

## **WISHA REGIONAL DIRECTIVE**

*Department of Labor and Industries*

*Division of Occupational Safety and Health*

# **2.21 Consultation Initiative For the Logging Industry**

**Date Issued: January 8, 2007**

## **I. Background**

Small logging employers have historically had a higher number of accidents, injuries and fatalities when compared with larger companies and other industries. Enforcement activity within the industry has shown only limited success in reducing accidents. Research of claims information indicated that “struck by” was the leading source of injury. This was followed by the lack of, or inadequate employee training.. The research also indicated 80 percent of the accidents were the result of the work process and 20 percent were the result of mechanical failure, lack of guarding, etc.

Based on the research, a plan was developed to work with the small logging employers through the department’s consultation program. The plan included developing long-term relationships to help employers with safety programs, hazard identification and training. Since consultation must be invited by the employer before our services can be rendered, a non-formal approach was taken to market consultation services. Since most of the contractors in Washington work for the large landowners, the consultation emphasis would focus not just on the contract loggers, but also the landowners to work together to ensure a safe and healthful workplace was provided for employees. By including the landowners, we could gain access to the logging contractors the department normally would not see.

This emphasis program was initiated in the fall of 2000 with onsite consultations beginning in the winter of 2001. The first group of logging contractors consisted of 30-35 employers. An initial review of claims data in December 2001, showed a reduction in claims from 42 to 30. With this success, marketing efforts were stepped up and by the end of 2002, approximately 100 employers were participating. After one year the number of claims dropped from 234 the previous year, to 161 (a 31percent decrease). At the present time, there are over 200 small logging contractors and four major landowners participating in the program. The most current data shows that the \*pre-consultation number of claims was 376. The actual post-consult number of claims was 269, a 28.5 percent decrease. Claims costs, based on an average dollar amount per injury type, show

the pre-consultation incurred costs were \$24,036,986. With the reduction in the number of claims, using averages, the expected incurred cost would be \$18,851,312 resulting in a projected reduction of \$5,185,674 (21.6 percent) in total claims costs.

*\*Pre-consultation is a sliding scale for the employers based on how long they have been in the program. Once an employer elects to participate, their previous three years of claims history becomes part of the data. The comparison is then based on this information. The longer an employer is in the program, the more defined the results will be.*

## **II Scope and Application**

This WISHA Regional Directive (WRD) provides guidance for the coordination of enforcement and consultation activities in the logging industry. It replaces and rescinds WRD 2.21, Logging Partnership, issued July 7, 2006 and any previous guidance, whether formal or informal and will remain in effect until rescinded.

## **III. Enforcement and Consultation Protocols**

A 12-month deferment from scheduled enforcement inspections will be given to logging companies who participate in the Logging Initiative. The deferment will apply to logging sides using similar logging methods to those reviewed during the onsite consultation. For instance, the deferment would apply to a high lead cable side if the consultant had conducted an onsite survey of another cable side. The deferment would not apply if the consultant had only visited a ground based logging side and the employer was currently conducting cable logging.

For a logging company to participate, they must schedule a comprehensive consultation and agree to correct all hazards identified during a walk around of active logging sides, including any program deficiencies identified by the consultant. To be considered a comprehensive consultation for this initiative, the consultant must visit all active logging sides. Employers may schedule a comprehensive consultation in two (2) consecutive years, for a maximum deferment from a scheduled enforcement inspection of two (2). Imminent danger allegations, accidents, fatalities, complaints or a follow-up to a previous inspection would still be conducted in accordance with the Compliance Manual.

A list of the participating logging contractors will be produced by consultation and a copy given to enforcement. The list will be updated as needed to ensure that enforcement staff have a current list of participating companies.

When an enforcement inspector comes upon a logging jobsite, the inspector must first determine the company name and if they are involved with the Consultation Emphasis for Logging. *Involved in the program* means the employer has had or has scheduled a comprehensive consultation. If the logging company is in the program, the enforcement officer shall leave the jobsite. If the company is in the program and while determining the company's status in the program, the enforcement officer observes a serious hazard, he/she shall:

- Address the hazard with the owner or lead man and the employees.
- Have the employer/lead man correct the hazard. If they refuse to comply, normal enforcement activity will commence.
- Notify the consultant for an immediate follow-up with the employer so steps can be taken to ensure the hazard doesn't occur again. Consultation will send a letter to the employer notifying them that if they are found in violation again by enforcement staff, citations will be issued.

WRD 2.12, "Coordinating DOSH Enforcement and Consultation," will be followed during the promotional process while trying to encourage new employers to join the program.

After the employer has made a commitment to become active in the Consultation Initiative for Logging, a comprehensive consultation will be scheduled and take place within 30 days.

The effectiveness of this emphasis program will be evaluated annually.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Stephen M. Cant, CIH, Assistant Director  
Department of Labor and Industries  
Division of Occupational Safety and Health