



CELEBRATING 60 YEARS IN 2018 AND ADVOCATING FOR TRAINING FUNDS

Just a reminder to mark your calendar for the ILA's 60th Annual Conference & Trade Show to be held in Kamloops on May 3-5, 2018. This year's theme is "Our Strength ... A Unifying Voice for 60 Years." Inside and outside displays will be set up at the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc Powwow Grounds, 100 – 345 Powwow Trail, just off the Yellowhead Highway in Kamloops. Registration packages and further information will be mailed out this month. Information will also be posted to our website: www.interiorlogging.org.

Our host hotels are the Sandman Signature (phone: 250-377-7263) and the Coast Kamloops Hotel (phone: 250-828-6660). When registering, please request the ILA delegates booking rate.

For the third year running, I am pleased to advise that the Interior Safety Conference will be held just prior to our conference on May 3, 2018. The theme for their conference is "Safe Behaviours = \$mart Business." Registration information and the agenda will be posted on our website early this month.

I know I regularly write about forest safety as well as our equipment operator and log truck driver training programs. However, both these topics are major concerns for the industry. I recently completed a phone survey of five major contractors in the Caribou and southern BC. My question to the owner/contractor was: "Will you be hiring any employees for the following operator positions within the next few months?" Here are their responses:

Operator Position	Number of Contractors Polled	Contractors with Open Positions	Number of Positions Open
Feller Buncher Operators	5	4	4
Processor Operators	5	4	4
Skidder Operators	5	5	8
Log Loader Operators	5	4	5
Log Truck Drivers	5	4	9



From just five contractor businesses there is an opportunity to place 30 workers into a piece of equipment or a logging truck. Can we find them? YES. Are they trained? NO. Can we train them? YES. Do we have the funds? NO.

There are many more operator job classifications that I did not request as part of this survey, but my point is there are many jobs available in the timber harvesting sector and many students that want to be trained. We have the courses, the instructor, the university, the licensee, the contractors and

the students. Unfortunately, we don't have the funding. We will continue to work with the current provincial government and the Labour Market Information Division of the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills & Training in an effort to receive funding so we can continue on with a course that has trained more than 150 students over the last four years.

Finally, I'd like to thank the TLA executive for inviting the ILA executive to attend the TLA's December board meeting and Christmas party. Attending the meeting was a great experience and helped the ILA better understand the TLA's advocacy goals for 2018. We look forward to hosting the TLA board again at our conference in May and working together throughout the next year.▲