

State of the Timber Industry in Mid-1989

Our correspondent recently spoke to I.N. Snakin, First Deputy Minister of the USSR Timber Industry, about production results in the first half of the year.

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In the first half of the year the industry met only 98.2% of its contracted deliveries target. As a result, the USSR Ministry of the Timber Industry currently owes the economy 244 million roubles. The most worrying shortfalls were in deliveries of commercial timber (1.3 million cubic metres), sawlogs (809,000 cubic metres), mining timber (140,000 cubic metres), lumber (338,000 cubic metres), etc.

What is the problem? After all, production targets for timber extraction, crosscutting and even for commercial timber were fulfilled over and above plan. It would appear that all the conditions for the realization of the assortment plan were met. Nevertheless, as many as 307 or 38.1% of the ministry's 805 associations and enterprises failed to meet their contracted obligations. One of the main reasons behind this shortfall is the inadequate supply of rolling stock: over the first six months of the year railway workers failed to supply timber industry enterprises with more than 144,000 units of rolling stock. Because of this, 71,000 railcars of timber were loaded behind schedule. Railcar turnover time in timber industry enterprises averaged 1.8 hours longer than usual. This resulted in a fine of more than five million roubles. All this money comes out of the profit-and-loss accounting funds of industry enterprises, which are still on a rocky financial base.