

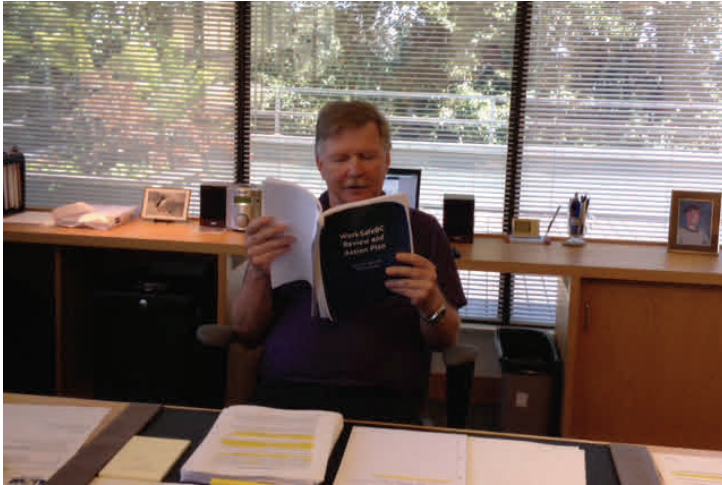


# SafeTalk



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## WorkSafeBC Review and Action Plan Fails to Restore Confidence in Worker Safety Steelworkers Call For Public Inquiry



USW District 3 Director Steve Hunt reviews the Macatee report examining both the risks associated with sawmill dust and more broadly, how workplace injuries and fatalities should be investigated by WorkSafeBC.

The WorkSafeBC Review and Action Plan released today by the B.C. Government fails to restore confidence in the agency's ability to keep workers safe, says the United Steelworkers (USW).

"In the aftermath of the horrific explosions in Burns Lake and Prince George and the botched investigations by WorkSafeBC, it is abundantly clear that the problems at the agency run deep and are engrained in a culture of secrecy. Unfortunately, nothing in this report fixes these problems," says Stephen Hunt, western Canadian Director for the United Steelworkers.

"The families who lost loved ones and have been horribly affected by the sawmill explosions deserve better. The recommendations do little more than tinker around the edges of a very flawed agency. The report fails to provide any explanation to the debacle that was WorkSafeBC's investigation. A public inquiry is required to provide answers to family members, workers and the public. Only then can WorkSafeBC hope to rebuild its standing," Hunt says.

The United Steelworkers launched a campaign in October last year called "Stop The Killing. Enforce The Law". The campaign is aimed at lobbying provincial and federal governments to enforce the Westray Law, which can hold corporate executives criminally responsible where negligence leads to workplace death.

"In February of 2012, our union met with WorkSafeBC to request a dedicated prosecutor and increased training and awareness for police officers and crown counsel specifically for enforcement of the Westray Law. This was followed by letters to the agency on March 9 and July 10 of 2012. Clearly, they dropped the ball and continue to do so," says Hunt. [Full Report](#)

## Coming Events

September 7-8 USW Local 1-207 Level 2, Edmonton, Alberta  
October 6-8 USW National HSE Conference, Toronto, Ontario

## Managing Faller Fatigue



Local 1-85 and 1-1937 fallers are participating in a study on faller fatigue. Carole Savage (far right) from the BC Forest Safety Council describes how the Readibands work to fallers from CFI in Port McNeill, BC.

Working with the BC Forest Safety Council, the USW has been meeting with a number of falling crews from locals 1-85 and 1-1937 to discuss issues around fatigue.

With the strenuous work, long days and early days fatigue has often been thought to be a contributing factor in injuries to fallers.

The first step in fatigue management is identifying whether or not the fallers are fatigued. That's where [Fatigue Science](#) comes in. Fatigue Science has worked with a number of professional teams, including the Vancouver Canucks and the Seattle Seahawks, on managing their fatigue.

The fallers are fitted with a Readiband, which is very similar to a light wristwatch that automatically detects a wearer's sleep and wake periods and characterizes the quantity and quality of sleep. After three weeks, the Readiband is sent to Fatigue Science for download and they will give the faller a confidential report.

In a related story, researchers at Duke-NUS Graduate Medical School Singapore have found evidence that the less older adults sleep, the faster their brains age, the study suggests. These findings, relevant in the context of Singapore's rapidly ageing society, pave the way for future work on sleep loss and its contribution to cognitive decline, including dementia. ....[More](#)

## Fatality in Local 9422

On July 10, 2014 at approximately 2:00 pm, Pascal Goulet was killed at the Lac des Iles Mine located 90 kms northwest of Thunder Bay, Ontario.

The company said Goulet, age 38 died after being struck by a piece of ore while he was outside of the loader he was operating underground. Pascal leaves behind a wife and two children.

The ERT has been dispatched and will be working closely with the Local Union and the District.

Our sincere condolences go out to Pascal's family, friends and coworkers.

## HAZARD ALERT

**Injury:** Fatal

**Industry:** Oil & Gas Industry, Trucking

A young worker (swamper) was discovered on the ground behind a trailer, adjacent to a steel skid that had previously been loaded onto the trailer using a mobile crane. It appeared that the worker had been struck by the skid as it slipped off the trailer.

**Injury:** Close call

**Industry:** Manufacturing

An explosion occurred in the pneumatic conveyance systems of a wood pellet plant, causing explosion vents in a hammermill plenum and a cyclone to burst.

**Injury:** Minor bruising and strains

**Industry:** Manufacturing

A boom boat operator was pushing log boomsticks off a steel "dolphin" (a piling used to secure log booms) when the boom boat capsized. The boom boat operator was wearing a personal flotation device and was rescued by a second boom boat operator.

**Injury:** Crush injuries to leg and lower body

**Industry:** Manufacturing

A worker's leg was pulled into the feed rolls of a large industrial planer.

**Injury:** Serious hand injuries

**Industry:** Manufacturing

A worker was running waste wood materials through a wood chipper when the materials jammed up in the chute above the chipper head. As the worker tried to clear the jammed waste wood using a side access panel, a loose piece of wood farther up the chute fell and struck the worker, causing the worker's hand to contact the chipper head.

**Injury:** Cuts and bruises, strain to one foot

**Industry:** Forestry

An excavator was constructing a logging road within a full-bench cut and end-haul section across ground with a 60 percent slope. The slope failed, pulling the excavator down. The excavator flipped onto its cab side and stopped to rest 40 metres below the road. The slide debris continued 200 metres farther down the slope. The operator escaped from the severely damaged cab with minor injuries.

**Injury:** Broken ribs, fractured vertebrae

**Industry:** Forestry

A backspare excavator was constructing an excavator trail on a 50 percent slope. The excavator flipped, ended upside down, and caught fire. The excavator operator was rescued from the cab by a yarding crew logging in the same setting.

**Injury:** Injuries to head and upper body

**Industry:** Forestry

A certified faller was falling a cedar tree, 11 inches in diameter. The cedar tree fell and pulled down an alder tree, 6 inches in diameter. The alder tree snapped 12 feet up from the ground. The top portion of the alder tree fell on top of the faller.

**Injury:** Fatal

**Industry:** Forestry

As a yarder was yarding a turn laterally, the yarder skyline pushed over a tree. The uprooted tree fatally struck a chokerman.

## Health and Safety Across the District

Federal-Bill C-31, the Economic Action Plan 2014 Act, No. 1, received third reading on June 12, 2014. The Bill would, among other things, amend the Canada Labour Code, the Hazardous Products Act, and the Hazardous Materials Information Review Act to improve regulation and labelling of hazardous products used in the workplace. Among other things, the amendments would implement the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals.

**Manitoba -Workers' Compensation Amendment Act** Bill 65, the Workers' Compensation Amendment Act, received royal assent on June 12, 2014. It will come into force on proclamation. This Bill amends The Workers' Compensation Act. The key changes are as follows:

- **Claims suppression:** Under the current Act, it is an offence for an employer to attempt to prevent a worker from making a claim for compensation. An employer also commits an offence if he or she takes discriminatory action against a person for reporting such an attempt to the Workers Compensation Board ("WCB"). This Bill broadens those offences by prohibiting an employer from taking discriminatory action against a person who exercises any right or carries out any duty under the Act and placing an onus on an employer who takes discriminatory action to prove that the action was unrelated to the worker making a claim or exercising a right or carrying out a duty under the Act.
- **Prevention of workplace injury and illness:** A prevention committee of the board of directors of the WCB is established and its duties are set out. As well, the WCB must undertake activities respecting the prevention of workplace injury and illness, and is required to maintain separate accounts of the costs of those activities.
- **Inspection authority:** The WCB is authorized to require documents to be produced and to inspect workplaces, in connection with timely and safe return to work and to determine compliance with the Act generally.
- **Fines and administrative penalties:** Maximum fines for offences under the Act are increased to \$5,000 (from \$1,500) for workers and \$50,000 (from \$7,500) for employers. The maximum term of imprisonment for an offence would increase to six months (from three). The administrative penalty provisions are expanded to cover an employer's failure to produce documents required by the WCB to determine compliance with the Act and the unauthorized disclosure of information by employees of the WCB and others who provide services under the Act.
- **The establishment of an appeal process for administrative penalties.**

**Alberta -Workplace Safety and Fairness Campaign**

Alberta's "Work Right" campaign was announced on May 12, 2014. The campaign is designed to inform workers and employers of their rights and responsibilities, and to encourage them to ask questions where they are unsure. The campaign encompasses information on health and safety as well as employment standards.

The Work Right campaign includes a [website](#) as well as a number of downloadable resources, such as posters, guides, and an Employment Standards Tool Kit for Employers.