



BCFSC FUNDED SAFETY APP TESTED IN FIELD WITH SILVICULTURE CONTRACTORS

The BC Forest Safety Council (BCFSC), in partnership with the BC Safe Forestry Program Strategic Advisory Committee (SAC) and a technology vendor, EHS Analytics, have started testing an advanced electronic safety reporting system, which in time could be rolled out to the whole of industry.

The new system, which was made available to all SAC member companies at no charge to test, is intended to make documenting and reporting safety far easier and more efficient. Most importantly, it can provide forestry contractors and licensees with tools for viewing their safety performance and how it compares to the rest of industry. As at mid-April there were 59 organizations using the system, with 1,979 people signed in and 2,234 incidents recorded.

The project started more than two years ago when the SAC, representing a

cross-section of BC forestry and silviculture contractors and licensees, discussed the absence in the sector of meaningful data to proactively and accurately assess leading indicators of injuries and near misses that could assist employers in better preventing these occurrences. The result was the development of a safety reporting app and analytics tool for SAC members, designed by them.

The mobile and web-based tools allow for capturing and coordinating safety records and activities for users as well as providing them with a simple and informative way of assessing performance through a visual dashboard.

The early adopter contractors are pleased with the results, the ease of use of the technology, the privacy and security features.

Zanzibar Holding Ltd.'s Sylvia Fenwick-Wilson said: "This initiative has helped us modernize our safety data recording and analysis. We can now capture our inci-

As at mid-April, 59 forestry contractors and other organizations had signed up to use the app and over 2,200 incidents had been reported using the app.



Photo courtesy of BCFSC

dents and investigations in the field at the cutblocks and camps, with the ability to share those immediately throughout the company. Reporting to the companies we work for is now easier and we have better ability to analyse our performance alongside our peers, with the goal of making things safer for our workers."

Golden Fire Jumper Ltd.'s Max Jolin said that they had been using the app "for a while and had great success. The reporting is easier than before and helps us maintain



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our own records. We can then use this information to help guide us in making our work safer.”

Access to EHS Analytics is paid for by the BCFSC, and contractors or licensees may use one or both parts as follows:

1. They can use the mobile app and web-based forms, called “EHS Forms” to record all their injury, incident, and close call records. The system provides silviculture-tailored forms that can be completed online or offline. The mobile app functions online and offline and can be installed on most smart phones or tablets. The web-app can be accessed online for laptops or mobile devices as well. The forms automatically synchronize with a cloud database across all devices and provide updated reporting summaries for rapid management review. Completed incidents can easily be reported via email to necessary parties like a licensee, and information can be transferred into a WorkSafeBC Form 7 report and submitted electronically if needed. In order to review their data and performance, companies that use the app have access to dashboards and summary tools for analysing safety.

2. For those contractors or other employers with their own existing reporting systems, use of EHS Forms is not required. Employers can connect their existing systems to EHS Analytics and automatically sync records to a cloud database and gain access to the full suite of analytical tools and dashboards. There are many firms in the forestry industry already linked to the EHS Analytics' system this way. EHS Analytics' is compatible with most leading safety management systems.

All contractors and other employers, whether using the EHS Forms or those who link existing systems to EHS can use the dashboard and its full suite of tools. EHS Analytics' users are able to instantly view and analyse incident report data for their own company and, should they choose to, share and compare their activity with a pool of data based on peers in their sector. Employers that generate only a small number of reports are able to view their incidents and close calls as part of a larger field of data.

As employers take further steps to improve their safety programs, solid data analysis will be increasingly valuable for assessing the success of their initiatives. The use of electronic reporting tools is

becoming the norm in forestry and other sectors, and more industries are moving towards collaborative data-sharing systems that help them learn from each others' experiences. These tools are evolving rapidly, and EHS Analytics is providing a way for companies to access advanced safety management strategies, including enhanced support for claims management and comprehensive data for program review and improvement.

These systems gain power and value with the number of companies that join into the data-collaboration system, and there is an opportunity for employers to make the data they are already required to collect work for them.

The BCFSC will evaluate how this system has worked for the SAC employers later in fall 2019, and then look at expanding and configuring the platform to the other sectors within forestry who could also benefit.▲

Cherie Whelan has been the Director of SAFE Companies of BC Forestry Safety since 2016 and brings more than 25 years of health and safety experience from both the public and private sectors.

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