

Sustainable Forest Management

2015 Facts & Statistics

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Agriculture and Forestry

Enforcing Forestry Standards

A key to sustainable forest management is ensuring forestry-related regulations, policies and directives are appropriate and that they are followed. The department has systems in place to ensure all companies and individuals comply.

The Alberta government monitors forest operations and timber production with planned audits, field inspections (Figure 1) and mandatory self-reporting by forest companies and individuals.

Additionally, compliance reports are completed by the Forest Management Branch (Edmonton) that validate the accuracy and timing of required legislated submissions.

In 2008, the department introduced a new forestry inspection program called Forest Operations Monitoring Program (FOMP), which supplements other monitoring initiatives. FOMP achieved and has maintained the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) certification to the ISO 9001:2008 standard in 2009 and 2012.

Consistent with the department's business plan, there is a strong need to ensure environmental protection and to deliver a consistent and efficient enforcement program. To help achieve this objective, the department formalized its forestry enforcement program in 1998 with the development of a Framework document and creation of the Incident Reporting System database (IRS).

Suspected violations or contraventions of standards are investigated. Where contravention is confirmed, the forest company or individual is required to address the problem. Appropriate enforcement actions, such as fines or penalties established by legislation, may also be assessed against those responsible.

Forest Officers choose the most appropriate enforcement response from a broad range of enforcement measures that range from proactive, educational or preventive actions, to remedial, administrative penalty or prosecution actions. These actions include Notices of Penalty

Figure 1. A field inspection of a forest operation to evaluate compliance



Assessment, Notices of Warning and Notices of Penalty Waiver.

A Notice of Penalty Assessment letter is issued when the facts, evidence and information from an investigation support the conclusion that a company or individual contravened the *Forests Act* or Timber Management Regulation and that a monetary penalty is warranted.

A Notice of Warning letter is issued when an investigation confirms that the circumstances do not warrant a monetary penalty.

A Notice of Penalty Waiver letter is issued pursuant to a penalty recommendation where additional facts and circumstances, provided by the respondent, indicate that a warning is sufficient. As such, the administrative penalty is waived.

Statistics

Tables 1 and 2, and Figure 2 summarize the final enforcement actions from non-compliance or violations of the *Forests Act* and *Timber Management Regulation*. A total of 20 enforcement actions, including 11 warnings (55.00%) and 9 assessed penalties (45.00%), were processed from May 1, 2014 to April 30, 2015. The assessed penalties resulted in fines totaling \$42,678.53.

No penalties were assessed in the Red Deer region;

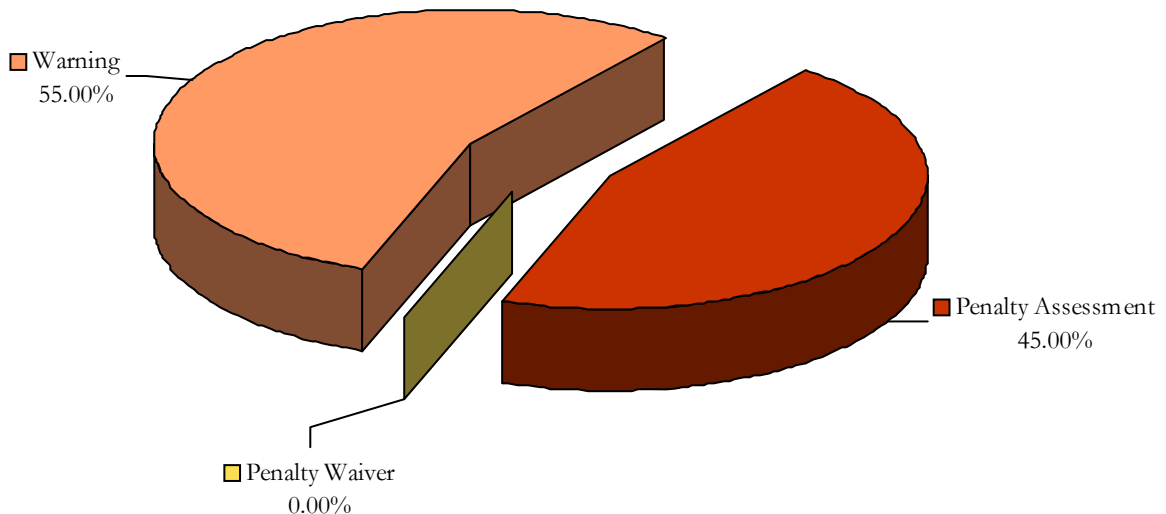
the Red Deer Region is mainly comprised of non-forested private land.

The information from Table 1 was used to generate a 99.31 per cent compliance rate based on the 2,892 harvested areas reported during this period (Figure 3). This compliance rate was similar to previous timber year.

Table 1. Forestry enforcement action in Alberta, 2014/15

Type of enforcement action	Total no. of enforcement actions
Notices of penalty assessment	9
Notices of warning	11
Notices of penalty waiver	0
Provincial Total	20

Figure 2. Percentage of forestry enforcement actions in Alberta, 2014/15



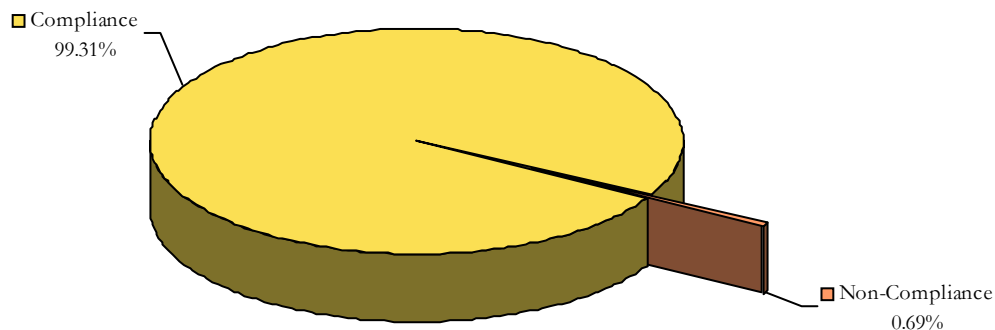
Statistics cont'd

Table 2. Forestry notices of penalty assessment by Land-use Framework Planning Region, 2014/15¹

Land-use Framework Planning Region	Number of Notices of Penalty Assessment	Total Amount of Penalties Assessed (\$)
Lower Athabasca	0	\$0.00
Lower Peace	0	\$0.00
North Saskatchewan	0	\$0.00
Red Deer	0	\$0.00
South Saskatchewan	0	\$0.00
Upper Athabasca	0	\$0.00
Upper Peace	0	\$0.00
Edmonton	9	\$42,678.53
Provincial Total	9	\$42,678.53

¹Data have been estimated for each Land-use Framework Planning Region to indicate approximate location and value for comparison purposes only.

Figure 3. Results of forestry inspections on Alberta public land, 2014/15



Historical Trends

The historical trends associated with the forestry enforcement program are illustrated in Table 3 and Figure 4. In 2008/09 the department established the Forest Operations Monitoring Program (FOMP) as a systematic approach to monitor forestry activities associated with timber harvest and reforestation (ISO 9001:2008 certified). With the introduction of this system it has taken time to calibrate activities with the protocols and in some cases required a change in behaviour. As the program has matured it is the expectation that enforcement levels should decline. Anecdotally, the reduction in enforcement numbers can be attributed to a number of factors, including but not limited to,

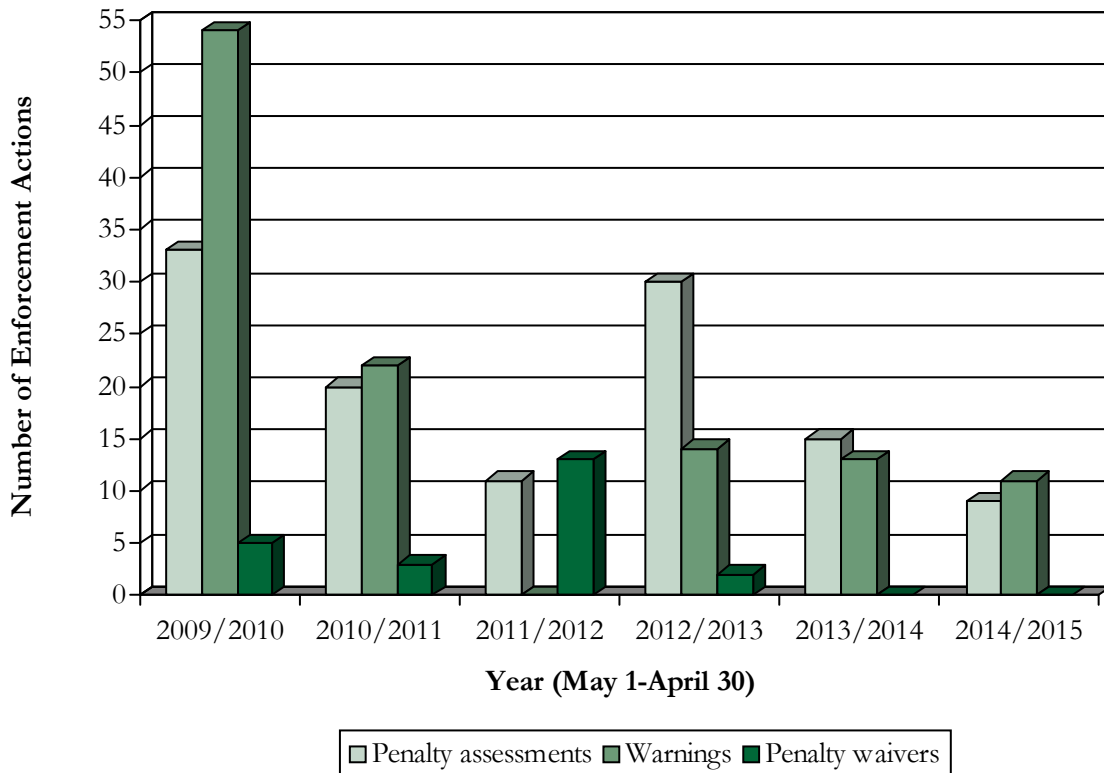
greater awareness of legislative requirements as a result of FOMP, time spent on education and company performance.

Historical Trends cont'd

Table 3. Forestry enforcement actions in Alberta, 2009-2015

Type of enforcement action	Year (May 1-April 30)					
	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015
Notices of penalty assessment	33	20	11	30	15	9
Notices of warning	54	22	13	14	13	11
Notices of penalty waiver	5	3	0	2	0	0
Provincial Total	92	45	24	46	28	20

Figure 4. Last five year forestry enforcement actions in Alberta, 2009-2015



Future Outlook

As the demands on Alberta's public lands and resources increase, there is a need to keep pace with a comprehensive compliance and enforcement program.

FOMP, which received ISO 9001 certification in 2009, will continue to provide monitoring information for the department.

Findings of non-compliance associated with this program will be addressed with an appropriate enforcement action consistent with the specific circumstances of each contravention.