SECURITY PRECAUTIONS FOR LOGGING OPERATORS

BACKGROUND: Security losses continue to plague forestry operations in the form of property damage, theft, trespass, equipment sabotage, dumping, and obstruction. Associated Oregon Loggers, Inc. (AOL) estimates that more than $1 million in damage and lost-time from losses to logging equipment and property occurs annually in Oregon. Managing a logging operator’s risk by taking appropriate precautions and incident response is the answer to preventing run-away security losses.

INCIDENT/SECURITY BREACH: Over the past decade, logging and allied forestry operations have become a target for criminals and others seeking to harm legitimate forest management activities. While most criminal attacks on forest businesses are malicious, some damage is random mischief—such as dumping or vandalism. Today’s operator can minimize exposure to criminal security losses by implementing a few simple security precautions.

An operator who fails to protect his operations adequately with appropriate security precautions could unnecessarily face costly equipment damage, downtime, and high insurance rates. All property and operations of the operator should be covered by practical security measures—including employees, equipment, job sites, log decks, transportation, facilities, and even information systems.

ACTION TAKEN: To assist Oregon logging companies in confronting the security loss problem, AOL is publishing a handbook, Security Precautions for Logging Operators, to be available to AOL members this year.

FEATURES: The handbook outlines a twelve-point security precaution checklist.

1) Have a Security Plan – Prepare a written plan for keeping the full scope of a company’s operations secure. Most companies have business and safety plans but often overlook developing a security plan. Address typical security risks, and define how to manage those risks for reduced loss. Consider measures for the typical jobsite, transportation, log accountability, shop, truck yard, and office. Smart risk management reduces property and casualty insurance.

2) Bid the Job for its Risk – Weigh security measures in each contract bid, making sure to consider the anticipated cost of additional watch service, supervision, work delays, downtime, and equipment damage. Is the bid jobsite at greater risk of security problems than the typical job? A contractor’s bid should consider neighborhood opposition, highway visibility, project controversy, environmentalist threats, unit access, log accountability, and previous history.

3) Gate Access – Where possible, gate roads to your worksite and fence the shop yard, to prevent unauthorized access when employees are gone for the evening or weekend. A smart security tactic is to deny would-be criminals easy access to equipment. Eliminate drive-by crime by making access difficult and parking machinery out-of-sight.

4) Lockdown, Secure, and Monitor – Store or remove portable woods equipment, if possible prior to leaving a jobsite. Park equipment in a safe location overnight, to remove criminal temptation during non-working hours. Each morning before start-up, inspect equipment for tampering or sabotage. Consider fencing, security alarm, and surveillance systems at the office and shop. When security systems are installed, post a warning at the gate as a deterrent.

5) Watch Continuously – Have a responsible watchman on-site or use hidden cameras when security problems are anticipated. Conduct periodic patrols, at unpredictable times. When warranted, hire a security service, or ask landowner to provide added security help. Firewatch may be given a security role. Monitor log accountability procedures to ensure compliance. Supervisor should be responsible for security, such as making written notes about log deck status at end-of-day.

6) Greet Visitors and Record Observations – Always make contact with uninvited people [intruder or visitor] observed near your jobsite, plus record license plate numbers and descriptions. Consider taking pictures of unusual observations and making written notes of any incident and intruders. Record time lost to protestor demonstrations. Recorded observations, notes, pictures, and other evidence help with law enforcement’s investigation.

7) Train Your Crew in Security Measures – Employees and subcontractors should know how to respond safely to each and every anticipated security situation. Assign a responsible supervisor to handle security matters and contacts with other uninvited people on the job site. Train your crew to be observant, to avoid endangering any
uninvited person. Call law enforcement and the landowner or purchaser immediately upon discovering a security incident.

8) **Security Kit in Every Vehicle** – Keep a security kit in all vehicles. A kit can be as simple as a ziplock bag filled with these items: notepad, pencil, disposable camera, forms (your company checklist, suspicious vehicle report, observation report, delay report), and contact information for local law enforcement, landowner and purchaser.

9) **Coordinate with Allies** – For projects that could have security problems, the operator, landowner, and purchaser should prepare security plans that all agree upon. Involve local law enforcement officers when appropriate. Before confronting an uninvited person on the jobsite, agree how such a contact can safely occur. When in doubt during a protest, stop work and call the sheriff. Upon discovering damage, sabotage, or other criminal activity, do not disturb a crime scene until the sheriff can investigate.

10) **Ask for Officer Patrol** – Inform local law enforcement where operations are anticipated to have security problems. Request additional patrol by the county sheriff, state police officer, or agency officer, as appropriate.

11) **Obtain Closure Authority** – For controversial operations on public forestland where protests are anticipated, consider requesting legal authority for public closure, from the agency with jurisdiction. An area closure allows the sheriff to arrest individuals that enter the area to interfere with contract operations. Forest worker safety is better protected by the area closure.

12) **Post Closure** – Post warning signs that deter unauthorized people from entering forest worksites or interfering with safe operations. Examples include: No Trespassing; Closed to Public; Hardhat Area—Authorized Entry Only; Logging Ahead—Area Closed; Logging—Do Not Enter Without Permission; Security Watch on Duty; Warning—Logging—Authorized Entry Only.

The AOL handbook also categorizes security losses: (⇒ Top-3 losses, by category)

**Property & People Crimes**
- Vandalism—Damage to equipment & property
- Theft—Stolen contractor equipment/tools/property
- Eco-sabotage—Guerilla damage w/eco-message
  - Arson—Burn machinery, supplies or facilities
  - Transportation—Driving & vehicles in-route
  - Employee attack—workers safe from assault
- Harassment—Evasive protest trouble
- Protest—Obstructing work progress; unsafe intruders

**Dangerous Material Handling**
- Fuel—Storage security
- Chemical & Petroleum—Use/storage
- Dumping—Illicit garbage disposal
- Bomb—Incendiary or explosives
- Firearm—Unsafe weapon handling
- HAZMAT—Spills, meth lab chemical dumps
- Controlled Substance—Marijuana, meth lab

**Forest Resource Security**
- Road Damage—roads/gates/culverts/ditches

**Office Facility is Safe & Secure**
- Computer data—Backup; virus protection; files
- Building security—Property/employees secure/safe
- Business records—Theft/loss of proprietary information
  - Personnel records—Privacy of employee records
  - Records/accounting—Procedures/fraud/taxes
  - Mail—Dangerous substance in letter/package

Rex Storm, Forest Policy Manager
Associated Oregon Loggers, Inc.
Salem, Oregon
503/364-1330

**COMMENT:** In addition to the new security handbook, Associated Oregon Loggers has also initiated a **PEST Reward Program** *(Prevent Environmental Sabotage Today)*. AOL offers up to $10,000 for information that leads to the arrest and conviction of a person or persons involved in sabotage, vandalism, or theft of logging equipment on forest harvest operations in Oregon. AOL instituted this reward program for the dual purposes of deterring and prosecuting crimes involving property destruction against logging and forest operators.

Individuals with information are instructed first to contact their local office of the Oregon state police or county sheriff to provide information about forest crimes or related activity. Contact AOL for further information about the **PEST** reward: 503/364-1330 or 800/452-6023.