

AUDIT REPORT

App./Cert.

FMS20001 C10332

Date

10/05/2007

AFS PUBLIC SUMMARY REPORT

Client:

Forestry Tasmania

Site Address:

Head Office 79 Melville Street HOBART TAS 7001 AUS

Mersey District Office, Stoney Rise Government Offices, Tugrah Road,
Devonport, TAS 7310**Huon District Office**, Main Road Geeveston TAS 7116**Standard(s):**

AS 4708(INT): 2003 The Australian Forestry Standard

AS/NZS ISO 14001:2004 Environmental management system - Specification
with guidance for use.**Relevant Codes****FMS** - E0301, E0302, E0303, F01, F02, F03, F04, F05, F06**CEM** - E0301, E0302, E0303, E02, E03, E07**Scope of Certification:**

The registration covers the Forestry and Environmental Management System for processes involved in the management of the State Forests of Tasmania. Activities include forest land management, road establishment and maintenance, plantation and native forest timber establishment and maintenance, timber harvesting and sales, tourism and State forest recreational management and development.

The Defined Forest Area registration applies to the forest area under Forestry Tasmania management control as detailed in the registers described in the Forestry Tasmania Defined Forest Area Procedure.

COMMERCIAL- IN – CONFIDENCE

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INTRODUCTION

SAI Global conducted an audit of Forestry Tasmania (FT) on 07/05/2007 to 17/05/2007 with additional reporting time offsite. This audit was a recertification for the ISO 14001 component of the forestry management system and a surveillance audit against several AFS criteria. It was conducted in conjunction with an SAI Global OHS auditor undertaking an OHS surveillance audit against the requirements of AS/NZS 4801. Whilst SAI Global undertakes audits on a six monthly frequency, a technical specialist is only used annually at which time the performance requirements of the AFS are assessed. At the interim audits without the technical specialist, the requirements of the AFS are usually limited to the key system implementation criteria and elements for which a technical expert is not required.

The purpose of this report is to summarise the results of the audit against the requirements of AS 4708, The Australian Forestry Standard (AFS).

SAI Global audits are carried out within the requirements of international standards relating to audit practice such as ISO 19011 and to the requirements of JAS-ANZ Procedure 26.

In addition to the information contained in this audit report, SAI Global maintains files for each client. These files contain all observation sheets and notes taken during the audit including communication with stakeholders. Information in these files is treated as confidential.

AUDIT SCOPE

The key focus of this audit was the recertification or triennial audit of the Forestry Tasmania (FT) forestry management system against the requirements of ISO 14001 for environmental management which also form the basis of Criteria 4.1 in the Australian Forestry Standard (AFS). This audit was also an interim surveillance audit against the AFS whereby areas of concern raised at the previous audit are examined in addition to the key management system elements contained in Criteria 4.1 to ensure the system continues to operate and improve. Forestry performance criteria relating to forestry management practice are audited at the next surveillance audit with the assistance of a technical specialist with native forest expertise.

As Forestry Tasmania comprises five districts with regional offices, the sample for this audit included the Mersey and Huon District offices and field activities in addition to Hobart office processes including corporate affairs and tourism, fire management, civil engineering and native forest quality standards. Field visits focussed on implementation of the system to manage potential environmental and OHS impacts and hazards.

Whilst several stakeholders were contacted as a part of this auditing process, a broader spread is targeted for communication annually and will occur at the next audit. SAI Global also continues to monitor stakeholder communication within FT and the use of their internal system to record, collate and take action to address issues raised.

OVERVIEW

There has been good progress in system development including specific action on topical issues such as the use of pesticides, mammal browsing techniques and enhancing stakeholder communication. Whilst the group structure is good, there is still evidence that the District personnel are not fully conversant with the requirements of the FT management system and the standards to

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which the system has been certified. This is limiting progress in some areas however; overall there has been considerable work to address deficiencies and to improve, with plans to complete further projects later in 2007. Field personnel are seen as very competent undertaking their work thoroughly and utilising the system components as they understand they apply to them.

There have been few changes to the business since the previous audit other than some structural changes beginning to take effect. The serious bushfires in the State during the summer stretched resources considerably and has had some repercussions in terms of delaying progress on a few projects. A new Swing Bridge has been completed at the Tahune Airwalk and the Huon merchandising yard at Southwood was due for commissioning in the week of the audit.

NON-CONFORMANCES

No major non-conformances have been raised as a result of this audit and therefore certification of the system may continue.

As with most surveillance audits, a number of areas of concern (minor non conformities) have been identified where there is a partial failing to meet the requirements of the Standard or there is a risk of a requirement not being met. These areas of concern require corrective action by Forestry Tasmania to be followed up by SAI Global at the next surveillance audit.

PREVIOUS AUDIT AREAS OF CONCERN

A summary was made available to the auditors of the actions undertaken to date to address the issues raised.

Positive actions to address the previous areas of concern have included the following:

- FT was asked to ensure that the statistical monitoring work being completed by the external consultant was fully captured by the management system. A specific records management file has been created and all documentation is now stored in this manner. This was very thoroughly done. All monitoring surveys have been assessed and ranked according to priority for statistical analysis with browsing and leaf beetle monitoring rating as a high priority.
- Aspects relating to activities conducted by the Forest Health unit are now in the Research section of the impacts register and other appropriate sections with aerial, roadside and ground surveillance assessed and controls identified. An environmental checklist and procedures have also been developed.
- A more systematic and therefore consistent approach to Wedge Tailed Eagle management is being addressed through the development of a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to ensure issues are dealt with as per the forestry management system (FMS) requirements. Distances for allowable activities are also very well mapped using the Geographic Information System (GIS).
- A previous issue raised was in relation to the Community Liaison Officer (CLO) role and the need for more structure around the core issues that they are required to address. There has been good progress and a significant focus on this issue with the GM for Corporate

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Relations and Tourism attending the CLO forum and providing more direction for the group. Individuals interviewed indicated that this was becoming more successful.

- There was concern that whilst prescriptions for the management of coarse woody debris were being discussed with FPA, FT personnel may not have a consistent approach set up in the forestry management system. Basic prescriptions are included in the FPP by the planners as potential habitat for stag beetles. This was observed in the FPPs examined during the field visits and is consistent across both Districts.
- To ensure that all District personnel report any native forest health issues through to the relevant personnel and to increase awareness amongst staff of potential issues, a Eucalypt training manual has been developed and added as an agenda item for the annual review planned for later this year. Plans are also in place to discuss the results of the plantations branch debrief at the July District meetings.

KEY FINDINGS MADE DURING THE AUDIT

Defined Forest Area (DFA)

The next DFA changes will be reported as per the 30th June 2007. There have been some small changes which may have resulted in an overall change to the area.

4.1 FOREST MANAGEMENT SHALL BE UNDERTAKEN IN A SYSTEMATIC MANNER THAT ADDRESSES THE RANGE OF FOREST VALUES

At the time of audit, the Draft Sustainable Forestry Management Report 2005-2006 had just been sent to the Executive for approval. The Biology and Conservation, Native Forests and Plantation Branches all publish formal reviews of achievements and new initiatives which can be related back to the objectives and targets. Other Branch results such as Fire Management, Tourism, and HR etc are discussed at management review and by the Safety and Environment Management System (SEMS) Steering Group.

Performance for 2005/2006 notes five FPA breaches, 59 new Wedge Tailed Eagle nests identified and statistics on old growth reserved, timber utilised, regeneration, reduction in the use of insecticide, removal of 1080 and introduction of variable retention. Indicators reflect the significant aspects that have been identified for FT under each relevant category. A new target of no old growth coupes converted to plantation has been set.

In general, the format of the new report appears to be much improved on the previous with case studies included and base data released in table format as an Appendix. There are also better categories for the information and some of the system projects have now been removed.

Areas of Concern

- A full review is needed of the current aspects and impacts assessment process to ensure that all aspects and potential impacts are identified and acknowledged in the system and that the mechanism for assessing significance is providing adequate results. This will also need to enhance and improve the current processes for assessing the impacts associated with new projects.

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- Personnel are still not fully aware of the aspects and impacts register and the links to the rest of the system and the requirements of AFS and ISO 14001 (as well as AS4801) for assessing controls that manage the impacts and risks.
- A number of areas of concern were raised in relation to the system mechanisms for managing information relating to the identified legal and other requirements and communicating these adequately to all staff through the registers and SOPs.
- The progress against the FT objectives and targets is not being fully assessed and the responsibilities for achieving actions in management programmes for implementation are not clearly outlined as there is no link between these and the District Plan. The current approved Sustainable Forestry Management Objectives and Targets do not indicate clearly those responsible and the actions and programs to achieve these. As a result, there is a poor level of awareness of the objectives and targets and how individuals have a role in achieving them and there is little relationship between these objectives and targets and the District Plans and their indicators.
- There is no notation in the system procedures on how the effectiveness of actions to address corrective action requests (CARs) is being assessed. It was also noted that a number of the CARs generated are still not fully complete in that there is no comment on what has been seen to verify actions are complete prior to sign off and preventive actions are not always noted. This issue is still pending the outcome of FT's mechanism of documenting root cause and therefore actions to address this.

Native Forests Branch – Quality Standards

The group utilises native forest quality prescriptions which is linked to the SOP for establishment. In July/August of each year, the Districts are visited by quality standards personnel to review processes with information now being collected in a central database.

Areas of Concern

- There was poor awareness of the DFRD management plans and objectives and targets.
- It is noted that each District is left to determine the seed co-ordinator, their competency requirements and the role. This may not ensure that there is a consistent FT system approach and as this is linked to areas of potentially significant impact, this is an area of concern with regard to the implementation of the system.

4.2 FOREST MANAGEMENT SHALL PROVIDE FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND FOSTER ON-GOING RELATIONSHIPS TO BE A GOOD NEIGHBOUR

There is a very thorough system of neighbour notifications in relation to the burning program including spreadsheets for all of the high intensity burns and stakeholders required to be notified. As with other Districts, communication with indigenous parties is still left with the established relationships at the corporate level. A listing of all meetings attended by FT staff and the CLO has been established and provides a good mix of various stakeholder interest groups.

A new manager responsible for Corporate Relations and Tourism has been appointed with one of the first tasks being undertaken, a brand audit. Approximately 60 groups and individuals were

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consulted and FT is now trying to be more proactive in engaging groups such as the Wilderness Society and WWF. The general intention is to try to open up the doors more and encourage discussion at all levels including at the Board meetings.

4.4 FOREST MANAGEMENT SHALL MAINTAIN THE PRODUCTIVE CAPACITY OF FORESTS

Fire Management

The Fire Management Branch had been extremely busy prior to the audit due to the extensive fire season over the summer and the drain on resources as FT was heavily involved in the fighting of the Scamander, Kellevie and other Northeast fires. There has been a very thorough assessment made of the training records currently in the training database and a comparison made with the competency requirements and known work history of FT personnel. This will be an ongoing project as there are numerous inconsistencies and a full review is now underway.

Area of Concern

- In following through the calibration of measuring and monitoring equipment, it was noted that there are instruments that may require some form of validation or calibration in use where records are not being kept and calibration instructions may not be fully picked up by the system. These include the weather monitoring kits, handheld electronic wind speed instruments, fuel moisture sticks, portable weather stations etc. These instruments play an important role in relation to the significant aspect of regeneration burns.

4.4 FOREST MANAGEMENT SHALL MAINTAIN FOREST ECOSYSTEM HEALTH AND VITALITY

Mammal Browsing

The management of mammal browsing following the cessation of 1080 use was a focus of the audit. Trapping and shooting was observed in the Mersey District and discussions were held in Huon with the senior forester responsible for implementing shooting and trapping programs. In Mersey, the activity is undertaken by FT staff and was observed to be very thorough with good systems in place to manage all aspects. In Huon, contractors are used to complete the activities and the audit was restricted to viewing documented records and interviews with FT staff. The mammal browsing database is well maintained and provides a clear indication of the coupes and allows graphs to be generated to show the level of browsing damage. The management of permits is well done for both districts visited with all personnel involved having up to date permits for all types of activity and fauna species.

Areas of Concern

- There appears to be no records of the checking that the contractors are undertaking the task in accordance with the contract and FT system procedural requirements.
- The legal and other requirements associated with mammal browsing have not been fully included on the register.
- The mammal browsing file and permits management for Huon requires improvement as

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records were difficult to locate and permits are not clearly listed to enable expiry dates to be easily checked. These should be on the consents register and the records should now be referenced by the record management system to ensure they are recognised by the system.

4.7 FOREST MANAGEMENT SHALL MAINTAIN FORESTS' CONTRIBUTION TO CARBON CYCLES

FT is developing methods to quantify carbon at a state-wide level. A consultant has been appointed to review work completed to date. The Lifecycle Inventory Project between Ensis and FT has good milestones and deliverables with a progress table established. Progress against this will be monitored in subsequent audits.

4.9 FOREST MANAGEMENT SHALL MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE LONG-TERM SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC BENEFITS

As a result of the legal cases held in Tasmania, the attitude towards contractor management and control has affected the implementation of the management system. At present, personnel at a District level are being trained to assess the appropriateness of contractor assessments of safety hazards and risks however; environment is still managed through the FPP and the implementation of the Code. It is intended for supervisors to conduct regular visits to enforce contractual specifications as there are safety related agreements in the harvesting contracts. Compliance will be a part of this assessment.

DISTRICT OFFICES

Documented information in relation to toolbox meetings, organisation charts, local inductions etc were readily retrievable and thorough.

Good files are being kept of various activities undertaken on State Forest including motorbike and car events. Training in recognition of cultural sites is being organised through FPA. Environmental interest groups have been identified and added to the listing and communication processes are in place with the file documentation providing evidence of this.

The road maintenance (post harvest) program is well planned through spreadsheets. Good planning information was contained in coupe files including the competency of individuals, preparation of equipment, smoke forecasts etc. It is noted that the FPPs viewed for a number of coupes are very well prepared and contain thoroughly researched information.

FIELD INSPECTIONS

The intention of the field inspection was to visit coupes where more recent activities had been undertaken including mammal browsing, Clearfell, burn and sow in native forest, roading and plantation management.

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Good Practices Viewed during the Field Inspection

Good prescriptions had been noted in the FPPs and a clear explanation of the coarse woody debris requirements. Flora reserve and wildlife habitats had been protected. Tas Fire Service permits were in force and neighbour notifications according to the map had been undertaken within the 1.5 km radius.

Roading activities were viewed and consisted of 0.35 km of Class 4 standard road in accordance with the Forest Operation Safety (FOS) plan for roading. All machinery was required to be washed down. The walking track nearby had been closed and a sign indicating the dangers. The native forest buffer was seen to be 100m and the habitat strip marked. For roading activities only a FOS and not a Forest Operations Plan (FOP) is completed as all of the environmental issues are contained within the FPP.

A lowland wet eucalypt coupe demonstrated 12 months regeneration with a good 81% stocking rate. Only three of the 165 plots were unstocked following aerial sowing undertaken in April 2006. Records indicated that 100% of the seed was collected on-site as identified in the seed database. Aerial sowing and burn plans were located in the file and all neighbour notifications undertaken. An archaeological survey was undertaken and a stone artefact found on the road during the survey.

Roading and harvest salvage operations had been very well managed and interim measures put in place to cater for drainage during expected heavy rain prior to works being completed. Monitoring sheets had been completed appropriately and the personnel involved in the job were well versed on the system requirements and potential impacts of their work and the controls in place to manage these.

Huon Merchandising Yard – Southwood

The audit included a visit to the Southwood complex in the Huon District where FT is currently constructing a merchandising yard. This facility will utilise smaller diameter logs, which have been previously sent to the pulpwood market, to produce veneer in the Ta Ann facility located adjacent. All system aspects were found to be satisfactory.

Conclusion

The audit has indicated that the Forestry Tasmania forest management system is continuing to improve with a renewed focus on several key areas of system implementation. As a result of this audit FT have succeeded in continuing the maintenance, implementation and improvement of their forestry management system to be recertified to the environmental management standard ISO 14001 and retain their AFS certification.



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