USE OF A SUSPICIOUS VEHICLE REPORT FORM ASSISTS IN INVESTIGATIONS

INTRODUCTION: To ensure that their foresters and employees are obtaining accurate and meaningful descriptions of suspicious vehicles and activities on or around company facilities, logging sites or timberlands, several companies in the Pacific Northwest are using the Suspicious Vehicle Report Form, shown on the back of this Security Alert. With environmental sabotage on the increase, it is the responsibility of each employee to become more observant and to record and report suspicious activities at or near company assets. Providing credible information from field observations can maximally utilize law enforcement agencies’ time and resources.

SECURITY BREACH/DAMAGE: No single incident prompted the development and initiation of the Report Form use. The form was prepared to record witness information while the data were fresh and potentially valuable to a specific investigation or deemed relevant to protecting assets. Specific lines are dedicated to recording the most relevant data in a handy, easily accessible form. The Form eliminates the need to search the floorboards of one’s truck at a later time for a note written on a paper napkin, scrap paper, or gum wrapper.

ACTIONS TAKEN: The Suspicious Vehicle Report was developed so as to be readily available to field and facility personnel. The Form is printed as a pad and easily fits into a glove compartment, desk drawer, or lunch box. The Form prompts the user to collect data that are relevant and critical to an investigation. Once the data are collected, the Form prompts the user to determine whether the data should be reported immediately and provides the agency and address for submitting the report. The employees’ supervisor may be responsible for forwarding the report following his or her review. In this case the report would be sent to the Oregon State Police Arson Section in Salem, Oregon.

COMMENTS: The Form standardizes the information gathered by foresters, loggers, and employees and prompts them to send the data to their supervisor or appropriate law enforcement agency. Often the witnesses fail to report incidents observed because they do not know where or how to make the report. This report helps to resolve those issues and speed the reporting process. The Form printed on the reverse is offered as an example. Other Forms may look different but should have similar characteristics, asking for data specific to the company and area needs, asking the user if the data should be reported immediately, and providing information necessary to facilitate the report. The Form should also include call-back information, so the officer has the opportunity to contact the witness to ask any additional questions.

RECOMMENDATIONS: (1) Adopt the process of Suspicious Vehicle/Activity reporting; (2) Use employee input and suggestions in developing a Form that fits specific needs (ownership comes from involvement); (3) Seek additional input from local law enforcement to coordinate reporting; and (4) Establish responsibility and location for filing reports (future investigations are often solved with past information).

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Timber Security: reporting
June 2002