

**App./Cert.**

FMS20001 C10332

OHS20082

**Date**

4/6/08

## 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

**Murchison District Offices** – Camdale, Smithton, Tas

Perth Nursery

**Standard(s):**

AS 4708: 2007 The Australian Forestry Standard

AS/NZS ISO 14001:2004 Environmental management system - Specification  
with guidance for use.

AS/NZS 4801-2001 Occupational health and safety management systems –  
Specification with guidance for use.

**Relevant Codes**
**FMS** - E0301, E0302, E0303, F01, F02, F03, F04, F05, F06

**CEM** - E0301, E0302, E0303, E02, E03, E07

**OHS** - H0301, H0302, H0303, HS31, HS32, HS33, HS34

**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**

The contents of this report must not be disclosed to a third party without the agreement of the SAI Global Client

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## INTRODUCTION

SAI Global conducted an audit of Forestry Tasmania (FT) on 26/05/2008 to 4/06/2008 with additional reporting time offsite. This audit was a surveillance audit against the Australian Forestry Standard (AFS) AS4708, ISO 14001 and 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.

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 focus of this audit was to assess the Forestry Tasmania (FT) forestry management system against the Australian Forestry Standard (AFS). As a surveillance audit, the elements of the standard are sampled and the areas of concern raised at the previous surveillance audit are examined to ensure they have been addressed. Forestry performance criteria relating to forestry management practice were audited 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 Murchison District offices and field activities, Mersey office and Perth nursery in addition to Hobart office processes including tourism and harvesting and sales.

## OVERVIEW

There were positive signs of improvement at the District level particularly in Murchison and through the development of the systems to manage focus areas requiring improvement through trend analysis. The system continues to be maintained however, the risk assessment process for managing change is still not as it should be.

The audit trail followed a proposal to deliver boiler fuel loads for a biomass plant in Burnie. Investigation of the use of the system to manage this process indicated a number of areas of system use that require attention. In addition, the system deficiencies identified previously in relation to training and competencies as they apply to significant aspects are still not addressed.

Requirements of the full 2007 version of the AFS were further reviewed in relation to stakeholder management and implementation of the conversion policy.

### **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**

FT use their corrective action system to record and manage actions undertaken to address any areas of concern raised from external audits. Progress against all previously raised areas of concern has been good with most sufficiently progressed for closure. Details of the verification observed are in the auditor observation notes however, a brief comment is also made here to indicate what has been completed.

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

- Improvements are being made in the GIS section of FT with the system being updated to ensure that maps, files and documents are better managed. There was significant improvement noted in the district offices in this area.
- The system has now incorporated the critical issues form as developed by Mersey District. This addresses previous area of concerns relating to the lack of follow-up of noted actions such as conducting seed crop assessments. Checks are now made to ensure that any outstanding items are carried through to completion.
- Further training and system reinforcement of use of the Forest Operations Plans has been undertaken and the field audit indicated greater awareness and use.
- Prompts have been added to the system to ensure that prior to activities that may have been planned some time previously, stakeholders and neighbours are checked for any changes and all personnel were aware of this requirement and the system change.
- A workgroup has been developed to examine a new risk integrated health, safety and environment risk rating process. This will be further refined as the new Forest Management System is rolled out and will assist in addressing the problems previously identified in addressing assessment of change in the business in relation to aspects and impacts.
- A greater emphasis has been placed on discussing corrective action requests at the field operations meetings as a means of raising awareness of personnel. Minutes from these meetings indicate that a stakeholder engagement section has been included and contributions received from the District CLO's are now included.

### KEY FINDINGS MADE DURING THE AUDIT

System improvement is steadily continuing. There has been a marked change in awareness and use of the system at a District level with increased ownership leading to development and improvement.

New procedures to ensure that any small scale clearing required for boundary alignment or infrastructure development meet the Standard's requirements have been signed off and implemented.. Two coupes have been assessed according to this new process and the documentation provided and decision process is excellent.

#### **Areas of Concern**

- Several new projects were not assessed according to the process (Non FPP and Reserve Activities) developed for assessing projects that fall outside the scope of the Forest Practices System.
- It is noted that where a complaint is found to not be related to FT, these are not logged in the corrective action system. Considerable effort goes into following up on issues raised and whilst the end result may be another company's operation or a local farmer, the process should still record that an issue was raised and how it was managed for any future reference.
- A neighbour advised FT personnel that they had noted a truck travelling too fast past the property. Whilst they were just raising a comment rather than a complaint, this was not going to be logged in the system, only the contractor advised to keep an eye out. This type of communication should be noted in some form.
- A monitoring sheet developed by one of FT's principal contractors was used to conduct harvesting monitoring instead of the form develop by FT for this purpose. The contractor's form not ensure that action items are recorded and then followed up to completion
- Where joint harvesting monitoring is being undertaken, there is no indication of how responsibility for following up actions is assigned or noting of the date such actions are to be addressed by.
- A large number of internal audits listed on the schedule have been missed. Whilst this is due to resourcing issues, this is the one of the key methods of ensuring continual improvement in the management system and a significant part of the process.

### STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT

The audit included follow up on concerns raised by stakeholders in relation to harvesting at Badgers, Lobster Rivulet and Jackey's Marsh. All complaints had been logged in the system, records managed in the filing process and generally well handled. The coupe at Badgers BG034A was visited and evidence indicated very good exclusions put in place particularly

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adjacent to the boundary. Contractors had been very well advised on the neighbour concerns with a specific briefing detailing all prescriptions required by both FT personnel involved. The normal special values identification process undertaken by FT located two known sites of an orchid and as per Forest Practices Code requirements, the FPA specialists were used to identify and protect sites. Crayfish were located in the creek and the creek crossing was also checked. In addition, the concerned neighbour has been added to the stakeholder contacts listing along with several of the other stakeholders who came forward during the communication process.

The communication process, records management and complaint system was viewed in relation to proposed harvesting at Jackey's Marsh. Records indicate that this is being well managed within the system and that stakeholder concerns are being recorded and considered in the planning process. Stakeholder management in general as viewed in the Mersey District appears to be very well managed and there was good evidence that management plans were being adjusted where possible after consideration of all issues without compromising the economic, social and environmental requirements of the business.

### DISTRICT OFFICES

The audit included the Mersey District office in Devonport, and the two Murchison District offices (Smithton and Camdale). The new boundary marking record form is very thorough and should assist in reducing any incursions by the contractors. Similarly, the key issues summary sheet included in the files provides a quick reference guide of specific concerns such as neighbour issues etc. This has been put to good use and have all been completed and filed. The register of licences and permits is being kept up to date and the corrective actions spreadsheet provides an excellent summary of the status of actions.

Neighbour notifications are issued within one month, but the forest operation is planned earlier, then the Community Liaison Officer will be advised. There is now a good process in place to ensure that Forest Practices Plans that are more than six months old will be reviewed to ensure that no new special values have been identified. Harvesting operations are visually monitored on a weekly basis and monitoring sheets were also viewed in the files. Depot inspections, Safety and Environment committee meeting minutes with both lead and lag OHS indicators and summaries of new Corrective Action Requests raised were viewed.

There is a marked improvement overall in the Districts since the previous audit in relation to use of system forms and procedures, records management, awareness of system requirements and overall performance. The process of auditing contractors and looking for common threads or issues to focus on is excellent and records generated through this including a summary of Forest Practice Plans (FPPs), spreadsheets recording status etc allowed quick identification of outstanding actions which were being undertaken by an individual who left FT. The additional resource dedicated to FPP preparation and auditing thereof is a very good initiative and the work being undertaken is outstanding.

It is also notable that the frequency of auditing of the contractors is greater than other organisations and as such will ensure that any issues are detected early enough to allow actions to be effective. Safety and Environment meeting minutes are very thoroughly written up with good actions that are carried through to consecutive meetings if unresolved. Contractor appraisals have been very thoroughly done with all potential issues considered. CARs are well documented and indicate good thought to issues and corrective/preventive actions, there are checklists being very thoroughly maintained and monitoring reports providing a thorough review of operational controls. A harvesting incursion was made into a wildlife habitat strip in October 2007. The investigation for

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this is yet to be completed however; the target date is set for June 2008.

Monthly Sales meeting minutes were viewed. Sales feedback is logged on a spreadsheet and trends noted through the analysis thereof. The contractor performance review, whilst viewed in summary in Perth, was seen to be very detailed in the records kept in Smithton. The position description for the Senior Forest Officer (forest practices) is very thorough and detailed as was the position description written for the Forest Officer (sales). Skill sets related to specific tasks have been assessed and there is a clear identification of those personnel who can prepare FPPs.

Discussions were held with the CLO for the District. The non FPP for the new mountain bike track at Dismal had been completed and most of the non FPPs are being completed by an experienced forest officer. No complaints were received by Murchison District during the burning season as notifications went out early and were very thorough. The stakeholder database is being used for communication records although could not be accessed by the CLO. Several examples were viewed of FT giving consideration to concerns raised and adjusting plans accordingly.

### FIELD INSPECTIONS

Coupes in the district around Smithton and Devonport were viewed during the audit with the focus on environmental protection and occupational health and safety management. System processes are very well managed with a strong emphasis on values management and monitoring.

#### **Good Practices Viewed during the Field Inspection**

- Neighbour notifications had been documented and visual considerations in relation to the Bass Highway were considered. Harvesting boundaries had been extremely well maintained with excellent decision making on tree density to ensure the visual buffer was sufficient.
- The Forest Operations Plan for site preparation was in place, as was relative burning plans for aerial ignition, worksite briefings and monitoring forms. Trees had been left on the boundary to avoid felling into the native forest and the burn had well managed to ensure damage was avoided.
- The consideration and mitigation measures in place in relation to the visual impact i.e. skyline view, is best practice and the concern and commitment of FT staff is commendable. Regular visits and checks were being made (including standing on the lookout at Dismal Swamp) and these were all documented on the file. Harvesting contractors had been well briefed and their management practices very good.

#### **Area of Concern**

- Documentation relating to the fertiliser program was not being correctly completed or reflected current system practice. FT had become aware of this issue but had not raised the problem in the CAR system to ensure that actions were allocated first to correct the issue and then to prevent it happening again. Auditing of this function indicated problems with keeping up to date documents, records management, inadequate training and awareness.

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### Harvesting and Sales

The audit focussed on this unit's operations by commencing with personnel based at Perth, viewing of records and discussions in both Mersey and Murchison and follow up in Hobart office. The harvesting unit's organisational chart as of January 2008 was viewed indicating the manager, executive officer and harvesting superintendent. Files indicating the fuel and rate review records were also examined. Contracts performance reviews for the 2005/6 year were located and files for specific contractors viewed. Only harvesting contracts are reviewed with five of the forty one contractors undertaking haulage. An excellent pivot table is used to estimate volumes and manage wood flow.

### Areas of Concern

- The Manager Harvesting and Sales based in Perth has not had sufficient training in the AFS to ensure that he is aware of the Standard and FT system requirements despite having a KRA to ensure AFS compliance.
- There are currently no systematic procedures in place that incorporate the harvesting and sales unit into the Forest Management System.
- At the last annual meeting held with contractors, there was no system representative present and as such the opportunity to reinforce system requirements and raise awareness with the contractors was not utilised.

### Perth Nursery

Changes at the site include the amalgamation of the seed centre with the nursery operations and commissioning of the glasshouse. This has resulted in some staffing changes and responsibilities being adjusted accordingly. A new seed orchard is planned to be developed at Upper Castra near Devonport with risk management being assessed by the tree breeder.

There has been a very good recognition of the potential for economic loss should a fire occur in the seed kiln. As such, the seed store building has been physically separated from the kiln.

The Eucalypt Seed and Sowing Technical Bulletin was reviewed and an electronic database established which will improve the scheduling of seed. The intention is to also review the Seed Centre manual to make it more comprehensive given the recent changes. All seed was delivered to meet District regeneration needs for the year and a stocktake is now underway. There are also good plans to try to minimise the use of road freight and use the network of personnel to ensure seed moves around the State as required.

Meeting minutes are well kept and action items tracked in addition to a listing of Job Safety Analyses. A quick look around the site indicated that there have been some excellent improvements made to address OHS and environmental hazards.

### Dismal Swamp

The staff at the site had been reduced to around six for the quieter winter months. A new mountain bike track is under construction. The system had been used appropriately in relation to assessing this activity. CARs are discussed at the District S&E meetings and have been very well noted. Public safety issues such as a person leaving the Dismal Swamp slide entry before being

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given the all clear and loose ground were raised.

As a tree blew over at the site an arborist was engaged and as a result a number of other trees have been identified as being unsafe or requiring attention. Interim controls of hazard tape and restricted access have been implemented. Toolbox meetings are being regularly held and minutes, the emergency procedures were tested in October 2007 with good action items noted, Job Risk Assessments are in place and there has been further attention to runoff and maintenance of the tracks.

The register of consents has been very thoroughly maintained. A staff training checklist is in place and indicates personnel signed off on use of the golf buggy. Other monitoring includes the daily outdoors checklist and Blivet and pump house checks. Potable water and the Blivet are tested, personnel have had hepatitis injections and first aid training. Signage has improved particularly at the slide and there have been better controls put in place to address the serious injuries previously encountered by the public.

### General System

Internal auditors recognised that they did not have the required competencies to audit aboriginal site management and raised a CAR on this issue.

Reserve activity audits have been completed with very good findings including the need for monitoring and follow up on threatened species permits. Cable logging has been audited and the assessment of non FPPs very thorough.

The last management review meeting was in February 2008 and the agenda indicated all requirements were discussed. The Arve River boundary incursion resulted in a \$25,000 fine being incurred. Changes to system procedures now require surveyors to mark boundaries and a competency is now required for personnel marking boundaries. The SEG meeting minutes indicate an agenda item for progressing the GPS competencies.

### Conclusion



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**SAI Global**

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