



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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B.C.'s Auditor General concludes more needs to be done to eliminate forest worker death and serious injury

VICTORIA – Today, Auditor General John Doyle released his audit of progress toward government's goal of eliminating forest worker deaths and serious injuries.

Four years ago, government committed to cutting the number of deaths and serious injuries by half within three years. Several months later, the goal was revised to zero deaths and serious injuries. In 2006 the Minister of Forests and Range called for an independent review of forest safety issues – concerns shared by the Minister of Labour and Citizens' Services.

“The goal of eliminating forest worker death or serious injury has not been achieved. Strong leadership and commitment is required now to guide, complement and support efforts taken by industry”, said Doyle.

“Government's involvement in forest worker safety is fragmented among several bodies. Existing occupational health and safety regulations have not been vigorously enforced for all forest industry workers”, he went on to say. “There has been no detectable impact on rates of death and serious injury.”

“If government is to meet its forest worker safety goals, action is required on a number of fronts”, said Doyle. He makes 15 recommendations to the Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services, Ministry of Forest and Range and WorkSafeBC, to improve forest worker safety.

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Report highlights attached

2007/08 Report #5 – Preventing Fatalities and Serious Injuries in B.C. Forests: Progress Needed.

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A copy of the full report is available on our website at: <http://bcauditor.com>