



Tribute to Roger Stanyer



It is with much regret that we acknowledge the recent passing of Roger Stanyer in Duncan, British Columbia.

Following in the footsteps of his father and grandfather working in BC's forest industry, Roger early on dedicated his life to the improvement of working conditions – whether it was through better health and safety or compensation – for individuals working in the industry. He rose through the ranks of the IWA – now the United Steelworkers – from business agent to ultimately becoming a National Vice-President before being appointed to increasingly senior executive positions in the Governments of Premiers Mike Harcourt, Glen Clark and Dan Miller in the 1990's.

As a reflection of Roger's commitment not only to improved health and safety standards and rules but also to better outcomes for disabled workers, and recognizing the history of frequent fatalities and serious injuries in the industry, was his immediate contribution in 1987 to the development of the video "Every Twelve Seconds", a national documentary chronicling the impact of severe forest industry accidents which focused on five individuals.

His participation in this development marked the beginning of a 25-year professional and personal friendship, highlighted in 1995 when, during his tenure as CEO and Chair of Forest Renewal BC, through his leadership, the FRBC Board of Directors agreed to contribute \$2 million to an endowment fund supporting the then fledgling National Institute of Disability Management and Research (NIDMAR) for which he was a founding member of its International Advisory Council. This contribution was pivotal in advancing NIDMAR's goals to identify creative, consensus-based strategies, programs and policies designed to reduce the impact of disabling accidents and injuries on workers.

Trevor James and Ken Neumann, NIDMAR's current employer and labour co-chairs, have both had a long-term professional and personal friendship with Roger. "While I used to sit opposite Roger during many negotiating sessions in BC Forest Industry bargaining, and these were invariably often heated and challenging", said Trevor James (a life-long senior HR executive in BC's Forest Industry), "Roger could always be counted on to take a highly disciplined and principled approach to the discussions. I also had the opportunity later on to work with him at FRBC and found him to be a CEO who could easily balance the diverse needs of employers, workers and other stakeholders in the forest industry."



Ken Neumann, Canadian National Director of the United Steelworkers, with whom Roger's union, the IWA, merged a few years ago, had extensive links with Roger in a variety of forums, especially when Ken was Western Director for the Steelworkers. "For both of us representing different parts of the resource sector during often difficult economic times, Roger could always be counted on to defend the interests of his membership in the forest industry with convincing passion, knowledge and vision," emphasized Ken. "I, and many others, have always seen Roger Stanyer as a balanced and committed social democratic leader and his untimely passing reflects not only the loss of a great trade unionist but is an equally great loss for all British Columbians."