FITEC
akoranga mo te waotu

Summary of Forest and Wood Industry Census, October 2009

During the second half of 2009 FITEC completed a survey of the forestry and wood manufacturing sectors (excluding biosecurity and furniture). The objectives were two fold;

(i) understand the operations and processes where the workforce was employed at the various job levels and improve our understanding of the training requirements on a regional basis, and

(ii) create a base data set to enable modelling of the impact of changes in regional and national wood flows on the industry's labour market and numbers requiring training.

This effectively creates the most comprehensive survey carried out to date on the forest and wood industry in New Zealand. It is timely given the industry environment over the past few years.

Some 831 companies from within the forestry and wood manufacturing industries were identified and surveyed. The results of the survey showing the total number of employees nationally working in various segments of the industry is shown in Table 1. Table 2 shows a comparison of this survey to previous ones conducted by MAF and BERL.

Table 1: Total Employees Nationally by Sector

		Employees	Companies Surveyed
Forestry Contractors	Harvesting	3664	309
	Silviculture	1586	130
Total		**5250**	**439**
Other Forestry Industry	Roading & Forest Engineering	213	27
	Forest Owners	567	28
	Transport	850	29
Total		1630	84
Total (Forestry)		**6880**	**523**
Wood Manufacturing	Solid Wood Processing	5360	150
	Remanufacturing	2460	76
	Wood Panels	1697	16
	Pulp & Paper	2050	9
	Tissue Converting	284	4
Total (Wood Manufacturing)		**11850**	**255**
TOTAL (all segments)		**18730**	**778**

Table 2: Comparison of Statistics: Total Employees by Sector

	FITEC Census 2009	BERL 2006 Total	BERL 2006 Adjusted*	MAF 2007 Total	MAF 2007 Adjusted*
Forestry & Harvesting	6880	7962	7968	6470	6470
Solid Wood Processing & Remanufacturing	7320	16473	8118	17229	8959
Panels	1697	1989	1992	2870	2870
Pulp & Paper	2333	2871	2289	2090	2090
Total	**18730**	**29295**	**20367**	**28659**	**20389**

Note: *MAF and Berl data relating to the ANZSIC codes covered by FITEC. These are the columns to compare with the 2009 census.

Anecdotal evidence has suggested that employee numbers have dropped in recent years and this is certainly confirmed within the wood manufacturing sector (Table2 comparison with previous statistics), which shows that it has contracted by an average of 10% (approx 1200 employees) from previous forecasts. This was also reinforced by the responses received where wood manufacturing companies indicated that that the number of employees had reduced due to the economic downturn. Forestry figures are more variable compared to previous statistics, probably reflecting the contracting nature of the business and the inherent fluctuations. However, a significant workforce is at least maintained.

The industry employs a total of 18,730 staff; 37% of whom work in the forestry sector and 63% in the wood manufacturing sector. The vast majority of employees are found in harvesting and silviculture (76% of forestry employees) and in solid wood processing and remanufacturing (66% of wood manufacturing employees).

Regionally the workforce is concentrated in the CNI (38%), which has the largest plantation forest area and woodflow with the clustering of large processing facilities in Tokoroa, Rotorua and Kawerau being a significant factor. The Southern North Island (10%), Nelson - Marlborough (10%), Northland (9%), and Otago - Southland (8%) are the other main regions of employment, generally reflecting the maturity of the industry in those regions.

On a skills basis the majority of the workforce is operationally focussed (72%), as shown in table below. This reinforces the view that FITEC's Levels 2 to 4 qualification structure is relevant and aligned with the needs of majority of the workforce.

Employees by occupation type

All Segments	Employees	% by Occupation Type
Managers/Supervisors	2595	14%
Operations	13430	72%
Maintenance	980	5%
Sales &Administration	1725	9%
Total	18730	100%

The industry census confirms the workforce has contracted along with the need for continuing focus on qualifications to meet industry operations requirements around Levels 2-4 during 2010. Further refinement and longer term modelling will also be undertaken to determine future trends with technology changes, but also to clarify other training requirements such as management and administration requirements.