Promotion of Registration

• Some respondents suggested the MAF (in some regions), some local authorities, NZFFA branches, etc., already advise people to use a RFC.
• Several respondents stressed the need for targeted marketing/PR to ensure the forestry-professional image locally is enhanced, and could be developed further.
• “As a specialist consultant almost all my work comes from professional contacts. Most already know my skills and experience. From this point of view registration is less important to me in developing client relationships. However, I strongly support the scheme and believe my registration contributes to a common interest and the principle of professional accountability”.
• “I have only done one job where the client required a ‘Registered Forestry Consultant’ to do the work. It would be good if 80 per cent of clients demanded that the consultant be registered, particularly for technical forestry work.”
• “Probably attractiveness to clients has been enhanced, however this has been negated a little by the need to recover PI costs through increased fees.”
• “The process has been worthwhile and could be developed further. Can contribute to the image of forestry consultants by showing that standards are met.”
• “What the Registration Board has done is very good... it takes a lot of commitment, so I am pleased the Institute has done this. I am impressed by the professionalism of the process.”

Promotion of Registration Scheme

• Several respondents stressed the need for targeted marketing/PR to ensure the forestry-professional image locally is enhanced, and could be developed further.
• MAF (in some regions), some local authorities, NZFFA branches, etc., already advise people to use a RFC.
• Some respondents suggested the NZIF promote the registration scheme (e.g. by articles in the forest industry magazines and the NZIF Journal) covering benefit and protection for users and for members.

CPD

• Views about the CPD requirement were mixed, with some respondents noting that identifying specific training opportunities was not always simple. Others felt that the description of CPD could be further improved.
• The profession needs a better appreciation of CPD, with more emphasis given to provision of specific CPD opportunities (courses, seminars), quite possibly jointly with other professions.
• It was widely acknowledged that CPD is a key component of the Registration process, important to maintaining professional capability.
• CPD requirements for NZIF are acknowledged as not being particularly onerous. It is good that a minimum level of performance is set, however those who are serious about their professional development will probably exceed it significantly.
• “Can get most of year’s requirement just by attending the NZIF conference”.

Interview Process

While respondents identified issues with the interview process these were generally specific to individuals (e.g. should have provided a wider range of reports, felt that panel focused on quite a narrow range of my expertise, panel were possibly a little picky, etc.). However a couple of wider issues were identified for the Board to give greater attention to in the future.

• Confidentiality can be a problem (i.e. where work submitted in support of application is privileged), and also commercially sensitive as consultants from other firms sit on the panel (Note however that all members of the Board are already required to sign a confidentiality agreement).
• Feed back on strengths and weaknesses after the interview was seen as a positive process, although this would probably need to be provided later after the panel had an opportunity to discuss their separate views. Perhaps follow-up by telephone after the result was notified would provide further value to applicants by giving them advice on how they might further develop their careers and widen their professional capability.

Summary

Although the Board has had limited opportunity to discuss these issues it believes most can be readily addressed within existing practices.

Probably the single most important issue is that of promotion of the registration scheme, and its registrants to the forestry and wider communities. The Board has already taken steps in this regard, having appointed a promotions committee and endorsed a strategy developed by this group. It is likely this will be the Board’s major activity (outside the registration process) over the next twelve months.

Local Section News

Rotorua (Neil Geerkens)

Two successful events this month. A beautiful day for 25 people meeting at Minginui Village, and heading into Whirinaki forest to view and hear about a selection logging trial established in 1979. This is a magnificent high density podocarp/hardwood forest, but which is over mature and in decline. Every storm event removes some of the standing volume. Conclusion was best management for wood production in this forest would be windthrow salvage, not selection logging. Second event included a BBQ for 35, followed by demonstrations of the Timbertech log making tool and a GPS unit. Further activities this year have yet to be planned.

Manawatu (Mike Smith)

In practical terms attending or belonging to the local branch of the NZFFA is still the best method of keeping up to date with what is happening locally on the ground in that most branches meet on a regular basis, often in connection with the NZFFA’s annual conference, held this year (as in previous years) in Tongariro, on Saturday, 2nd December. I would urge all members to attend the conference, indeed the local branch committee and I are keen to see all members present, to hear some good speakers and to enjoy a pleasant day's activities...
Global framework for mutual recognition of environmental certification of forest practices came a step closer at a major meeting of international private sector paper and wood products interests in Rotorua.

The International Forum of Forest and Paper Associations (IFFPA) and the FAO Advisory Committee on Paper and Wood Products have endorsed efforts by an international industry working group, led by New Zealand, to develop a framework for credible sustainable forest management standards and certification systems.

The IFFPA collectively represents 90 per cent of the world’s commercial forestry and wood processing interests and 55 participants from 27 countries have met in Rotorua in early May.

"It’s the biggest meeting of global private sector forestry and wood processing interests ever held in New Zealand,” said IFFPA chairman, James Griffiths. “And to reach consensus on such an important subject as certification for sustainable forest management is of enormous potential significance.”

The major US and European industrial users of wood fibre and retailers of wood products have given the industry until the end of next year to come up a cost-effective and credible solution to the proliferation of certification schemes.

"At the moment there are at least 40 certification products of varying type and credibility available around the world,” says Griffiths, “and that represents potential chaos.”

“However, the FAO committee and the IFFPA have today supported the working group’s efforts to develop an over-arching framework which will identify credible standards and deliver sustainably sourced forest products to the marketplace.”

The New Zealand-led working group will now develop the tools for bilateral and regional recognition of the certification framework and test it with international customers before a potential launch early next year.

Mr Griffiths, who was appointed vice-chairman of the FAO Advisory Committee, will represent Southern Hemisphere plantation forestry interests through to 2003.

“Having these two prestigious groups meet here is part of our strategy to promote the New Zealand plantation industry and our concepts of sustainable forest management,” said Griffiths who is also chief executive of the NZ Forest Industries Council.

“We have been telling delegates, including representatives of major international agencies such as the World Bank, the UN Environmental Programme, the International Tropical Timber Organisation and the European Community to watch out, the New Zealanders are coming.”