



SPEAKING OUT FOR SAFETY, CONTRACT CHANGES & INNOVATION

My heartfelt condolences go out to the families, friends and communities of our fallen colleagues. We have witnessed a spike in industry fatalities this summer and we must take a moment to remember these individuals—who they were and what they meant to our forestry community. These tragedies should be front and centre in all of our crew discussions as we go back to work after a long, dry summer.

Although complete details of each incident have not been released as I write, we need to acknowledge our fallen colleagues' sacrifice and create change in our industry once and for all. Paperwork, courses, meetings and regulations are all there to help us build a workplace with no injuries or fatalities. But it is a boots-on-the-ground culture shift that is going to get us there. THIS STARTS WITH YOU! Develop the courage to speak up and be heard. You must lead by example, ask questions and take the extra time to ensure you and your co-workers are clear of any danger at all times. We should all be **"standing in the gap"** for safety and life.

"Standing in the Gap" is an exceptional safety presentation I took part in while touring New Zealand in 2013. This inspirational and heartwarming presentation was presented at Forest Industry Contractors Association's annual safety convention and trade show in Rotorua. I have become good friends with the presenters—husband and wife team Wiremu Lee and Marsella Edmonds—over the last couple of years. They will be presenting at our 2016 TLA convention and trade show in January at the Westin Bayshore. The Edmonds family experienced the loss of their son, Robert, in a falling accident. This honest presentation is one you can't miss. Please plan for your owners, managers and employees to attend. I believe the Edmonds' message will both hit home and give us a different perspective on keeping our people safe in the field. With their Maori heritage and amazing strength, I know

Wiremu Lee and Marsella's presentation will resonate with BC's forest industry, as it has in New Zealand with impressive results.

This summer, when a passerby said, "Isn't this sunny weather incredible?" your answer may have been a little unexpected. Maybe you politely agreed. But if your inside voice got going, maybe you talked about how much the weather is negatively impacting your life and business. No revenue, no pay cheques. A work load that's piling up and adding additional stress to your fall operations. Deadlines flying by or looming in the background. This year's "summer that never ended" has had quite the historic impact on BC's forests and on the loggers sitting at home as a result of prolonged record temperatures that ended in record rainfall. Dealing with extremes is the nature of the business, that's what.

As we move into our busy time after such a hot dry summer, contractors need to look directly at the financial side of the business with safety leading the way. As business-minded individuals, we may look at the months lost to hot weather as a positive shift to an increased demand for volume to be harvested. So the main message here is simple. Get a handle on your costs and don't under sell your services. Remember, a true safety program costs money, however it will ensure workers have the best opportunity to return home safe every day and save you money at the end of the day. Don't base your bid, or productivity, on what you can do yourself. And, finally, remember to **Say No** if the deal is wrong for any reason. There is plenty of wood out there to harvest and making the wrong deal or being afraid to say no doesn't help anyone, including you!

Here are a few things that consistently change in the field and are sometimes missed in contract modification:

- utilization/spec changes
- additional bush sorting
- weather/time of year of harvest due to extended fire season
- change in trucking destinations
- increased or decreased delivery demands

If you see these demands or changes, please take the time to identify their impact and work with the licensee to recognize the additional costs, with contract amendments.

The contractor community is not stuck in old thinking and wants to be successful over the long haul. Your TLA has heard this and, as a result, we have taken steps to work with the Coast Forest Products Association (CFPA), licensees and FPIInnovations on like-minded issues. We understand that our industry needs to evolve in many areas, including technology and government regulation. I would like to thank the CFPA and other participants for agreeing to work together to identify areas where we can increase our competitiveness both as contractors and as an industry.

Your TLA and its Board of Directors will maintain our push on rate issues. However, we are stepping outside the box as well. I believe this is our industry putting our best foot forward to ensure business success for loggers and BC's forest sector as a whole within the global marketplace.

Finally, please remember to have the confidence to speak out for safety, contract changes, innovation and always understand the **Power of NO.** ▲

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