BC **Forest Safety** Council

Planning & Management

Safety Alert Type:
Planning and Management

Location: Blue and Gold road, Nelson BC.

Date of Incident: 2008-01-31
Company Name: Kalesnikoff Lumber Co. Ltd.

Details of Incident:

While plowing snow between 3.5 km and 4 km on Blue and Gold road, a grader operator witnessed two separate avalanches a short distance ahead of the grader. Both slides initiated in a cut block, 1 above the road and 1 below the road. The slides initiated on approximately a 60% slope and covered a combined area of about 1 hectare. The slides consisted of fresh storm snow sliding on a buried hoar frost layer and were considered a class 2 avalanche. The slides totaled a width of about 100m wide and ran for about 150 m. The average slab depth was 40 cm. The suspected cause of the slides was likely a combination of the above snow conditions and the vibration from the grader. A harvesting crew arrived on site a short time after the slide occurred and immediately reported the incident to the company harvesting supervisor. The harvesting supervisor visited the site and shut down operations in the area until conditions stabilized. Weekend weather was predicting more snowfall with increased avalanche activity. The gate at the bottom of the road was locked limiting further access to this site.

This is the first time that this type of event has occurred in this area during the duration of forestry activities in the area.

Recommended Preventative Actions:

1. Professional avalanche risk assessments or other mitigative actions may need to be conducted prior to forestry operations in other areas with similar site conditions.
2. If avalanche activity is noted in any area of operations, stop work and contact your supervisor for further direction.

More Information Contact Details:

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