



The First Stage of the BCFSC FIRS App (Forest Industry Reporting System) is Now Available.

In the March issue of Forest Safety News, we reported we were currently developing a new App to help streamline and consequently reduce the amount of safety-related paperwork and administrative work required in the field. The **BCFSC FIRS App** or **Forest Industry Reporting System** is a FREE resource available to all BCFSC Members. Its purpose is to assist supervisors in managing copious amounts of paperwork as part of their due diligence requirements, monitor worker training and certifications, and help manage SAFE Companies audit submissions using a measurable tracking system.

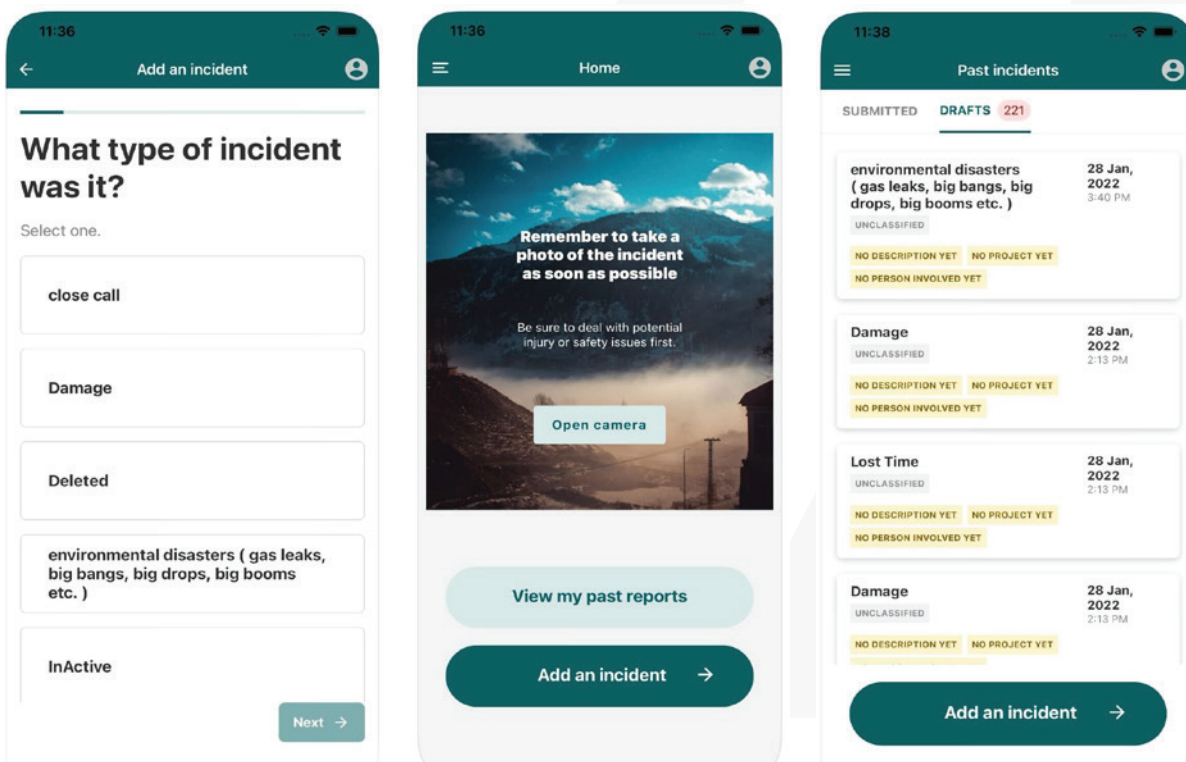
The first stage of the **BCFSC FIRS App** is a **lite version** of the App called **Quick Add**. This version is now complete and is live and ready to use. Quick Add allows companies to submit and track incident reporting by submitting answers to five simple questions and uploading supporting photos into the record. Incident reports can be entered into the App even if your device is offline. Once you are back online, the information will be automatically submitted. The Quick Add App also includes a Supervisor's Queue allowing supervisors, safety professionals, and company owners to review

submitted records and extract important information from the report such as the severity or nature of a reported injury.

The Five Questions for incident reporting currently available in the Quick Add App include

- Incident Type?
- When did the incident occur?
- Where did it occur?
- Who was involved?
- What happened?

The new Quick Add version of the BCFSC FIRS App is available through the App store for Android and iOS devices. Simply go to the App store on your device and search for BCFSC FIRS to download the FREE App. To access the BCFSC FIRS Quick Add App, you will require a FIRS account. For security purposes, BCFSC will need to confirm your SAFE Certified Company first by emailing your registration request to FIRS@bcforestsafeg.org. Registrations will be reviewed by BCFSC and once approved, your account will be established. An invitation email will be sent to your inbox where you can then set up your FIRS account with your registration details.




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Using feedback from our industry survey and user review sessions, app developer [EHS Analytics](#), is continuing backend development work on the Online Forms feature of the BCFSC FIRS App. The following is an overview of the SAFE Company forms and required activities that will support the Online Forms project:

- Close Call/Hazard/Incident report forms
- Commercial Vehicle maintenance
- Emergency Response Plan
- First Aid Assessment
- Falling checks
- Heavy Equipment maintenance
- Investigation
- Notice of Project
- Orientation
- Pickup maintenance
- Prework planning
- Safety meetings
- Site Inspection
- Supervisor notes
- Training Log
- Worker assessments

The key features under development are:

- Auto storage of SAFE Companies forms for record keeping and to support SAFE Companies audit documentation requirements
- Store company Safe Work Procedures so workers can access in field (available on and offline)
- Submit the records/reports to clients/stakeholders (only if wanted!)
- Available on iOS and Android devices
- Automated work flows to help manage work
- System generated notifications
- Talk to text enabled to reduce typing
- Able to take pictures in field to upload
- Role based access and tasks
- Due tasks highlighted
- Maintain training profiles and records for workers
- Available on and offline with auto sync
- Tips and tricks to help with completion of audit
- Support SAFE Companies Audit submission requirements

As the design and backend components for the FIRS App become finalized, we will be looking for volunteers to help with user acceptance testing, likely in Q1-Q2 2023. If you would like to participate in the user acceptance testing, or for more information about the project, please contact us at FIRS@bcforestsafesafe.org. 



Harvesting Equipment Regulation Update

By Martin Ridgway, SAFE Companies Quality Assurance Supervisor

On September 1, 2021, many requirements in Part 16 (Mobile Equipment) changed or were new. Someone in your company should have read through them by now. These are starting to appear in Inspections from WorkSafeBC. One of interest to people operating harvesting equipment is:

16.38 Rollover or tipover and fire

(1) This section applies to the following mobile equipment:

- (a) a feller buncher;*
- (b) a timber harvester;*
- (c) a timber processor with a significant risk of rollover or tipover when operating on a sloped forest worksite other than a road or a landing.*

(2) In addition to meeting the requirements of section 16.24 [note: “alternate escapes”], the mobile equipment referred to in subsection (1) must be equipped with the following:

- (a) attached to the inside of the cab, a powered cutting tool able to effectively cut through steel guard bars and polycarbonate windows in a timely manner to provide an emergency means of escape;*
- (b) attached to the mobile equipment, in a position that is outside of the cab, a fire extinguisher in good working order with a UL Rating of at least 4-A:60-B:C;*
- (c) if the mobile equipment is manufactured more than 2 years after September 1, 2021, an effective engine fire suppression system that will discharge when needed in the event of a rollover or tipover.*

There are some battery-powered cut-off tools that can meet this requirement. Sticking with the same brand as your Maintenance tools may be useful for battery swapping. Consider how many bars would have to be cut to make a hole for the biggest person in the company to get out, plus have enough charge first to cut through the polycarbonate window. You may need more than one battery. Talk with your tool supplier and/or maintenance people on how many cuts your exact battery would last for in your particular type of metal.

It is important to note that the Regulation says ‘attached’. They (tool and any spare batteries) need to be securely mounted so that they do not become a hazard if the machine is no longer upright. They also need to be able to be detached easily during the emergency. Battery checks on the tool would need to be added to pre-use inspections and/or a maintenance schedule for the machine it is mounted in.

A “4-A:60-B:C” fire extinguisher is commonly known as a red “10 lb dry chemical” extinguisher. It usually weighs about 8kg / 17 lb and is 12-15cm / 5-6” in diameter and about 45cm/18” tall. Note that the Regulation says “at least” for the minimum size.

Standard vehicle mounts are available from normal extinguisher suppliers to properly secure it. A brief visual check that the pressure gauge is still in the green should be added to the pre-use inspection for the machine it is mounted in as well as adding to the formal fire equipment inspection/maintenance schedule for the company.

This is only #38 of the 43 Regulations (plus 3 Schedules) in the revised Part 16. There are very few jobs in forestry that do not use mobile equipment, so Part 16 should be as much of interest as Part 26 (Forestry). Reading it, it’s Guidelines and asking questions will reduce the risk of serious injuries and of visits from WorkSafeBC becoming expensive. 🙏



The Importance of Regular Safety Meetings

By Stacey Sproule, Safety Advisor

When I review SAFE Companies small employer audits, I find the greatest level of inconsistency in submitted reports is the quality of content in monthly safety meeting minutes (Question 11). We get a wide variety of written answers from single word descriptions such as PPE, weather, etc. to full descriptions from companies who want to capture the details of their safety meetings and even feedback from workers on their own personal safety insights.

Creating a work culture where safety is a top priority for everyone requires a commitment from the top down. It is important to put your money where your mouth is and make sure you aren't just talking about safety but putting those words into action with structured safety plans and protocols to ensure workers feel their safety is a company priority.

Regular health and safety meetings are an excellent opportunity to get everyone involved in safety processes. Maintaining communication between owners, supervisors and workers is crucial for the success of the required WorkSafeBC occupational health and safety (OHS) program.

Here are the benefits of regularly scheduled comprehensive health and safety meetings:

- You collaborate with and enlist the help of all employees.
- You promote the importance of safety by showing the company's willingness to invest the time
- You give workers a forum to voice their concerns, share their insights or show their support because, after all, they are on the frontline and know firsthand which unsafe conditions and behaviors exist.
- You provide an opportunity to teach safety topics such as *3- Point Contact*, *Preventing Hearing Loss*, *Warning Signs of Fatigue*, etc. in a short effective conversation rather than long training sessions.

- You provide and promote a level of enhanced awareness, teamwork and community
- You provide an opportunity to quickly and consistently establish a strong safety-first culture by using an easy but crucial method to regularly and collectively maintain it.

Conducting effective monthly safety meetings:

- Hold monthly meetings regularly when possible or more frequently when necessary.
- Inform your crew on the monthly topic(s) for each meeting and develop / maintain an agenda - stick to it.
- Conduct productive, informative and results-oriented meetings. Encourage active participation by everyone present.
- Make health and safety a company priority. Promote and encourage sharing and identifying potential risks and discuss best practices to control identified hazards.
- During the meeting share inspection reports, recent close calls, incident investigations, recent first aid reports and review safe work procedures, recent industry safety alerts and safety publications like the Forest Safety Newsletter.
- Document meeting minutes and record actions taken and open items requiring further action.

Employers have a responsibility to keep workers healthy and safe at work. Fostering well-rounded and relevant monthly safety meetings not only meets your due diligence requirements but more importantly, demonstrates your commitment to getting workers home safe, every day. 🌲