



Articulated Rock Truck BACKGROUND

The Articulated Rock Truck Operator's Training Course and Qualification Process (ART) is a TruckSafe initiative to help forest industry employers, ART owners, contractors, and drivers improve commercial vehicle safety by reducing injuries associated with articulated rock trucks. TruckSafe is the WorkSafeBC strategy to improve the safety of truck drivers, trucks, loads and roads so that all road users in British Columbia will be safer.

This course is based on articulated rock truck training "standards" representing the appropriate safe work procedures for basic and advanced ART operations. The overall goal of ART Training Standards is to assist existing ART drivers, and new drivers who want to obtain ART qualification, to develop the knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes that will enable them to function as safe and productive professional drivers.

The ART Qualification Process

Existing ART Operators are assessed on their current skill level to ensure they qualify for an evaluation process. They must then score 80% or better on a written exam and pass a field evaluation before they become qualified Articulated Rock Truck Operators. Qualified ART Operators receive a formal ART Operator Certificate or ticket that confirms the date of qualification and expiry date. Qualified ART Operators are expected to abide by the *ART Operator's Code of Practice* and requalify every five years.

New applicants must take the ART Operator Training Course from an authorized provider who will display the TruckSafe sign. They must have a BC Class 3 Driver's License to meet the minimum entrance requirements. The training is an eight-day, intensive course that includes classroom and field training. By the end of the course, participants will be eligible to be examined and evaluated in the Qualified ART Operator Process. The qualification process is the same as for existing operators, but new ART operators must re-qualify initially, after three years.

A re-qualification process is being designed and will be communicated to all qualified ART operators at a future date.

Why ART is necessary

Motor vehicle-related incidents, involving injuries or fatalities, negatively affect organizations every year, from increased direct and indirect costs to the loss of valuable assets, chiefly, the personnel directly or indirectly involved. In many instances, driver inexperience and/or inadequate training are the root causes of these incidents.

The Canadian Supreme Court determined, in a landmark ruling, that the operators of commercial motor vehicles have a higher "standard of care" than the average auto driver; a greater responsibility for public safety due to the increased size and weight, dynamics and unique handling characteristics of commercial vehicles. In the case of commercial motor vehicles, it is critical for drivers to have the appropriate combination of training, skills and experience to safely and efficiently operate their vehicles. It has been recognized that training directly related to the specific vehicle to be operated by a commercial vehicle driver is essential to mitigating risk, especially in the case of new drivers who cannot draw on their experiences operating other vehicles to deal with performing critical tasks and making critical decisions.



WORKING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE



Section 115 (2) (e) of the *Workers Compensation Act* stipulates that the employer must provide workers with the information, instruction and supervision necessary to ensure the health and safety of those workers carrying out their work. In section 16.4 of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation (OHSR) a person must not operate mobile equipment unless that person has received training in the safe operation and demonstrated to a supervisor their competency to operate the equipment.

What it means to be a “qualified” ART operator

Qualified means being knowledgeable about the work, the hazards involved, and the means to control the hazards, by reason of education, training, experience or a combination thereof. (Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, Part 1)

In the case of ART operators, “qualified” means that drivers are able to:

- Relate the importance of driver professionalism and safe work procedures for the prevention of injury and promotion of efficient teamwork
- Describe their responsibilities and demonstrate basic safe work procedures at all times
- Recognize hazardous situations
- Implement sound and safe solutions

Origins of the program

In 2002, International Forest Products Limited (Interfor) created a Safety Task Group (STG) which adopted a mandate to help prevent fatalities and serious injuries within its company and contract operations. In June 2003, following the fatality of a contract ART operator at Alpha Bluff, the STG took immediate steps to prevent similar incidents by:

- Distributing an Incident Notice focusing on ARTs and their operators
- Forming an ART sub-group to develop and implement a “grandfathering” process to test and qualify all existing, experienced ART operators within Interfor and its road contractors
- Creating a training standard for all new ART operators
- Facilitating the work of a multi-organizational team, including Interfor, Pacific Coast Articulated Truck Limited, Advantage Fleet Services, ART contractors, and WorkSafeBC to develop ART training, testing, and evaluation processes and documents. This work was completed in the summer of 2005.

The next steps

In the interest of worker safety, Interfor and WorkSafeBC have asked the BC Forest Safety Council to help ensure that the ART training program is implemented in an effective and expedited manner. The Council, for its part, supports moving forward with the adoption of the standards and the training program, and will work to incorporate these priorities into an overall approach sponsored and endorsed by industry.