

Forest Management System – Summary Audit Report			
Client name:	Forestry Corporation of NSW – Hardwood Forests Division	Certificate #:	AFS 604224
Client address	121-123 Oratava Ave West Pennant Hills NSW 2125	Website:	forestrycorporation.com.au
Audit type:	Surveillance	Audit date:	03.04-28.07.2023
Standard:	AS/NZS4708:2021	Auditors:	Gerard Moore
This document provides a summary of the findings contained in a report to Forestry Corporation with respect to the implementation of this client’s management system as determined during an audit conducted by BSI Group ANZ.			

Scope of certification:
<p>Activities associated with the sustainable management of native forests and hardwood plantations within NSW State forests. This includes the production and sale of forest products; the management of non-productive areas for conservation values; the development and maintenance of forest infrastructure; management of planned and un-planned fires; and the provision of visitor facilities, forest permits and access for recreation activities.</p> <p>The Defined forest area incorporates the following Forest Management Units: South coast hardwoods; Southern tablelands hardwoods; Cypress forests in western NSW; Redgum forests in the Riverina; Northern Coastal hardwoods; Northern Tablelands hardwoods and Northern hardwood plantations.</p>

Executive summary:
<p>This report describes outcomes from a Surveillance Audit of the Forestry Corporation New South Wales - Hardwood Forests Division (FCNSW HFD) management system against the requirements of the Australian Standard AS4708:2021 (the Standard). The audit was conducted on-site between 03.04-28.07.2023, at FCNSW’s Head Office, West Pennant Hills, regional Offices at Coffs Harbour, Wauchope and Maitland, field operation sites in these areas, and supporting infrastructure including Depots at Wauchope and Mandalong. Criterion assessed are described in the Assessment Plan.</p> <p>The audit met BSI Group ANZ objectives and confirmed FCNSW HFD has continued to develop, implement and maintain its management system to comply with requirements of the Standard at the sites assessed.</p> <p>Stakeholders provide input into the management of forests by FCNSW and their feedback has been included into the assessment findings.</p> <p>Key Strengths of the management system include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FCNSW Strategy 2025 being rolled out. • Consistent approach to risk analysis in forest operations. • Strong commitment from FCNSW Executive management team for the management system. • Employee Engagement 11.2022. • Cowarra SF Tourist Precinct Project, community and corporate business engagement. <p>Notable improvements or strengths of the forest management system include:</p>

- Forest Management Plan includes Case Studies, that link ESFM Principles to IFOA Indicators.
- Change to managing compliance: Compliance Assurance Team.
- Weekly wrap up, CEO presentation update.
- Stakeholder Engagement Guidelines, Factotum Report.
- Complaints Management Procedure.
- Olney SF, Littlejohn's Tree Frog Trail Project, collaboration with University of Newcastle.
- Consultation Manager is being trialled.

Non-conformances identified in this assessment

FCNSW's response to addressing/closing the Minor Non-conformances from the previous audit was not fully effective. Some Non-conformances were closed, and some remain open and have been continued.

- Non-conformances that have been closed and/or remain open/continued for HFD are:
 - Closed 3, Remain open/Continued 4.
- New Minor Non-conformances identified at this audit include:
 - Emergency preparedness and response, replacing the previous Non-conformance that has been closed after being continued for several years; and
 - Depot risk identification and management.

Minor non-conformances continued at this audit:

Criterion 3.4.3: Batemans Bay: The implementation of plans to enhance the capacity of the forest to support Significant Biodiversity Values, where they exist and have been diminished or degraded, specifically in relation to pest animal programs to support the Southern Brown Bandicoot population on the South Coast, NSW. Further the pest animal program does not include control of feral cats, which as recent research suggests are also a threat to the Southern Brown Bandicoot populations.

Criterion 4.2: FCNSW has updated its Stakeholder Engagement Framework which identifies amongst others ENGO's and individuals as 'interested stakeholders', however the process for identification the specific needs and expectations of these stakeholders at a local level is not systemic and records relate predominantly to neighbour notifications prior to the commencement of forest operations. Further, when the stakeholder needs and expectations are identified, the process to justify which of these become compliance obligations is not fully evident.

Criterion 11.6.1: The Manual and Operational Guidelines Standards for managing Non Aboriginal Cultural Heritage is in draft. Processes to identify and record the significant cultural places and values and protect and maintain these cultural places and values in a way that takes due regard for their significance is not consistent across operational areas.

Criterion 11.6.3: Processes to consult with relevant Indigenous peoples or representative bodies to identify and record the significance of places and values and protect these values, and also identify areas that support subsistence needs of Indigenous peoples and communities and manage with regard to their significance is not fully evident for Northern and South Western Cypress Forests.

Minor non-conformities identified at this assessment:

Criterion 8.2: It is not clear how FCNSW conducts Emergency drills/events for all its potential emergency events/scenarios, and periodically tests planned responses over an agreed period, across the organisation.

Criterion 8.1: Depot risk identification and management: FCNSW approach to risk identification and management at its Depot sites is not effective and/or consistent at Mandalong Depot

Opportunities for improvement are identified in the body of this report.

The Assessor would like to acknowledge the cooperation and constructive engagement of all staff involved in this assessment.

Defined forest area statement

Hardwood Forests Division incorporates the following FMUs

- FMU 1 – South Coast hardwoods
- FMU 2 – Southern Tablelands hardwoods
- FMU 3 – Cypress forests
- FMU 4 – Redgum forests
- FMU 5 – Northern Coastal hardwoods
- FMU 6 – Northern Tablelands hardwoods
- FMU 7 – Northern hardwood plantations

Defined forest area (in hectares):	1,767,333 ha
Advised to AFS Limited on:	28.07.2023
Certificate expires on:	31.12.2024

Report prepared by:

Gerard Moore	Lead Auditor
<i>Name of person who prepared this report</i>	<i>Position</i>

END OF REPORT