



Gearing-up for a Successful Season

By Richard King, BCFSC Program Development Manager

There have been significant challenges to the industry recently with disruptions in work for many people across our province. After the recent reduction in volumes, the coastal labour dispute and COVID-19, companies will be eager to start gearing up again.

Starting up work again is an exciting time with new opportunities and a return to normalcy. However, because there is an increased risk of injury when gearing-up, it is very important to have a solid plan in place. Regardless of the size of your operation, ensuring personnel, equipment and resources are ready to go when things get busy not only makes a safer workplace but a more effective and efficient one.

Following the resolution of the coastal labour dispute in February, the BCFSC released a Safety Alert with *Top Tips on Starting-Up Safely*. It was intended to address the challenges of returning to work for those affected by the strike. But now, as COVID-19 has forced companies to make modifications to their worksites, the safe start-up information bears repeating.

This article provides useful resources to help **prepare, assess, monitor and communicate** for safely starting up work again after a period of inactivity.

February 2020 Safety Alert of the Month – Top 10 Tips for a Safe Start Up
www.bcforestsafesafe.org/node/3449



Prepare:

As activities resume, companies should assess/reassess their plans to maintain social distancing and ensure that procedures and the appropriate PPE are available. The BCFSC has been maintaining a comprehensive webpage of COVID-19 resources that companies should review to ensure that their plans are up to date.

BC Forest Safety COVID-19 Resources and Links

www.bcforestsafesafe.org/node/3460



Reviewing and refining Safe Work Procedures (SWPs), developing Emergency Response Plans (ERPs) and training workers are just some of the things needed prior to starting work. It is also important for workers to be mentally and physically fit for the work ahead.

Pre-developed templates can give companies a good starting point for developing SWPs, ERPs and other pre-work tools. Companies should adjust these templates to meet their specific needs. The BCFSC has developed many templates for SWPs (ranging from “Working Alone” to “Loader Operator”) as well as an ERP development guide and template. Additionally, templates for worker orientation and risk assessment are also available.

Forms and Templates

www.bcforestsafesafe.org/node/2650



ERP Resources

www.bcforestsafesafe.org/node/2585



“Fit for Work” resources provide excellent information for active work like falling and tree planting as well as more stationary work like log hauling. These resources include nutrition, sleep and physical fitness tips. Workers are encouraged to use these

tools to ensure that they are fit enough to do their job. The fact is, returning to work fit and ready to go will reduce the chance of injury.

Fit for Work page

www.bcforestsafesafe.org/node/3013



It is also important for workers to take care of their longer term physical and mental health. The BCFSC has developed and collected a number of resources to support healthy workers. In addition to the following links, there is more information on mental health included on the BCFSC COVID-19 webpage.

Healthy Worker Resource Package

www.bcforestsafesafe.org/node/3435



Mental Health Resources

Tips for Challenging Conditions:
www.bcforestsafesafe.org/node/3430



Managing Stress in the Workplace:
www.bcforestsafesafe.org/node/3354



Good Mental Health:
www.bcforestsafesafe.org/node/3101



The BCFSC also has online and in-person safety training courses. These courses are aimed at both new and experienced workers and cover subjects ranging from an introduction to the forest industry to incident investigation training.

Training Page

www.bcforestsafes.org/training.html



With wildfire season underway, it is also important to ensure companies are prepared by ensuring their pre-work and ERPs address the wildfire risk. In the *Industry Section* of this issue of Forest Safety News, you will find a contributed article by Douglas MacLeod on preparing for a wildfire on a worksite. Additionally, the BCFSC has some Safety Alert links on wildfire below:

Training Page

Working on Wildfires:

www.bcforestsafes.org/node/3352



Wildfire Risks:

www.bcforestsafes.org/node/2992



Assess:

Assessing workers is important to ensure they are doing their jobs effectively and safely. Individual worker assessments can help supervisors determine if someone has gaps in their knowledge or skills that can be resolved with the right training. Without an assessment it is much more difficult for supervisors to identify potential issues that may lead to dangerous incidents.

The tools developed by the BCFSC as part of the competency-based system for training and assessment provide supervisors and employers a way to measure their employees' knowledge and skills to ensure they are competent in their role. These assessment tools were developed in conjunction with subject matter experts to meet the needs of the industry for a variety of occupations including yarding and log truck driving with more occupations being developed all the time.

Occupation Resources

The BCFSC Occupational Resources will soon be available on the BCFSC website.

Stay tuned as we will be making an announcement on our Facebook, Twitter,

LinkedIn and Instagram pages with a direct link to these new resources.

The BCFSC is dedicated to transportation safety. In addition to the competency-based assessment tools, we also offer a professional log truck driver training and endorsement program. The program was developed to ensure new drivers use a consistent set of standards that reflect the extensive skills and knowledge a professional log truck driver needs to safely and proficiently operate in BC.

Log Truck Driver Assessment and Endorsement Program

www.bcforestsafes.org/node/3331



Monitor:

Ensuring that your worksite meets minimum safety standards is critical at all stages of operations, but it is especially important immediately following start-up. The BCFSC has developed a number of resources to help with workplace and vehicle inspections, and conducting risk assessments. These tools are intended as starting points for companies to independently adjust to meet the specific needs of their worksites.

Small Employer Safety Forms

www.bcforestsafes.org/node/149



The BCFSC can provide personal support to companies in a variety of health and safety services using our industry Safety Advisors. Our advisors provide many services from helping to develop health and safety programs, to providing incident investigation advice.

BCFSC Health and Safety Support Services

www.bcforestsafes.org/safety_info.html



Communicate:

Communication is the key to safe and effective operations but it means more than just simply talking - it means taking care to

ensure that accurate and timely information is shared and understood. Tools available to support effective communication include reading materials, videos, posters and more. The BCFSC has created a number of new resource packages including light truck use and maintenance, working under equipment, winch assist harvesting and worker health. These resource packages offer guided crew talks, videos, information overviews and posters.

The BCFSC, WorkSafeBC and Safer have created YouTube pages that feature some excellent videos to support effective communication in the workplace and are a great source to find and share information with your crews.

Resource Packages

www.bcforestsafes.org/safety_info/resource_packages.html



BCFSC YouTube Channel

www.youtube.com/user/BCForestSafety



WorkSafeBC YouTube Channel

www.youtube.com/user/WorkSafeBC



SAFER Council

www.youtube.com/user/SAFERCouncil



Final Thoughts:

As work begins to ramp up, care and attention must be taken to ensure workers are coming back ready and able, and worksites are prepared for a safe start-up. The BCFSC is here to support companies and workers with resources, training and tools to set themselves up for success. While the past 12 months have been challenging, with proper planning and care, the future can be successful and safe. 🙌

BCFSC Online Training Courses

In keeping with COVID-19 social distancing practices, the BCFSC has postponed classroom training until it is safe to get back into the classroom. Alternatively, there are many online courses we offer which provide companies and employers with a safe option for training during the COVID crisis.

We have free, high-quality web-based training you can do from home designed for owner/operators, supervisors and employees to get back to work safely.

Forestry Safety Overview

Do you have workers new to the forest industry?

This course offers forestry basics and includes the importance of incorporating safe practices into forestry work.

Originally developed to support companies seeking SAFE Conversion for their Certificate of Recognition program from other certifying partners, the Forestry Safety Overview training course is also valuable for workers new to forestry.

After completing this **FREE** online training (approx. four hours), participants will be able to:

- Describe basic BC forest sector business operations, such as:
 - Forest industry size, structure and economic impact on BC
 - Land ownership, First Nations consent
 - Bidding processes
 - Regulations pertaining to forestry operations in BC
 - Safety management system implementation
- Recognize safety culture in the forest sector and the role of the BCFSC

A certificate of completion is provided after finishing the course. For more information and to access the enrollment form, visit www.bcforestsafesafe.org/node/2904

Serious Incident and Fatality Investigation

If the worst happened, are you prepared to conduct an investigation that would meet WorkSafeBC requirements?

Do you know what's involved?

The BCFSC offers a **FREE** online Serious Incident and Fatality Investigation course that provides instruction on how to complete investigations for incidents involving serious injuries or fatalities.

These types of incidents often involve different agencies such as the RCMP and Coroners Service. Employers should understand the roles and responsibilities of these agencies at the workplace.

Upon completing this course, participants should be able to:

- Follow the BCFSC's five-stage Incident Investigation Model
- Describe serious incident or fatality investigation skills
- Describe the roles of outside authorities in an investigation



- Understand the initial response steps to a serious incident or fatality
- Describe WorkSafeBC's reporting requirements following a serious incident or fatality
- Identify and describe helpful resources available to support you and others affected by a serious incident or fatality in the workplace

A certificate of completion is provided after finishing the course. For more information and to access the enrollment form, visit www.bcforestsafesafe.org/node/3179

Supervising For Safety from WorkSafeBC

This **FREE** online course is aimed at supervisors in any industry. It is designed to help supervisors understand their responsibilities and discover how to be more effective by championing workplace health and safety. It is designed for participants to learn at their own pace and select topics they want to explore including:

- Safety management systems
- New and young worker education and training
- Impairment
- Incident analysis
- Claims and disability management, and more.

For more information, visit the WorkSafeBC website www.worksafefbc.com/en/resources/health-safety/interactive-tools/supervising-for-safety-course?lang=en

Below is a full list of BCFSC's online training courses.

- Combustible Dust Hazard Training for Workers
- Managers and Contractors
- SAFE Companies - Individual Owner Operator (IOO)
- Occupational Health & Safety
- SAFE Companies - Small Employer (SEBASE/ISEBASE)
- Occupational Health & Safety

We also offer knowledge units for:

- Log Truck Driver
- Entry Level Forest Worker
- Grapple Yarder Operator
- Hook Tender
- Landing/Utility Person
- Tower Operator
- Rigging Slinger
- Chokerperson

For course information and registration details, visit www.bcforestsafesafe.org/training.html. 



Inspection of Light Duty Pickup Trucks

By Christopher Walker, Owner and Lead Instructor, Overlanding BC Professional Training

Light duty vehicles, typically pickup trucks, are regularly used in forestry and especially on resource roads across BC. As road surfaces change, moving from paved to unpaved roads, these vehicles experience high mechanical stress throughout their lifecycle.

Vehicle inspections are vital and every vehicle operator should perform daily inspections at the start of their shift AND an abbreviated inspection at the end.

We all know it is important to perform a pre-trip inspection on any commercial work vehicle. It is the driver's responsibility to conduct and record a thorough walk around to determine whether the vehicle is safe to operate on public roads and is within the standards set by the Motor Vehicle Act and **WorkSafeBC's Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Guidelines**.

The employer is also responsible to make a record of these inspections and safely store these reports for future reference for record keeping, maintenance purposes and/or, if required, inspection by relevant authorities. We recommended downloading **BCFSC's Vehicle Inspection Check-list** to assist with pre-trip inspections.

An inspection will determine whether the vehicle is fit for purpose and safe to use. Designated individuals, typically the vehicle operator, within a company can perform these inspections. The operator does not have to be a certified automotive mechanic, but should be trained in-house, or complete the BCFSC Resource Road Light Truck Driver course. During the inspection, look for defects that would render the vehicle unsafe or out-of-service until the faults are fixed by either the vehicle operator or a certified automotive mechanic (if required). Also look for easily remedied defects such as dirty lights, low coolant levels and so on and resolve them.

After the pre-trip inspection is done, we often miss the need to conduct further vehicle inspections during the course of a shift or day. The operator should continue to make ongoing assessments throughout any period the vehicle is in use.

If there is a change in the vehicle's performance, for instance, unusual and unfamiliar noises, feeling things change,

wobble or shake, warning lights and so on, it is important to remain focused on the driving task but still monitor its "health" while driving. Any change that falls outside of the vehicle's "normal condition" should be inspected before a possible defect leads to a dangerous situation. Pull over to a safe, flat area, secure the vehicle from moving and set up your safety zone using warning triangles, etc. to alert others of a vehicle on the roadside. Communicate your situation via radio on the relevant RR channel and engage your response plan. When safe to do so, inspect the vehicle. Any defects that can't be rectified by the driver or passengers safely would require calling for further assistance from the company, a third-party mechanic or a tow service.

Further Check and Inspections

Aside from the initial pre-trip inspection, further checks are recommended and can be performed in moments. These checks will help ensure your vehicle is as safe as possible for the upcoming trip conditions that may evolve throughout a shift such as weather changes. Consider the following:

1. When leaving a paved surface and driving onto an unpaved road:
 - Ensure that you are on the correct RR or VHF channel.
 - Re-check all secured loads inside and on the bed of the vehicle, including things like open fluid containers.
 - Engage locking hubs (if equipped) and four-wheel drive (4wd) (if required) and ensure the 4wd mode selected is working with no warning or blinking lights.
 - If 4wd is required, engage high- or low-range as necessary for greater control and to reduce wear-and-tear of drive train and tires.
 - Ensure tire pressure is correct for the resource road conditions. It may be necessary to slightly reduce air pressure for better traction and ride quality.
 - Install chains if icy or snowy conditions are encountered.
 - Turn on daytime running lights for added visibility of your vehicle.
 - Deploy warning whip flag if required.

2. When returning to the paved road:
 - Re-check all secured loads inside and on the bed of the vehicle.
 - Ensure all lights are working and clear of dirt, dust or debris.
 - Ensure all windows & mirrors are clear of dirt, dust or debris, and are not cracked / chipped in a condition that could impede the driver's vision or violate the regulations of the Motor Vehicle Act.
 - Ensure license plates are clear of dirt, dust or debris.
 - Re-inflate tires to road / manufacturer's recommended pressure.
 - Thoroughly check tire integrity including inspecting inside sidewalls for damage.
 - Ensure mirrors are re-adjusted after road vibrations.
 - Re-torque lug nuts if a spare tire was required.
 - Disengage 4wd for greater control and to reduce wear-and tear on the drive train and tires and ensure the 2wd mode is working with no warning or blinking lights.
 - Ensure brakes and wheels are free of dirt or debris that may impede braking efficiency and / or change the balance of the wheels causing dangerous vibrations and potential vehicle control issues.
 - Ensure the mud flaps are clear of dirt and debris so it is not flung across the road or highway creating danger to others.
 - Ensure floor mats are clear of dirt and debris so the pedals are not operationally hindered.
 - Stow warning whip flag if deployed.
 - Do a mental check. Are you still ok to drive? Is there another occupant who could drive if you are too tired, etc.?
3. Post-trip/shift inspection. Conduct a full vehicle walk around to inspect the following (but not limited to):
 - Dashboard warning lights.
 - Check the integrity of mirrors, windows and vehicle lights to ensure they are working properly and are not cracked / chipped in a condition that could impede the driver's vision or violate the regulations of the Motor Vehicle Act.
 - Re-check tire integrity for damage, including inside sidewalls. Do not forget the spare.
 - Check fuel levels.

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- Check for leaks, smells and vibrations.
- Inspect the body, chassis and bumper integrity.
- Clean out and secure the interior.
- Roll up windows.
- Inspect and re-secure loads within the vehicle and in the bed.
- Do an inventory of safety equipment such as warning triangles, firefighting equipment, etc., and check it is functioning.

A post-trip inspection from one worker is not designed to replace a regulated pre-inspection from another. It is a cursory inspection aimed at detecting any obvious faults or issues. Any defects found should be recorded and fleet maintenance informed so they can fix it.

Checks may seem cumbersome but are crucial in maintaining the safety and integrity of the vehicle, its occupants and other road users. By performing these inspections, we reinforce good safety culture. On occasion, time-sensitive production and operations can quickly push vehicle inspection checks to the wayside. Taking 10-15 minutes to perform a vehicle

check will greatly reduce the likelihood of a dangerous situation stemming from an unsafe vehicle. A good operator will make it a habit and a routine and a good employer will make it a necessary operational procedure.

WorkSafeBC regulations indicate companies and operators are responsible for the upkeep of vehicles and more importantly, the safety of the workers that travel within them.

Look at it pragmatically. If you are tasked to drive a vehicle you may not have driven before, or for a while, you want to ensure it is not only fit to drive but is also safe for occupants and other road users. The beauty of a post-trip inspection is you have done your due diligence in terms of health and safety of the vehicle, if a fault is found, it can be fixed by the company fleet mechanics, or a replacement can be found in advance of the next day's operations reducing potential down time and loss of production. Also consider you may not be driving that same vehicle on your next shift, you may be off sick, the vehicle may be re-assigned to another work-site, and so on. In good faith, you want to leave your assigned

vehicle in a good, safe condition so the next operator can do their pre-inspection without finding fault(s) and use the vehicle safely during their shift.

A good driving safety culture is imperative both with a company and the operator. Pre- and post-inspections and other checks are a great way of ensuring the health and safety of workers and maintaining the quality reputation of a company's safety culture. 🚧

QR Codes

WorkSafeBC's OHS Guidelines:



www.worksafebc.com/en/law-policy/occupational-health-safety/searchable-ohs-regulation/ohs-guidelines/guidelines-part-17

BCFSC Vehicle Inspection Check-list:



http://www.bcfscsafe.org/files/files/safety_info/fallers-08-05-06-vehicle_ins_chklst.pdf