFSC became the health and safety association for sawmill and pellet manufacturers on a trial basis.

Funding

As the Health and Safety Association for the forest industry in British Columbia the BCFSC receives funding under a 5 year renewable agreement from the forestry industry's WorkSafeBC assessments. Where appropriate, the BCFSC ensures that organizations and individuals benefiting from our programs and initiatives support them through cost recovery fees.

In addition, as the certifying partner for the forest industry – an independent agency approved and contracted by WorkSafeBC to implement and administer the COR program



and monitor employer compliance with program requirements – the BCFSC receives additional funding under a 5 year renewable agreement.

What we do

The BCFSC works at the direction of industry to identify, develop, implement and continually improve initiatives that will secure improved safety performance in forest harvesting operations, sawmills and pellet manufacturing.

SAFE Companies – This is a safety system evaluation program that educates and advises forestry companies from Independent Owner Operators, through to large public companies on the best safety practices. Through audits – or the SAFE Companies Certification process – industry ensures companies’ safety programs meet industry standards.

Certification became a pre-requisite to bid on B.C. crown forest contracts on January 1, 2009. Branches of the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations are also in the process of becoming SAFE Certified.

Launched in late 2006, more than 4,600 forestry operations have registered and more than 2,600 companies have achieved SAFE Certification.

Companies achieving SAFE Certification are also eligible to receive COR recognition from WorkSafeBC, and a 10% rebate on their assessments, provided they meet certain requirements.

Falling – The BCFSC administers faller certification in the Province of BC under the BC Faller Training Standard, and champions safe faller training, certification, supervision and promotion of falling to ensure industry is able to meet increasing demands to replace retiring fallers.

Transportation – Promotes and supports safer drivers, vehicles and roads in B.C. forestry. The focus is on advocacy and outreach, information and education, and collaboration with partners inside and outside the industry.

Training & Development – Supports the development of a confident, competent and well-trained work force, where safety is integrated into every action and process to maximize safe, effective and efficient performance. More than 13,000 workers have received training from the organization since its inception.

Industry Initiatives – Many safety programs and tactics are developed as a result of industry-driven initiatives. Groups of leaders, technical or other experts within industry identify issues that industry needs to address to secure best practices to further improve injury rates. These groups may be working or steering committees, or action groups, but each has a mandate, accountabilities, objectives and measurable deliverables that collectively support industry in improving its safety record and performance.



Current initiatives include: Trucking Advisory Group, Log Truck Technical Advisory Committee, Falling Technical Advisory Group, Coast Harvesting Advisory Group, Prequalification Steering and Working Groups, and an Injury Management/RTW two-year pilot project extended for another year; Construction Initiated Slides Working Group, Bulk Haulers Injury Elimination Task Force, Silviculture Advisory Committee, Woodlot License and Community Forest Agreement Safety Committee. For more information on industry initiatives, please see <http://www.bcforestsafe.org/node/2523>.

Forest Safety Ombudsman – An independent ombudsman is appointed by the Council to conduct reviews and produce reports on major forest safety issues, and to be an impartial third party for individual cases involving safety. Roger Harris has held the position since the organization's inception in 2004.

Last updated: March 2016