



Recertification Audit Report for Forestry Tasmania

29 April - 11 May 2012

STANDARDS: AS4708:2007, AS/NZS ISO 14001:2004 AND AS4801:2001

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PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE AUDIT:

This is a recertification audit of Forestry Tasmania's obligations as determined in its integrated Forestry, Safety and Environmental Management Systems to:

- ensure that the organisation continues to comply with its internal procedures;
- ensure the ongoing compliance of the organisation's integrated forestry management system with the requirements of the nominated standards (Australian Forestry Standard AS 4708:2007, Environmental Management Standard AS/NZS ISO 14001:2004 and Safety Management Standard AS/NZS 4801:2001);
- assess the effectiveness of the integrated Forestry, Safety and Environmental Management system (FMS) in providing improved management, statutory compliance and performance;
- identify additional areas of risk improvement opportunities; and
- provide the organisation with feedback to facilitate ongoing development and implementation of its management system.

RECOMMENDATION:

- The management system complies with the requirements of the nominated Standards.

RESPONSE & DATE REQUIRED:

An action plan to address each of the non-conformities recorded in the report is required within four weeks. The details provided should address the cause of the issue, the short term rectification action and the long term corrective action to be taken to prevent recurrence and the timeframe involved.

Please provide responses by either inserting details under the relevant finding, or forwarding a separate action plan.

For the observations raised, no formal action is required but opportunities for improvement should be reviewed.

SITES AUDITED

| Site Audited | Audit Date | Auditors |
|--|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| Head Office, Hobart | 30/4/12 to 1/5/12 | Ross Garsden (ATL) David Lee |
| Derwent District, Field sites Butler and Wentworth Coupes | 2/5/12 | Ross Garsden (ATL) David Lee |
| Bass District, Southern Operations | 3/5/12 | Ross Garsden (ATL) David Lee |
| Bass District, Western Operations | 4/5/12 | Ross Garsden (ATL) David Lee |
| Murchison District, Burnie | 7/5/12 | Ross Garsden (ATL) David Lee |

| Site Audited | Audit Date | Auditors |
|------------------------------|------------|---------------------------------|
| Murchison District, Smithton | 8/5/12 | Ross Garsden (ATL) David Lee |
| Murchison District, Smithton | 9/5/12 | Ross Garsden (ATL) David Lee |
| Perth, Nursery | 10/5/12 | David Lee |
| Head Office, Hobart | 10/5/12 | Ross Garsden (ATL) |
| Head Office, Hobart | 11/5/12 | Ross Garsden (ATL) David Lee |

REPORT PRESENTED TO AND RECEIVED BY

Name: John Hickey
Position: General Manager
Date: 1 June 2012

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the findings of the re-certification audit conducted by NCS International Pty Ltd (NCSI) of the Forest Management System (FMS) implemented by Forestry Tasmania (FT). The FMS incorporates the requirements of the nominated standards: AS4708:2007, Australian Forestry Standard; AS/NZS ISO 14001:2004 Environmental Management Systems and AS4801:2001 Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems.

The purpose of this audit was to assess compliance with the requirements of the nominated standards and various legal and other obligations as described in the FT FMS. The audit assessed the effectiveness of the controls that FT has developed and implemented to manage its activities relating to the planning and management of forest operations within its Defined Forest Area (DFA), including its provisions for safety and environmental management. The findings are based upon evidence obtained during the audit.

- FT has developed a fully integrated management system which incorporates the requirements of the relevant forestry, environmental and safety management standards.
- The FMS scope has changed considerably and has been re-defined accordingly. The centrally-run policies and procedures within the FMS meet all of the requirements of the nominated standards and applicable state and federal statutory requirements.
- Minor non-conformances identified in the previous report have not been fully actioned, largely due to resourcing issues. While progress is acknowledged, the applicable findings are raised again here. Further action is needed before these can be closed.
- Whilst the organisation is maintaining its core functions, resources appeared to be stretched. Issues have been identified where more resources are needed to ensure that the management system remains fully functional, for example in areas such as system planning and documentation control.
- The new Integrated Risk Register (IRR) has yet to be fully utilised by the organisation and review of the identified significant risks indicates that further work is needed to get the relevant level of data out of the database.
- The organisation's approach to its document management and control has improved and planning is underway to further rationalise system documentation. However, it is still inconsistent and not fully meeting the requirements.
- Planning of FT's forest operations is comprehensive, efficient and extensively documented, and demonstrates a dedicated commitment by FT staff and contractors to comply with the organisation's policy and objectives for sustainable forest management.
- Operational and file management of Forest Practices Plans (FPP) including the number of folders used to store and manage information, methods of recording information, sign-off completion and peer review process, has improved and a greater level of consistency was noted with respect to documentation for all coupes visited.

While no major non-conformances were detected; several minor non-conformances were identified in relation to:

- System planning - documentation and control of documents;
- Emergency preparedness and response;
- Resource management and provision of resources;
- Process and operational controls – e.g. residual current devices;
- Plant risk assessments - statutory requirements; and
- Operational controls – e.g. road construction.

As with all NCS International reports, a significant number of 'Observations' have been included within the body of the report; these do not require an action plan to be submitted to NCSI, however NCSI encourages FT to assess them for risk management and continuous improvement

opportunities. The observations are designed to assist the organisation in the maturation of the system and expanding the return to the operation from the Forest Management System.

The audit team was aware that FT is currently responding to the potential changes in its business activities as a result of the Intergovernmental Agreement process. Arising indirectly from that process, the PEFC (Programme for Endorsement of Forest Certification) Council office in Geneva asked NCSI to investigate claims relating to the sustainability of Forestry Tasmania's activities. NCSI has investigated this matter concurrently with this audit and has engaged specialist support to assist with this investigation. NCSI has determined that FT has applied best-practice in the determination of its sustainable yield. The audit has also determined that FT is acutely aware of the need to balance the supply of all forest products across its forest estate so that the sustainability of a single forest product is not compromised by shifts in demand for related forest products.

The auditors noted the high level of professionalism and commitment from staff involved in the audit process. It is clear that staff take pride in their work and endeavour to deliver the highest possible standards in all aspects of forest management. Where opportunities for improvement were identified, staff responded positively and constructively.

A notable strength of the organisation is its capacity to conduct research with immediate relevance to, and implications for improved forest management. Such research is vital to the realisation of continual improvement in forest management.

The assessors consider that the Forest Management System operated by FT continues to comply with the requirements of the standards, (subject to the necessary corrective actions) and therefore makes a recommendation for re-certification.

The NCS International assessors wish to thank all staff interviewed for their help and cooperation during the assessment.

System effectiveness (each standard):

- The FT Forest Management System complies with AS 4708:2007 – *The Australian Forestry Standard - requirements*
- The FT Environmental Management System complies as with AS/NZS ISO 14001:2004 – *Environmental Management Systems - requirements*
- The FT Safety Management System complies with AS/NZS 4801:2001 – *Occupational, Health and Safety Management Systems - requirements*

Multiple site system management considerations

The FT 'Forest Management System' that incorporates forest, environmental and safety management systems is being centrally managed from the Melville Street, Hobart, Head Office by the Environmental Manager, in association with FT staff in Hobart and district offices.

Review of previous cycle (Reassessments only):

FT has a robust Forest Management System in place that is being continually reviewed, updated and improved. All issues raised in the previous period have been actioned appropriately with minor exceptions that are part of an ongoing planned management process based on resource availability.

System effectiveness and continual improvement

Summary of major findings

- FT has developed and implemented an integrated management system that broadly meets the requirements of the respective standards for sustainable forest management, environmental management and occupational health and safety.
- While all the necessary components of the management system are in place and have been demonstrated to be working effectively, the components and interactions are not always well described.
- Continual improvement is evident in many areas, and a number of innovations have been identified that are yet to be fully integrated into the management system.
- FT has demonstrated its capacity to carry out essential research that provides clear scientific evidence, validating its commitment to sustainable forest management.
- Minor system deficiencies identified in this report are associated at least in part to limited resources for the effective maintenance of the management system.
- Operational performance and management of forest operations was of a high standard. This is affirmed by the most recent report from the regulator, the Forest Practices Authority.
- Where deficiencies in operational performance are identified, FT has an effective system for determining the root cause and implementing the appropriate corrective and preventive actions in a timely manner.

END OF REPORT