

THE LOGGING AND FOREST INDUSTRY TRAINING BOARD

(A Brief Summary of it's Position)

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INTRODUCTION

The Logging and Forest Industry Training Board was gazetted in April 1980, pursuant to the Vocational Training Act 1968. It is comprised of members representing :-

The N.Z. Forest Owners' Association Inc. (2)
The N.Z. Loggers' Association
The Director-General of Forests
The N.Z. Timber Workers' Union
The N.Z. Workers' Union
The N.Z. Forestry Council
The Secretary of Labour
The Director-General of Education
The Vocational Training Council

The broad statutory objectives of any Industry Training Board are :

- to encourage the implementation of systematic training and development schemes to ensure that New Zealand has the people at all levels of employment with the requisite knowledge and technical skills to perform their tasks efficiently.
- to ensure that people as individuals have the opportunity to continue to develop.
- to raise the standards of knowledge, skill and effectiveness.
- to encourage those directly responsible for achieving the foregoing objectives.

PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVES

The principle objective of the Logging and Forest Industry Training Board is to provide coordinated training for those people employed in the logging and forest management sectors of New Zealand's forest industry.

Since its inception, the Board has identified that the overriding need was the training and development of front line workers. To this end, the Board has now introduced to the industry, two training schemes - The Logging Training and Certification Scheme and The Forest Skills Training and Certification Scheme. In each scheme the aim has been to improve the efficiency of front line employees by upgrading their work skills and knowledge.

Carefully controlled certification is an integral part of each training scheme, as this provides recognition of work skills and upgrades the image and status of this industry and those who are employed within it. Both training schemes have been designed to be applied at a National level and only lack of the necessary financial resources hinder this eventuating.

TRAINING WITHIN THE INDUSTRY

There are a number of important factors which effect the planning for coordinated training within the industry :

The industry is primarily labour intensive. Therefore -

Most training must be carried out on site, generally in a 1:1 or a 1:2/3 situation.

The most effective training aid available is the forest and its environs, well away from technical institutes and schools, etc.

The work place and therefore the training ground for the industry is scattered, in generally remote locations, the length and breadth of New Zealand.

The Department of Labour surveys between 400 and 450 employing units for their information on the industry - the numbers employed by each unit ranging from 1 to 400.

The very nature of forestry in New Zealand and the mobility of a large proportion of its workers, hampers planning for training needs. There are at least five differing but well informed sources of information on the manpower needs for the industry to the year 2000. The forecasts made today can be changed tomorrow by market demands, the economy, the unemployment situation and by nature.

Although technological changes are not liable to affect training over the next 5-10 years, natural phenomenon can and does. The recent Bay of Plenty wind blow is a good example.

The School of Forestry and the N.Z. Certificate in Forestry are the only formal forestry training options open in New Zealand - between them producing somewhere around 40-45 graduates a year - all destined for management roles and generally very "light" in the area of logging skills.

With the closing of the Woodsman Training Schools there is now no formal training available in basic forest skills. There are no full time forestry trainers, as far as is known in the industry. There are a handful of full-time logging trainers.

Unlike some other Industry Training Boards, there is no single employer or employee organisation existing in our industry which could act as an "umbrella" or "father figure" for the Logging and Forest Industry Training Board.

Unlike factory based situations, the line of responsibility for forest workers is often very difficult to follow. In many cases, between the Forest Owner and the worker are two or more intermediary employing agencies all of whom tend to pass on

their employee responsibilities. Particularly in regard to training and safety.

We are faced primarily with a re-training situation in most areas, particularly in the logging sector. The problems associated with changing long ingrained, existing work habits are therefore manifest.

A generally low status in the community enjoyed by forest workers, activates a latent desire for self improvement and social recognition. One means of achieving this is through nationally recognised certification schemes detailing skills and experience. The enthusiasm for these comes from the potential recipients however, rather than from the providers of the wherewithal to promulgate and administer the schemes.

Not having any organised industry wide means of funding or levying places the activities of the L. and F.I.T.B. in an invidious position. It is impossible to plan ahead effectively when financial resources are unknown. The current and foreseeable activities of the Board can best be described as a "do what you can, when you can, with what you've got" situation.

Logging and forestry have been put together in the one training board but in reality, often the only common factor between the two aspects of the industry is the forest. There is some transposition, such as the use of chainsaws, fire-fighting, machine operating, etc, but in the main a tree planter does not log and a logger does not plant trees. They are not even members of the same Union. It will, therefore, be very difficult to find a person who has sufficient knowledge, skills and credibility to train both loggers and forest workers effectively. This means a duplication which may be difficult to overcome in the smaller situations.

THE FUTURE OF THE LOGGING AND FOREST INDUSTRY TRAINING BOARD

The Board is now at the crossroads of its development, i.e. a point has been reached where it can either continue doing what it can, where and when it can, with the limited resources available or developing on a scale sufficient to satisfy the needs of the industry. To date the L. and F.I.T.B.'s training and certification format has been based on sound accepted practices, developed by the major companies in the Bay of Plenty.

The question of dissemination of new technology per media of training must remain unanswered until the L. and F.I.T.B. is in a position to be able to consider this possibility.

