

The logo for Conifer, featuring the word "Conifer" in a white, sans-serif font on a dark blue background. The letter "i" has a stylized tree icon integrated into it.

Circular

CR No. 07/21

RE: INDUSTRIAL INQUIRY COMMISSION (FORESTRY SUCCESSORSHIP)
NOVEMBER 24, 2021

TO: All Member Companies,

As you may be aware, the provincial government has appointed an Industrial Inquiry Commission (under provisions of the Labour Relations Code) to look into contract logging practices in the forestry sector and make recommendations as to whether successorship should occur where a unionized logging contractor loses a contract to a non-union contractor, or where tenure is transferred from one licensee to another where there is a unionized contractor working on the tenure. The government news release link is <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2021LBR0033-002187>. The Terms of Reference for the Commission are attached (and key components highlighted).

The Commission has asked interested parties to file any submissions they wish to make by December 15, 2021. CONIFER will be providing a submission.

While unionized logging is not prevalent in the central and northern interior, the effect of applying successorship where tenure is transferred, or logging contracts are re-tendered, could be significant. It would mean that the unionized employees would have the right to work in the new contractor's operation, which would be bound by the predecessor contractor's collective agreement. Similarly, the unionized employees and the collective agreement could follow the right to harvest timber on a tenure (e.g., forest licences, cutting rights), if it transferred in the ways outlined in the Terms of Reference.

We would like to hear from you as to concerns you may have with potential union successorship in the forest sector in terms of its implication for log cost, capital investment and innovation of logging practices (or any other problems you foresee).

Please give this your early attention, given the short time frame we have to make a submission. You can also anticipate a short survey from our office in the coming days to inquire into your harvesting tenure associated with your CONIFER member operation, number of contractors you have engaged, and duration of the relationship with those contractors. Please feel free to contact the staff at CONIFER with any questions.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Cam Meroniuk".

Cam Meroniuk
Manager, Employment Relations