

RCW 51.04.160 Logger safety initiative—Task force—Report. (1)

The department shall include one or more representatives of logging industry workers on the logger safety task force. In addition, the department shall reach out to all employers in the logging industry, including those having one or more on the job fatalities in the last five years, and invite them to participate in the logger safety initiative. All participants must comply with the requirements of the logger safety initiative.

(2) By December 31, 2013, the department shall report back to the appropriate committees of the legislature on the development and implementation of the logger safety initiative. The report shall provide a status update on implementation of the initiative and participation in the safety program, including a description and summary of the worker training and supervision standards and the certification process for individual companies. The report shall also contain a description and summary of any industrial insurance rate reduction or other incentive for rate year 2014 that will be applied to employers participating in the initiative. The report may provide recommendations for legislative consideration to further the goals of the initiative. [2013 c 339 § 2.]

Findings—Intent—2013 c 339: "The legislature finds that many Washington workers involved in manual logging in the logging industry suffer industrial injuries with greater frequency and severity than workers in other industries. The legislature further finds that the incidence and severity of injury is particularly high among young workers during the early periods of employment in manual logging. The legislature recognizes the importance of improving safety performance in the logging industry to reduce industrial injuries for workers and resulting workers' compensation premium rates for employers. The legislature acknowledges that industry participants, including private land owners, timber industry employers, the department of natural resources, and the department of labor and industries, have formed a logger safety task force to develop and implement a logger safety initiative. The goal of the initiative is to reduce the frequency and severity of injuries in the logging industry. The task force will create a program that will establish sector-wide standards for worker training and supervision; establish a certification process for individual company safety programs; and review the progress of logging operations through mandatory performance-based audits. The legislature further recognizes that as the safety culture in the logging industry evolves, the frequency and severity of injuries will decrease, which will drive down industrial insurance costs for logging industry employers. While the industrial insurance costs will decline over time as safety improves, the legislature acknowledges that an immediate reduction in industrial insurance rates for the 2014 rate year for participating logging employers provides an additional incentive for these employers to commit to the logger safety initiative. Therefore, the legislature intends to monitor development and implementation of the logger safety initiative." [2013 c 339 § 1.]