

TRAINING THE LOGGERS FROM LIMITED SCALE OPERATIONS

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INTRODUCTION

The basic philosophy of the Group Training Scheme for loggers in the Bay of Plenty region and subsequently the Logging and Forest Industry Training Board, was that if correct work methods were established and then practiced throughout the industry, productivity would be improved and work injuries reduced.

The pay off from the implementation of this philosophy to date has been :

1. Low production costs: resulting from improved efficiency due to
  - the use of proven work methods
  - the proper care and operation of tools and equipment
  - improved morale.
2. Reduced incident and severity of injuries through
  - correct work practices
  - improved knowledge of work rules
  - improved knowledge and use of protective equipment.
3. A standard system of certification which testifies to a worker's level of skill and experience when applying for employment.
4. Training and certification programmes which bring status and pride to what traditionally have been regarded as lowly rated, menial jobs.
5. Lower A.C.C. levies as accident levels come down.

The Logger's Certificate, of which some 1100 have now been issued, is a record of proven skill and experience in logging. It is issued in a booklet form and is administered by the Logging and Forest Industry Training Board.

It can be attained by anyone working in the forest industry who can reach the necessary level of skill and experience as laid out and who can prove that skill and experience to an assessor appointed by the L. and F.I.T.B.

THE PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH TRAINING AND CERTIFYING LOGGERS FROM SMALL SCALE OPERATIONS

It would be true to say that most training and subsequent certification of loggers to date has been carried out under the umbrella of a large forest owner or employer. The reasons for this are fairly obvious.

There is no doubt that small scale operators have as much, if not more, to gain from a properly trained workforce as large companies and this has been proven. The training problems associated with this type of operation however are :

- (i) The availability of sufficient trainers to service the widely scattered distribution of limited scale operations and because of their commercial nature, the reluctance to pay for the cost of such training.
- (ii) Manpower may not be continuously involved with logging.
- (iii) Small crew size means that even on job training could be disruptive to production for a period.
- (iv) Many have less than adequate or appropriate gear through cost considerations, thus undermining the effectiveness of training.

What Can Be Done About It?

The problems outlined are not unsurmountable and I believe should be addressed by both the industry and the L. and F.I.T.B.

The answers really revolve around three aspects :

- (1) The willingness of limited scale contractors to become involved and to accept that there are some minimum standards required by good logging practice, safety and the law. Remembering that the contractor must accept the responsibility for keeping up the standard and leading by example after the trainer has gone.
- (2) The availability of trained trainers - at present all trainers are employed by one or other of only four employers in the industry. There are sufficient capable people around however, who could be trained by the Board to be effective trainers.
- (3) Who employs the trainers and how are they financed?

There are three alternatives

Either - The trainer is employed by a far sighted company or forest owner who provide his services gratis from time to time to train outside of that company's area of activity.

- Or - Trainers are employed by the Board and the costs covered in the voluntary levy system (which of course does not cover independent limited scale operators).
- Or - Freelance or company employed trainers are found, organised and directed by the Logging and Forest Industry Training Board to specific training contracts, paid for directly by the contractor/operator involved.

Any one or a combination of these situations will work, it is only really a matter of who pays. Once this question has been sorted out, then the L. and F.I.T.B., within the limits of its finely stretched and uncompleted network of Regional Co-ordinators, can address the problem.

