Continuing Professional Development (CPD) – What do YOU think?

Where does the Institute want to be in the year 2003? What vision does it have for the progression of its members’ aspirations over the next 10 years? Will this vision 2003 reflect the needs of the members?

The Council has initiated a joint Task Force to examine the dual items of NZIF: Vitality and how the Institute can service the educational needs of members in a more meaningful way, with the introduction of Continuing Professional Development (CPD). The CPD Task Force comprises John Galbraith, Bruce Manley, Peter Casey, Graham Whyte, Colin McKenzie, Bill Cleghorn, David Paul, Kathy Kuggeleijn and Rod McGowan. The CPD Task Force has prepared a plan to enable them to present a proposal to members in about 12 months’ time. This proposal should ensure that CPD is seen by members as an appropriate service of the Institute.

One of the first things that must be done is to open up debate by members as to what is the purpose and objective of the Institute. This is the reason why the Vitality Task Force is working in with the CPD Task Force. The CPD Task Force cannot get past square one without guidance as to possible directions that are available for the Institute to take.

The current objectives of the Institute are (from the NZIF Articles of Association):  
(a) to be an independent advocate for forestry;  
(b) to serve its members by:  
(i) affording them opportunities to express and exchange views;  
(ii) overseeing members’ ethics;  
(iii) encouraging fraternity and “esprit de corps”;  
(iv) providing for the recognition of professional standards.  

These objectives are noble but are they appropriate to an organisation of the 90s? The Institute needs to be adding value to membership by providing services to members that are of a quality and standard that provide members and the community with a product that they recognise and value. Comparison with other professional groups’ Mission Statements provides quite a contrast to NZIF’s objectives; e.g. New Zealand Institute of Valuers: “The New Zealand Institute of Valuers encourages its members to develop high standards of professionalism and excellence through the provision of education, support services and promotion.”

The New Zealand Society of Accountants also provides a contrast: “The mission of the Society is to act on behalf of its members, providing the necessary support to ensure that Chartered Accountants in every sector provide quality professional services.”

The wider community, the forestry industry and land and resource custodians have always had the right to expect the professionals acting within the field to keep themselves up-to-date. In recent years this expectation has increased. The pace and volume of change now means that all professionals must allow sufficient time to properly assimilate and digest new material, to think conceptually about matters of relevance and to consider the application of advanced thought to the areas of their activity. The task force has prepared a framework to assist it in ensuring that CPD is seen by members as an appropriate service for the Institute to be providing.

What is Continuing Professional Development?

The issue of Continuing Professional Development raised the question: what do these three words actually mean?

Professional
Definition of this term has been debated in many circles for years and will be debated for years to come. One definition is that a professional is an individual who is part of an organisation or group of like-minded individuals who collectively possess a body of knowledge that they use to solve complex practical problems and demonstrate the solution with a high level of competence.

Development
To demonstrate and maintain the self-esteem that these individuals hold for each other they must refresh their knowledge and ability and build a sense of collective responsibility to society.

Continuous
The more proactive the group and the individuals who make it up are in developing themselves and demonstrating (within a structured visible system) continuing maintenance and enhancement of competence, the greater is the community’s recognition of their body of knowledge. This in turn will result in a propensity for society to take guidance on issues that this body of knowledge covers.

When does CPD begin?
Continuing Professional Education begins when formal education ends and the application of skills starts. Formal education programmes that prepare individuals to become professionals is not CPD. The purpose of CPD is not to fulfill institutional requirements but to satisfy an individual’s goals of practising in one’s area of expertise to the highest standard.

The objectives of CPD
The task force has prepared a list of objectives which is by no means comprehensive:
- Keep pace with changing technology, legislation and community expectations.
- Enhance ethical standards.
- Learn new skills.
- Demonstrate competency.
- Enhance professional image.
- Differentiate the NZIF product.
- Interchange ideas.
- Forum for debate.
- Enhance self-esteem.

We want to hear from members on their views on the objectives of CPD, either by direct response to this article or by responding to the survey noted below.

The mechanisms for the delivery of CPD
The mechanisms for the delivery of CPD are many to reflect the diversity of our members’ aspirations and geographic locations. Some examples are:
- Annual Conference
- Journals and authorship
- Branch meetings, field visits
- Summer schools at universities
- Residential courses
- Existing University and Polytechnic courses
- Distance Teaching Seminars
- Videos
- Sponsored lecture tours
- Teaching modules
- In house corporate training.

What is next?
The task force is preparing a survey,

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NZIF Council report on Forestry Corporation of New Zealand Ltd

In the light of the resolution passed at the Napier AGM, Council have endeavoured to make an assessment of the sustainability of the forest operations of Forestry Corporation of NZ.

1. The Corporation, as an SOE, controls 170,000 ha of exotic forest at Kaingaroa, Whakarewarewa, and Rotoehu, with a cut expected to be sustained at an annual level of 2.6 million m³ from 1996.

2. The forests are primarily radiata pine (137,500 ha) and Douglas fir (19,290 ha) with declining areas of Corsican, contorta, larch, ponderosa, Southern pine and other species. These latter are progressively being converted to radiata and Douglas fir, and restocking averages 5500 ha per annum.

3. Of the major species, Council had an interest in the distribution of age classes.
   a) For radiata, the spread appears reasonably "normal" and the planned clearwood age of felling is 27 to 28 years.
   b) Douglas fir has a slightly skewed age class distribution. The table below shows this for 19,290 ha.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Class</th>
<th>Radiata</th>
<th>Douglas Fir</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-9 years</td>
<td>4600 ha</td>
<td>4100 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-19 years</td>
<td>4100 ha</td>
<td>4100 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-29 years</td>
<td>4100 ha</td>
<td>4100 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39 years</td>
<td>1600 ha</td>
<td>1600 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-44 years</td>
<td>240 ha</td>
<td>240 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-49 years</td>
<td>150 ha</td>
<td>150 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-54 years</td>
<td>50 ha</td>
<td>50 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-59 years</td>
<td>2050 ha</td>
<td>2050 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-70 years</td>
<td>1600 ha</td>
<td>1600 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older than 70 years</td>
<td>800 ha</td>
<td>800 ha</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Silviculture emphasises clearwood production and over 95% of radiata has either been pruned or is planned to be pruned. Less than 10,000 ha is expected to remain in unpruned "framing". The Corporation has commenced pruning Douglas fir in 1993 with an annual programme of 500 ha.

5. Maximising of returns on the forest capital is seen as the main thrust of management and there is little interest in pulpwood regimes. The contractual pulpwood supply to Tasman Pulp and Paper Ltd is seen as a mainly top-log by-product of sawlog management and from production thinning.

6. We were invited to meet the senior staff of the Corporation. From the comments made to me by Council members after this meeting it was a consensus that:
   a) Management is relatively conservative in terms of rotation lengths to be adopted.
   b) Emphasis on clearwood for radiata would preclude shortening of rotations below that which will yield an adequate clearwood sheath.
   c) The restocking into Douglas fir will maintain the area of this species and it will probably increase in total over the next few years.
   d) Felling of less vigorous, more disease-prone species for conversion will continue to be a method of increasing productivity.
   e) There is no evidence that there is any alarming trend which would jeopardise sustainability of the forest resource quality. The cut has been high up to 1992-93, although the radiata has been cut at less than the sustainable level, and will probably be at reduced levels over the next three to four years, after which the sustainable level of 2.6 million m³ will be maintained. New planting of purchased land will enhance future production which will be concentrated in the Bay of Plenty.

7. The thrust of the AGM resolution was to involve another agency in an investigation or a complete analysis of how harvesting and marketing policies affect the supply of wood in the future, by both species and quality, from the forests managed by Forestry Corporation of NZ.

   The company management were not prepared to submit to this process. However, as set out above, they gave us the opportunity to meet their most senior staff and at this meeting provided a range of data which has been drawn upon for this report to Institute members. Certain commercially sensitive information discussed at the meeting has not been included in this report.

8. Conclusions that can be drawn from the information provided are that:
   a) The forests are being managed responsibly.
   b) The management policies are aimed at maximising the return to the owners of the forest in a sensible commercial manner.
   c) There is a modern and progressive attitude to staff training, investment in research, marketing and forest protection.
   d) The enhancement of value of forest produce is supported as a long-term aim to improve the worth of the forest. Investment jointly with the USA firm, Fibreform, at Waipa, plus renewal and replacement of obsolete plant in the mill facility are initial steps in this process.

   Log supply to efficient independent sawmills continues and 20 sawmills draw supply from the forests.

8. Comments from members and correspondence in the August 1993 Journal indicate a degree of discomfort in the Institute being involved in any examination of a forest company’s activity whatever the ownership. Recent publicity generated by the NZ Owned Sawmills Association suggests however that an orchestrated criticism of forest protection and management practices by the Corporation may be contributing to the situation.

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