

**Inter-agency Agriculture Committee
Meeting Minutes of June 25, 2009**

- **Committee Representation:** Rod Bianchini who has been the acting Regional Manager responsible for the farm labour team is moving to a permanent position as the Regional Manager in Burnaby. Les Hudson who is an experienced Regional Manager will be taking over the farm labour portfolio and will be representing the Ministry of Labour on the committee.
- **Non-commercial vehicles transporting farm workers:** There are a number of Farm Labour Contractors using smaller passenger vans versus commercial vehicles to transport workers. These vehicles still require valid inspection certificates and Employment Standards is verifying all vehicles listed have an up to date inspection. These vehicles must still have the notice on seating and seatbelts displayed and these vehicles are being stopped and inspected during roadside checks. It is suggested an additional voluntary inspection opportunity for these vehicles be set up for next year as was the case for those designated as commercial vehicles.
- **Inspection update:** Roadside inspections continue over the summer season with two to three inspection sites established for each month. To date, the quality of the vehicles inspected is consistent with the previous year and committee members will continue to monitor trends. Should the instances of vehicles failing inspection due to mechanical defects increase the frequency of roadside inspections will be adjusted accordingly. Activities and initiatives of the committee continue to support improved compliance.
- **Education of employer and workers:** Employment Standards Branch (ESB) continues to do education sessions through the Progressive Intercultural Community Services Society (PICS). Recently PICS has approached the Employers Adviser office concerning holding a Safety Fair for agricultural workers. ESB has indicated we are interested in participating along with WorkSafeBC but also has suggested to the coordinator that it would be valuable to add Commercial Vehicle Safety and Enforcement (CVSE) as a presenter to provide information specific to vehicle safety. Committee members have agreed these educational presentations are important and we want to promote greater awareness to both workers and employers in order to facilitate compliance. Options for additional education sessions will be discussed with the sector. In conjunction with the BC Agriculture Council ESB is also distributing a letter reminding producers of the requirement to only utilize licensed farm labour contractors and outlining payroll requirements.

Patrick Cullinane
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Ministry of Labour