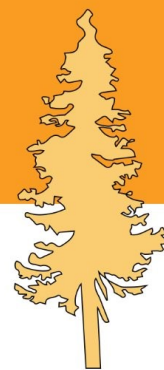




Vancouver Island Safety Conference



2023 CONFERENCE WRAP-UP

Navigating the Future During Complex Times

October 28, 2023 | Vancouver Island Conference Centre

VISC Delegates are Welcomed to the Traditional, Unceded Territory of the Snuneymuxw First Nation



Snuneymuxw Elder, Geraldine Manson

Snuneymuxw Elder and VIU Elder-in-Residence, Geraldine Manson (C-tasi:a), welcomed delegates with a heartfelt prayer. She acknowledged the attendee's passion for safety and appreciated their dedication by coming on a Saturday as it shows passion and compassion for one another.

We are grateful to Geraldine for her beautiful song and inspiring words. Hychqa C'tala.

Rob Moonen Sets the Stage

In his opening remarks, Rob Moonen, CEO of the BC Forest Safety Council (BCFSC), opened the conference with a speech that set the tone for the day. He highlighted three key points:

1. The only constant is change. By managing change effectively, we all help get people home safe at the end of every day.
2. Our ability to shift with the changes shows our resiliency.
3. Industry's safety success is based on continued support and commitment to safety.

Rob also thanked the sponsors, exhibitors, speakers and staff for their contributions to the conference.



BCFSC CEO, Rob Moonen

Thank you to all 294 delegates who joined us for the 16th annual Vancouver Island Safety Conference. An array of presentations focused on the theme of this year's conference was *Navigating the Future During Complex Times*, including three keynote speakers who shared their insights on how to cope with uncertainty and the evolution of change.

We also want to express our appreciation to all the volunteers and sponsors who supported this conference and networking event. Without the generosity of our sponsor's financial, product and service donations, and the valuable time our volunteers provide, this FREE event would not be possible.

Mark Your Calendars for VISC 2024



VISC Attendees Make a Difference for Charities

This year's conference was not only a great opportunity for learning and networking, but also for giving back to the community. Thanks to the generosity of our delegates, we were able to support three charities that make a positive impact in the lives of many people.

KidSport Nanaimo provides financial assistance to children who want to participate in organized sports. This worthy cause received \$1,668 from silent auction contributions in memory of Fred McEachern.

Our 50/50 draw was a huge success, raising \$1,196 in total for the **Canadian Red Cross BC Fires Appeal** which provides emergency relief, recovery assistance and long-term support to BC communities in need. The winner of the draw, Alben Stromquist from Spuzzum Contracting Ltd., generously donated his share of \$598 back to the Red Cross, doubling the impact of the donation. Thank you Alben and crew!

Loaves and Fishes Nanaimo Foodbank is a long-standing recipient from VISC delegates who are encouraged to donate non-perishable food items and/or cash donations in lieu of conference registration fees. Our delegates once again showed their compassion and kindness by bringing over 350lbs of non-perishable food items and donating \$330 in cash and gift cards to this vital organization.

We also want to congratulate the lucky prize winners.

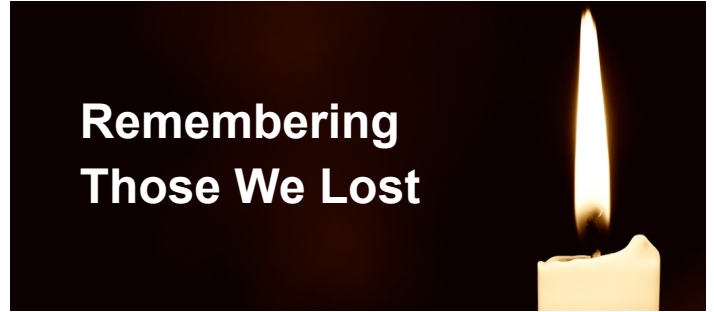
The grand prize winner of the Sony ZV-1 II Vlog Digital Camera generously donated by **London Drugs** went to James Atkin from Mosaic. Congratulations James!

Our VISC early bird registration prize winner was Todd Brown from Gowlland Towing. He went home with a Stanfield and toque courtesy of **BCFSC** for simply registering for the conference before September 15th. An easy task for a great payout!

We want to thank everyone who attended, sponsored, and contributed to this year's conference. You made it a memorable and meaningful event for all of us.



Remembering Those We Lost



Master of Ceremonies, Mike Milholm led a Moment of Silence in honour of those we lost since the 2022 Vancouver Island Safety Conference.

May these deaths remind us of the importance of safety to ensure every worker goes home safe. Every day.

Occupation	Age	Cause of Death
Planing Mill	72	Traumatic Injury
Skidder Operator	52	Traumatic Injury
Forestry Manager	62	Occupational Disease
Pulp Mill Worker	85	Occupational Disease
Power Engineer	84	Occupational Disease
Pulp Mill Worker	77	Occupational Disease
Iron Worker	85	Occupational Disease
Pulp Mill Worker	65	Occupational Disease
Millwright	85	Occupational Disease
Forestry Maintenance	52	MVI
Mill Operator	35	MVI
Forestry Operator	30	Aircraft Incident
Forestry Cook	54	Aircraft Incident
Forestry Worker	82	Traumatic Injury
Carrier Operator	70	Traumatic Injury
Sawmill Worker	85	Occupational Disease
Grapple Operator	60	Traumatic Injury
Sawmill Operator	50	Traumatic Injury
Forestry Worker	74	Traumatic Injury
Pilot	64	Aircraft Incident
Forestry Technologist	56	Aircraft Incident
Forest Firefighter	37	MVI
Forest Firefighter	27	MVI
Forest Firefighter	21	MVI
Forest Firefighter	19	MVI
Forest Firefighter	25	MVI
Pilot	35	Aircraft Incident
Forest Firefighter	19	Traumatic Injury

Congratulations to this year's Safety Award Winners

The 2023 Leadership in Safety Awards were presented by BCFSC's CEO, Rob Moonen during the Vancouver Island Safety Conference.

The awards celebrate safety achievements in the forest industry by recognizing individuals for their contributions and their outstanding commitment in supporting safety in the workplace.

This year's awards were presented to three well-deserved individuals who have shown outstanding commitment to forestry safety throughout the course of their careers.



Roger Harris, Patrick McDonald, Sandra Higgins

The **Cary White Memorial Lifetime Achievement Award for Commitment to Safety Excellence** was presented to **Roger Harris**, the BC Forest Safety Ombudsperson who will be retiring from his position at the end of 2023. Roger Harris has served as the BC Forest Safety Ombudsperson for 17 years. In this role, he was responsible for investigating safety concerns and providing recommendations for improvement to industry stakeholders, including employers, workers and regulatory bodies. Roger's extensive experience in forestry, gave him a 360-degree view and an objective perspective of BC forestry with a full understanding of the inherent safety and operational risks that both workers and employers face.

During his tenure, Roger produced in-depth reports on key safety issues relating to forestry safety, including Phase Integration, SAFE Companies, Recruitment, Training and Certification for Worker Safety, Resource Road Safety and more.

Sandra Higgins was awarded the **2023 Most Valuable Player of the Year Award** in Harvesting. Sandy's lifelong career in forestry began when logging operations were mostly manual, and the industry was extremely high risk. She has shared stories when it was considered normal to take immense risks just to bring home a paycheck, when the motto was "in for the money, out for your life". When the BC Forest Safety Council introduced the SAFE Companies program and industry started to see a shift in safety culture, Sandy witnessed the cultural shift first-hand. She knew from experience it was not going to be without its challenges, yet at the same time, it was the best part of her career.

Sandy is the Safety Coordinator at Mercer Forestry Services located in Lumby, BC. Her industry experience and her commitment to safety are at the core of Mercer's "Safety First" forestry operations. Sandy firmly believes in this number one value and personally holds safety to the highest standard by leading by example. She is well respected among staff, customers and industry and she clearly and consistently demonstrates strong safety leadership in the organization.

The **2023 Most Valuable Player of the Year Award in Manufacturing** went to **Patrick McDonald**. Patrick has over 15 years of experience working as a safety professional in Canada. He is considered an innovator and leader in wood products manufacturing safety in BC and specializes in developing worker and operational safety solutions.

Time and time again, Patrick has demonstrated his forward-thinking creativity in various projects including his most recent hand-safety initiative that focusses on the prevention of hand injuries. For this project, he collaborated with a leading glove supplier to design and implement gloves that are task-specific to wood products manufacturing and shared the project outcome with the BC sawmill industry and across Canada through the cross-country safety share with Workplace Safety North (Ontario).

How to Tame Your Elephant

Safety leadership specialist **Allan Moore** was the first keynote speaker of the day.

His presentation titled “*How to Tame Your Elephant*”, was a captivating and humorous story of his encounter with wild elephants in Botswana.

He began his presentation by addressing that although we may be divisive in some ways, when it comes to safety, we must be united to truly have each other’s backs. This commitment to one another can trigger an instinct to stop and think and allow us to recognize and appreciate the care of one another.

Allan’s cited the three fundamental rights Canadian Occupational Health and Safety Act that entitles all employees to:

1. The right to know about health and safety matters.
2. The right to participate in decisions that could affect their health and safety.
3. The right to refuse work that could affect their health and safety and that of others.

He used these fundamental rights as examples to identify three types of safety leaders using an analogy from the movie *The Good, The Bad and The Ugly*.

To help identify the leadership styles, Allan used his experience of travelling in Botswana on a trip to track elephants. He characterized the good, the bad and the ugly in the safety leadership styles of those accompanying him on the trip.

He was travelling with two friends and local guides who all had various opinions on what to do if an elephant should charge. Various recommendations were made to Allan who was unsure of what to do due to his lack of knowledge and experience and he didn’t know whose advice to trust. One of the group members shared his knowledge not to run and to stand his ground should an elephant charge, another in the group gave Allan the impression that he was confident in his knowledge that he would do the right thing if the elephants charged and they should all stick together, the trip guides gave Allan the impression that he was in good hands and nothing would happen. Allan was apprehensive to ask safety questions and took the guides at their word that they knew best, he trusted in his friend’s confidence and told him he would stay with the group should an unsafe situation arise, and he did not inquire further about why his friend advised him on not to run.

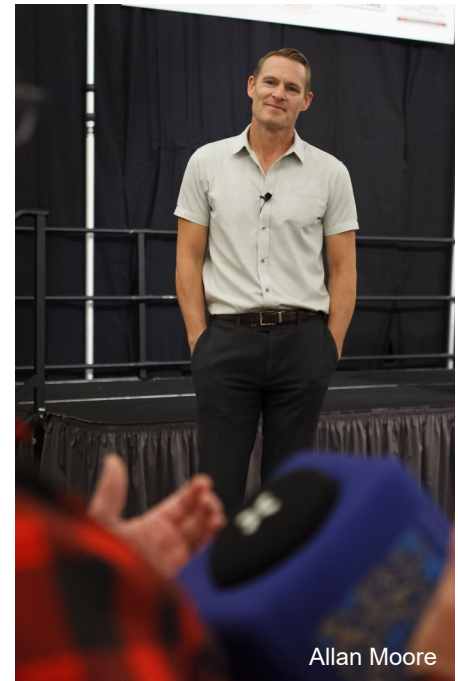
In the end, an elephant did charge, and Allan ran for his life based on the panicked instruction from the local guides, not considering anyone else but himself. It turned out to be the wrong decision. The only person not to run was the one person who recommended standing his ground. The elephants stopped within a few metres of his friend, and in the end, no one was hurt.

Allan then defined the good, the bad and the ugly leaders in the group explaining that his friend who stood his ground was a good leader. He provided his knowledge to the group and then followed his own advice “putting his money where his mouth was”. By standing his ground, he saved lives.

The bad leader(s) he believed were the guides or the “subject matter experts” who gave the group false confidence that nothing bad would happen. They did not provide any safety expertise, only impressed upon the group that they should just enjoy their trip and not worry about anything.

Allan identified himself as the ugly leader. He did not exercise his right to know, participate or refuse. He did not ask questions, challenge assumptions or seek clarification. He did not act as a team player, but as a selfish individual. He did not tame his elephant, but let it run wild.

Allan ended with a call-to-action for all of us to be good leaders in safety, to share our knowledge, to ask questions, to challenge assumptions, to seek clarification, to act as a team, to have each other’s backs, and to tame our elephants.



Allan Moore

ZoneSafe: Proximity Warning Systems for Mobile Equipment and Pedestrian Interface



Joe Scibilia & Mike Milholm

Joe Scibilia, the Business Development Manager of ZoneSafe, demonstrated how their technology can aid safety on worksites and complement existing safety procedures. ZoneSafe is a company that specializes in proximity warning systems for mobile equipment and pedestrian interface.

ZoneSafe technology offers detection systems for mobile equipment, personnel and no-go hazard zones that offer activated warnings to help avoid collisions and incidents. These alert systems can be mounted on mobile equipment and walls and also worn as tags providing audible, visual and vibrating pulse warnings to notify equipment operators, pedestrians or personnel of anything located in the detection zone. The system also captures data for tracking and reporting to help identify near-miss incident reports in high alert areas to re-evaluate safety protocols for those areas and help reduce the risk of potential incidents.

Joe Scibilia explained how ZoneSafe technology can be applied to various scenarios in the forest industry, such as logging, hauling, loading, unloading, milling and processing. He also shared some case studies and testimonials from clients who have used ZoneSafe technology and experienced positive results in terms of safety performance, productivity and efficiency.

For more information on ZoneSafe technology, [visit their website.](#)

Roger Harris Bids Adieu to His Role as the BC Forest Safety Ombudsperson

Roger Harris took to the stage to share his insights and reflections before retiring from his role as the BC Forest Safety Ombudsperson at the end of 2023.

He made note that the Moment of Silence was a chance for him to reflect on the history of the Ombudsperson role, which was created in response to the high number of fatalities and injuries in the industry in 2005.

Roger encouraged everyone to celebrate our successes as there is no end point, no finish line, in safety. He said that we should not get caught up in the statistics, as they are not the ultimate way to measure safety. Statistics can help us pay attention, but we should look at the evolution of the statistics over time, rather than focusing on the numbers in isolation.

He shared some statistics over time, taking a look at the fatalities vs. the harvesting volume from 1992 to 2022. We saw how the fatality rate has decreased significantly over the years, despite the fluctuations in the harvesting volume. The statistics showed how industry can be negatively impacted, such as the fallers strike in 1972, and ultimately affect safety outcomes. Roger shared insights on how when the industry tries to catch up and fill the hole in the loss of marketable fibre, that is when mistakes are made and injuries and fatalities become elevated.

Roger remarked that if safety could be legislated, it would have been done a long time ago. He said that safety is not simple, it is complex, and there is



Roger Harris

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Roger Harris

continued from page 5

no one answer to complex problems. We need to continue to focus on the people doing the work and build upon a culture of safety first.

Through Roger's graphs, we saw how industry's safety culture has evolved over the years. He made a point of saying that in 2005, there was a code of silence, and we could not have a candid conversation around safety because of potential backlash. The industry was transactional and focused on profits and it didn't matter if people were put at risk.

Roger explained the number of fatalities in 2005 exposed the danger of working in forestry and the public outcry made everyone sit up and pay attention. Changes needed to be made. One of the changes was to establish the Ombudsperson role and the BC Forest Safety Council.

The Ombudsperson role provided the industry with a place for candid, open conversation without consequence. It was a confidential office for workers in the industry to raise concerns privately without being touted as a "whistleblower".

Roger observed that since his time in office, the industry has transformed and evolved. Now we work together and collaborate with one another for a better and safer output. Candid conversations about worker safety are now commonplace. Advisory Groups, like the Falling Technical Advisory Committee, provide a collective place for peer-to-peer discussions and opportunities to bring safety concerns to the forefront.

Roger shared three takeaways that we can all learn from his experience as Ombudsperson:

1. Change is constant. We need to be adaptable and flexible to the changing conditions and challenges in the industry.
2. Embrace the outrage. We need to use the public pressure and scrutiny as a catalyst for positive change and improvement in safety.
3. Address the elephant in the room. We need to be honest and transparent about the issues and problems that affect safety and not shy away from difficult conversations.

Roger finished his presentation by reminding us that when we share concerns with owners, supervisors, management, and each other, we make strides to make sure we can keep doing our jobs and get home safe at the end of the day.

We would like to thank Roger for his dedication and service to the forestry industry and for making a difference to the safety of its workers. He has been a valuable resource and a trusted ally for many people in the industry. We wish him all the best in his retirement.



Responsible Awareness Falls on All Our Shoulders

Dr. **Alison Granger-Brown**, a human development expert, gave an insightful presentation on how to manage ourselves in our environment and career. She shared some practical tips and methods to help us cope with stress, maintain awareness, and stay motivated.

Dr Granger-Brown started by asking us how we manage ourselves in our environment and career. She reminded us that safety is inherently in us (self-preservation) and in our control. When incidents occur, we need to look at what we did and didn't do to help us determine a safe course of action for the future. Attention and awareness to being vigilant to personal safety is the key to self-management.

She explained that she was not talking about hyper-awareness, which requires maintenance to our own health and wellbeing. She was referring to the complexities of life (e.g., war, the economy, etc., things out of the scope of our own control) that can deplete hopefulness. How do we keep up hope? She said there are methods of focus we can use to help us. These methods are not about mental health, but will help us

understand how to become aware of our surroundings and stress levels to help maintain focus.

She then gave us some fascinating facts about our brains. Our brains use more calories than any other organ in the body and are made up of about 80 billion neurons, which create trillions of bits of information. Our brains process 11 million bits of information per second. To do this, our brain splits into two systems:

- Rote Mode: when our brain goes on autopilot (think of times when you've driven home but don't actually remember the drive).
- Reset Mode: our brain gets triggered into restore and reset mode when our parasympathetic nervous system (PNS) kicks in.

She continued by describing how our bodies react to stress. When our bodies are stressed, our bodies rely on a stress-response system and our nervous system kicks into action. Stress can trigger the PNS and the body starts to compensate for its personal safety. Your pre-frontal cortex can actually turn off, which can affect executive functioning. In times of extreme stress, the PNS gets overloaded and accidents or dangerous situations can occur as the brain is overwhelmed and can't choose what to prioritize.

She also mentioned some warning systems that the body has, which we have all likely been exposed to:

- Gut instinct: the body contains 1 million neurons in our guts, which kick in when the sensory feels unsafe. Trust it - it is your body's way of telling you something is not right.
- Little Brain in Heart: this is the sense that you get when your heart feels like it's fluttering. It is an intracardiac nervous system felt in your heart muscle that helps activate heightened awareness.

She warned us that constant stress can break down our body's survival instincts and our ability to manage our stress response. To stay on top of our game and stay aware and focused, we need to maintain our health and wellness through stress management.

She advised us to understand awareness and maintain vigilance to our health and wellbeing by focusing on sleep, nutrition, exercise, fun, awe, socialization, spirituality, and creativity. These are all human factors that must be cared for.

She also shared with us three key factors to consider in order to stay motivated:

- Sense of Purpose: having a clear and meaningful goal or vision
- Sense of Mastery: having the confidence and skills to achieve our goals
- Sense of Autonomy: having the freedom and resources to pursue our goals

Finally, she provided some tips to help us manage stress, maintain focus, remain alert, and in control:

- Breathing: our breathing is connected to our heart rate and brain waves. Our ability to control our breathing will allow us to control heightened stress levels. She taught us the Square or Box Method of Breathing, a breathing technique used by US Navy Seals before they engage in combat or missions.
- Writing notes at the end of the day and removing them from our brain and allowing us to pick them up the following day.
- Avoiding blue screens before bed.
- Keeping a bedtime ritual so the brain knows it is being prepped to rest and restore.
- Listening to our body. Our body is the best indicator of elevated stress.
- Sleeping well. 7 hours is optimal. If we toss and turn, we should get up, go to a quiet place to restore the brain peacefully, and head back to bed.

She concluded by saying, "Take Care by Being Aware." We thank Dr Granger-Brown for her enlightening and helpful presentation. We hope you enjoyed this newsletter article and learned something new. Stay safe and focused!



Dr. Alison Granger-Brown

How to Navigate Change in a World of Disruption

Our final keynote speaker **Steve Donahue** is a global speaker and bestselling author of *Shifting Sands*. Steve shared his incredible story of crossing the Sahara Desert and how he learned to embrace change in a challenging and unpredictable environment. He also gave us some valuable insights and tips on how to deal with change in our personal and professional lives.

Steve's presentation was titled "*An Endless Journey on Shifting Sands*". He used the metaphor of the shifting sands to illustrate how change is inevitable and ever-present in our world. He told us how he embarked on a daring expedition to cross the Sahara Desert, the largest and hottest desert on Earth. He faced many dangers and difficulties along the way and fascinating people who safely guided him through difficult situations teaching him life lessons that have stayed with him to this day.

Steve's journey was not only a physical one, but also a mental and emotional one. He learned to overcome his fears, doubts, and prejudices, and to trust himself and others. He learned to adapt to the changing conditions and to seize the opportunities that came his way. He learned to appreciate the beauty and diversity of the desert and its inhabitants. He learned to enjoy the journey, not just the destination.



Steve used his journey as a way to explain how to embrace change and get better at change. He shared some practical advice suggesting we use four key points to embrace change:

- **Relegate the Pyramid of Fear:** This is a model that explains why we are afraid of change and how we can overcome it. The pyramid consists of four levels: fear of failure, fear of rejection, fear of loss and fear of the unknown. Steve encouraged us to challenge these fears and to reframe them as opportunities for growth and learning.
- **Evaluate the Downside of Not Changing:** This is a way of assessing the risks and consequences of staying in our comfort zone and avoiding change. Steve urged us to consider the potential problems and dangers that could arise if we do not change, especially in a world that is constantly evolving and demanding new skills and competencies.
- **Exaggerate the Upside of Change:** This is a way of envisioning the benefits and rewards of embracing change and taking action. Steve advised us to imagine the positive outcomes and possibilities that could result from changing, such as new experiences, new connections, new knowledge, and new achievements.

Extricate Yourself from the Status Quo: This is a way of breaking free from the habits and routines that keep us stuck and limit our potential. He also suggested that we adopt a beginner's mind, a mindset that is curious, open and eager to learn.

Steve also emphasized the importance of safety when dealing with change. He explained that by evaluating the downside of not changing, we can identify and eliminate potential risks or hazards.

He also explained that the upside of change will never be obvious. It can only be evaluated once you've taken the risk and made the change. But we can motivate ourselves and others to take action and to improve our performance and well-being.

He suggested evaluating mandatory changes over optional and assessing the potential risks that could change them from optional into mandatory if they are not thoroughly considered.

Steve's presentation was captivating. His storytelling skills and humor inspired us. He challenged us to think differently and to act boldly. Steve's amazing story and his valuable insights on getting better at change resonated deeply in these times of unpredictability.

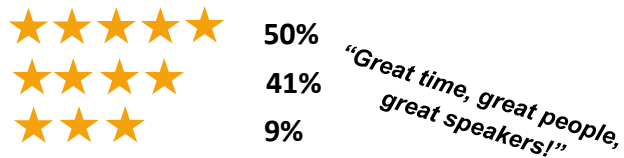


Survey Results

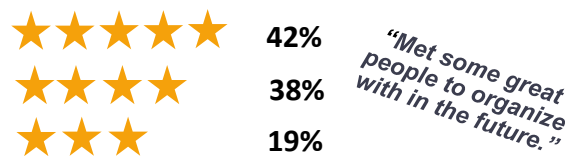
1 95 delegates participated in the Pigeonhole Live Survey providing their feedback on the 2023 VISC Conference. A breakdown of the participants showed that most came from the harvesting sector (42%). The manufacturing sector made up 26% of the audience and over 29% indicated as "Other". The audience was mainly made up of Workers (37%) with 21% in supervisor roles and management at 33%. Owners made up 6% with the remainder of the audience made up of students at 3%. Over 66% of attendees were a Worker Safety Rep or member of a JOHSC Committee.

The following is a breakdown of the survey results:

OVERALL CONFERENCE RATING



NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES



KEYNOTE RATINGS

ALLAN MOORE "How to Tame Your Elephant"



"Very engaging, loved the group interaction"

DR. ALISON GRANGER-BROWN Responsible Awareness Falls on All Our Shoulders



"Very informative and insightful."

STEVE DONAHUE How to Navigate Change



"Steve Donahue was amazing!"

PRESENTER RATINGS

ROB MOONEN Opening & Closing Remarks and Safety Awards



"Great job of setting the stage."

ROGER HARRIS The Shifting Landscape of Forestry Safety



"Very eye opening."

JOE SCIBILIA Proximity Alert Technology



"Extremely important safety topic"

TIM STINSON Drone Safety



"Very interesting. There is more to than I thought."

Keynote speaker **Steve Donahue** left us with this to say about VISC 2023 ...
"I have attended over 1,000 conferences and this one of the best I have ever been to!"



2023

Vancouver Island Safety Conference

Conference Moments - courtesy of Geoff Hoew, VISC 2023 Photographer





2023

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Conference Moments - courtesy of Geoff Howe, VISC 2023 Photographer



2023



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