

# Manulife *Forest Times*

Brought to you by Manulife Investment Management Forest Management (NZ) Limited

Issue No.17 | NOVEMBER  
2024



## Coming to the end of the year

By Chris Barnes - General Manager

*Welcome to the last edition of Manulife Forest Times for 2024. Another year is nearly complete, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our staff and contractors for the outstanding work you have all done for our clients and each other during 2024.*

Reflecting on the year, it is easy to focus on the difficult market conditions, especially mid-year when we reduced production levels over a collective period of 11 weeks. However, it is important we also celebrate and recognise the many positive achievements across the business during the year. A great example of this was at the recent CNI Forestry and Northern Forestry annual awards where it was inspiring to see MFM (NZ) contractors take out numerous awards recognising excellence across health and safety, silviculture, forestry, distribution, harvesting and engineering, and our very own Richard Stringfellow winning the Outstanding Regional Service Award.

MFM (NZ) hits a significant milestone this December. It has been 20 years since Bill McCallum and HNRG executives started Hancock Forest Management Limited in Rotorua. There is a great article in this publication celebrating the history of MFM (NZ) and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all past and present staff, contractors and directors for their support in growing MFM (NZ) into the very special business it is today.

Since our last edition there have been a few changes in staff with Steve Webb finishing at the end of September. Steve made an important contribution to the business since joining in 2021, especially to our mental health and wellbeing committee and we would like to wish Steve all the best in his future endeavours. In August we welcomed Aaron Huggins as our new Risk and Assurance Manager. Aaron is based in Tauranga and will be spending time across offices/operations so please take the time to welcome him when you get the opportunity.

As we move towards the end of the year, it is pleasing to see domestic inflation easing back into the 1-3% range, and importantly for log prices, offtake in China has been firm with inventory levels falling. We have re-established a steady supply to our customer base in India with a vessel now scheduled every 4-6 weeks and through AVA we are continuing our supply into Japan, Korea and Taiwan.

By the time this edition goes to print we will have less than 25 working days remaining to the end of the year and a well-deserved Christmas break. The most important job for all of us during those 25 days is your safety and the safety of your work mates. Please make this your #1 goal for the rest of the year. Take time to look out for yourself and each other and remember that you are empowered to stop any activity if you think it is not safe and have my full support and encouragement to do this.

I would like to acknowledge Helen for all the work that goes into producing the three editions of this newsletter each year. I would also like to thank the staff and contractors who have submitted articles during the year. It is the people that make this a great place to work, and the articles are a nice reminder of the remarkable people we are fortunate to go to work with every day.

In closing I would like to thank all staff and contractors for their support of our clients and each other during 2024 and wish you and your family all the best for a great Christmas. Please feel free to give me a call (027 257 7260) anytime if you need anything or would like to have a chat or a coffee (my shout).

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# National Managers' Update



## Andrew Widdowson

### National Operations Manager

The year is fast drawing to a close with only seven weeks remaining until we shut down operations for the Christmas period. Where has the year gone?

Unlike the severe weather events we experienced over 2023 including Cyclone Gabrielle, this year we have enjoyed much more settled weather which has been very favourable to our forest operation's supply chain.

Turning to operations, we recently completed our 2024 re-establishment programme which comprised the planting of 4,474 hectares or 3.74 million seedlings. As you can appreciate, this is a large undertaking and it is a credit to our forestry staff and contractors who completed the programme ahead of schedule and without incident. Forestry operations are now focused on a large post-plant aerial releasing programme covering 4,800 hectares. Alongside this we will be undertaking spraying for Dothistroma across all our client managed estates. Thin to waste operations have recommenced and to ensure a high level of focus on health, safety and quality, a thin to waste workshop was held in Rotorua which all silvicultural contractors and forestry staff attended, along with a representative from Competenz Rotorua and FISC assessor Mike Bruce who provided an in-depth overview of the new National Thin for Value Best Practice Guide. Thanks go to Ngāro Tumai, Geoff Parsons and Peter Houston for organising the workshop including the field exercises.

Our engineering operations continue to provide a first-class

harvest planning and infrastructure construction service to our harvesting operations. Our current combined forward position is 9.8 million tonnes forward planned, and 3.5 million tonnes harvest ready. Construction activity is programmed to increase over the summer period with the objective of having a 4 million tonne harvest ready position by 30 April 2025 i.e. a 12-month forward harvest position.

Our harvesting operations have been operating to full capacity over most of the year apart from several occasions where we have needed to take volume out of our log export market. We understand these situations, where we need to restrict production, can result in uncertainty and appreciate the full support and understanding from our harvesting contractors.

Our distribution operations have provided a reliable and high-quality log cartage service over the year in which they have had to contend with both forest and public road closures and congestion at several ports. Under the leadership provided by Laresia, Kim and Scott, supported by our three distribution supervisors John McCarty, Quintin Makene and Lars Christensen, I believe our distribution operations set the bar in terms of safety performance and distribution efficiency in the New Zealand forest industry.

An important comment on fire protection. By the time this publication goes to print, all staff and contractors will have received the MFM (NZ) 2024-2025 Fire Response Plan which details what to do and who to contact in the event of a forest fire. Please take time to read the plan thoroughly and have the plan stored for quick access. Thank you to Peter Houston and Jarron McInnes for developing this season's response plan and delivering vegetation fire refresher training to our staff and contractors as we head toward drier conditions.



## Darrell Tahere

### National Harvesting Manager

Reflecting on this past year, we've navigated numerous changes. MFM (NZ) staff, both new and existing, have taken on new roles or retired. Recently another harvesting contractor, S&R Logging Limited, concluded operations in mid-

September due to cyclone damage.

Change is an inevitable part of any business, and it often brings both challenges and opportunities. When people leave, whether due to retirement, new opportunities or other reasons, it can create gaps in knowledge and experience. However, it also opens the door for new talent to bring fresh perspectives and ideas.

**Adjusting to New Ways of Working:** As the business evolves, so do our methods and processes. Adapting to new technologies, workflows and strategies can initially be daunting, but it ultimately leads to greater efficiency and innovation. Embracing change helps us stay competitive and responsive to market demands.

**Impact of Departures:** When long-time employees leave, it can be a significant emotional and operational shift. Their departure might lead to a temporary loss of expertise and a need for remaining team members to take on additional responsibilities. This can be stressful but also an opportunity for growth and skill development.

**Welcoming New Team Members:** New hires bring fresh energy and new ideas, which can invigorate the team. They often challenge the status quo and encourage us to rethink our approaches.

**Impact on Remaining Employees:** The remaining team members might feel a mix of emotions – sadness over losing colleagues, excitement about new team members and anxiety about changes. It's important to support them through these transitions, providing clear communication, training and opportunities for feedback.

Overall, while change can be challenging, it also presents opportunities for growth, innovation and improvement. By embracing change and supporting each other through transitions, we can continue to thrive and succeed as a team.

Ngā mihi.



## Mike Baker

### National Forestry Manager

Well done and thanks to all our forestry contractors, suppliers and MFM (NZ) forestry staff for the completion of the planting programme, with over 4,400 hectares planted this year. It proved a challenging season from a tree stock supply perspective, with a lot of behind

the scenes work to ensure we were able to obtain our tree stock requirements to complete the programme.

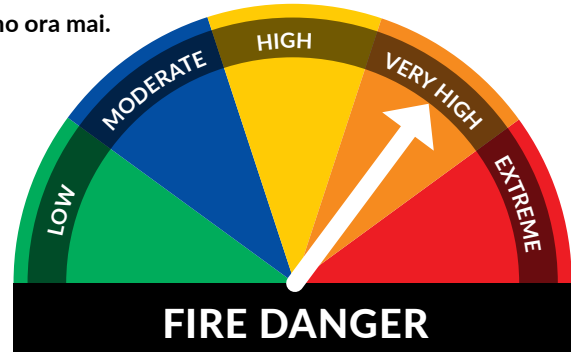
Most of the silviculture crews have now moved into thin to waste operations. As part of the transition, a meeting was held in September with all MFM (NZ) thinning contractors to present and discuss the manual thin to waste certification programme (see article in this edition).

Production thinning operations also commenced in Matahina Forest in the Waonui Forest Investments Ltd estate in September. As described later in this edition, the operation is planned to

continue through until early in 2025, as part of an obligation under the Waonui estate acquisition.

As we move into fire season, a reminder for everyone working in the forests to ensure they have the appropriate fire suppression tools on site and to manage operations relative to the fire danger. MFM (NZ)'s 2024/25 forest fire readiness and response plan outlines these details. Each crew should have a copy of this plan on site. If you require a copy, please talk to your MFM (NZ) forester.

Noho ora mai.



## Geoff Gover

### National Harvest Planning & Engineering Manager

Folks the sun is shining and the ground is drying, all good signs for the upcoming summer engineering season.

Since the last edition of Manulife Forest Times, the engineering group has passed a significant milestone. The last lost time injury (LTI) in the group was five years ago when a chap hit his thumb with the hammer while placing a culvert marker. Five years LTI free is quite a milestone given the environment the team works in. For the aggregate trucks, they are driving at times on partly formed roads and, at the other extreme, with significant public interaction (State Highway 1).

To achieve a result of five years takes planning and execution of safety plans and daily activity plans so all staff are aware of all the hazards/risks and how they manage these risks for the site they are working on. The result of five years LTI free does not happen by coincidence but as a result of all persons taking ownership of their work site.

In recognition of the achievement, the engineering team will be out and about passing on a small gift as appreciation for

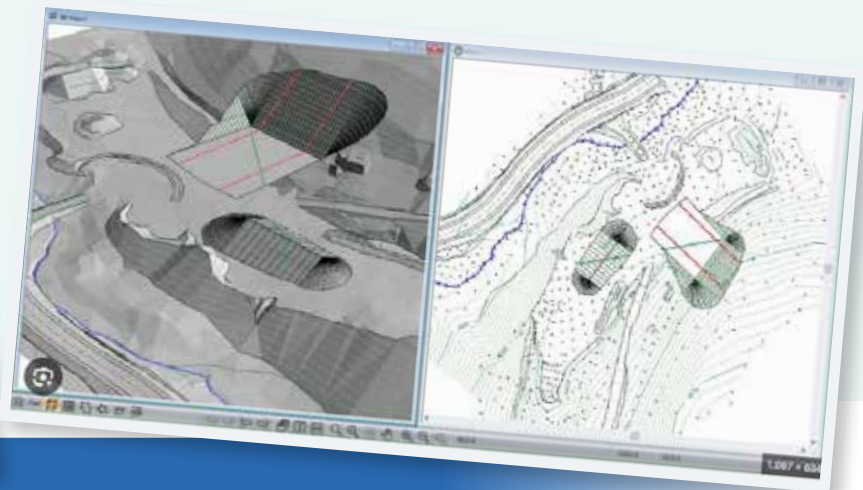
the outstanding ownership by the entire engineering team.

For those who may not be aware, the King Country is the last of the first rotation forests that are currently being roaded for harvest. First rotation forests are the most challenging construction and for engineers bring the biggest rewards.

How times have changed. Since I first started managing engineering operations some 30 plus years ago, the single most significant change I have seen is the integration of technology. Back in the good old days, a grade line would be marked and the tree crop cleared. Then within the wide cleared corridor, the best alignment would be marked to access the landing site.

Today, before we even put a foot on site, a three-dimensional model from Lidar (light detection and ranging) is generated. From the model we can virtually construct a road either manually (in the software) or using AI (machine learning). From the output, the minimum road corridor for salvage is removed, making way for the road construction. The bulldozer and excavator operators are equipped with the full location and cut/fill depths on their phone (Avenza). Using these tools, the only earthworks undertaken is then minimised, resulting in reduced environmental impact and reduced cost.

**As always, look out for your mates, and work safe.**  
**Geoff**







## Laresia Heke

### National Distribution Manager

In this last edition of Manulife Forest Times for 2024, I will be sharing some photos and commentary around:

- Recent contractor change of daylight savings BBQs and 4Ds competition
- State Highway 1 (SH1) Tirau to Waioru accelerated maintenance project
- Heavy Vehicle Stability, Control and Technology course attended by some log truck drivers.

### Contractor change of daylight savings BBQs and 4Ds competition

The Taumata distribution daylight savings BBQ was held on Monday 30 September at the Kinleith Weighing and Measuring Solutions (WMS) Weighbridge. A second BBQ was held on Tuesday 1 November for our Eastern Bay of Plenty region at the Kawerau Processing Yard. We use this forum as an opportunity to talk to log truck drivers and other contractors about key safety messages, their general wellbeing and this time we introduced the concept of the 4Ds.



Thanks for filling out our 4-D form at the recent BBQ and going into the safety prize draw to win a Hunting and Fishing Voucher. Congratulations, to the following entrants who were winners:

**Brent Keen – Rob Dahm Limited**

**Braedon Malone – Rotorua Forest Haulage**

**Tarnz Tioke – C3 Kawerau**

**Kane Savage – Kajavala Forestry Limited**

The idea behind 4-D's – what is Dumb, Difficult, Different or Dangerous is to write down or report what YOU see, this might be different to what other people see. Some people see things every day and get used to it. Letting someone know about one of the 4-D's could prevent something serious happening and make sure everyone goes home safely every day.

The MFM (NZ) Distribution Team hopes that you enjoy spending your voucher!

### SH1 Tirau to Waioru accelerated maintenance project

SH1 through central and southern Waikato is an important route within our highway network. The last few years have seen an increase in the number of potholes and many sections of this route are in the worst condition of all highways in Waikato.

To hold the current condition, an increase in basic maintenance would be required but Waka Kotahi advise that this intense rebuilding programme will go further by preventing further deterioration, bringing the road up to a higher standard, and provide longevity with less maintenance patching. Improved drainage and vegetation maintenance will form part of the work plan.

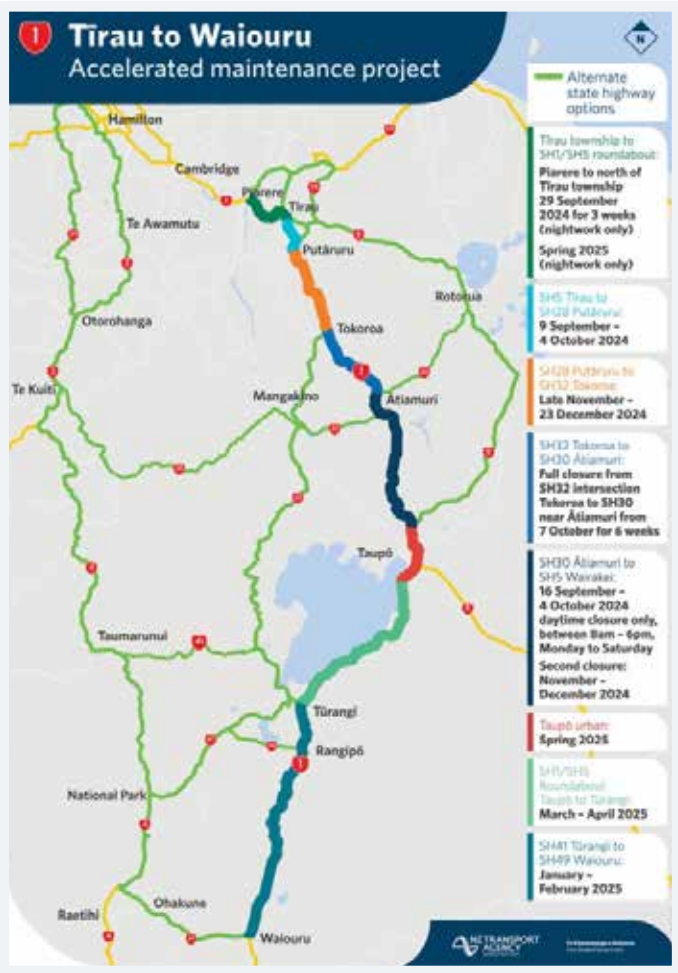
The planned sections and approximate timing for maintenance is shown on the map at the end of this article.

This project, which commenced on 29 September, will use block closures in many areas to expedite delivery and reduce the length of time people are affected by temporary traffic management (the programme for 110 lane kms of work can be condensed from over four years to under 16 months).

The MFM (NZ) distribution and engineering teams have worked closely with Waka Kotahi to understand the plan and to minimise the impact on our client operations. Where possible, consideration is being given by the woodflow team to the log

grades that are cut at specific locations to minimise delays from source to destination.

Waka Kotahi have extended their thanks to MFM (NZ), along with other forest companies and the dairy industry, for working closely with them to make the closures work as well as they can for everyone.



## Heavy Vehicle Stability, Control and Technology

Laresia Heke attended a Heavy Vehicle Stability, Control and Technology course at Hampton Downs on 7 August with seven log truck drivers. The course stressed the importance of doing the basics right, developing good driving habits and observations, and building on these with technical driving skills.



TR truck with 'trainer wheels' to prevent rollover during training

All the best for the final quarter of 2024. Noho ora mai, Laresia Heke, National Distribution Manager

## Competition

### Winner of Best Article in the July 2024 Newsletter

By Helen Moffatt - Administrative Coordinator, Tauranga

#### Congratulations to Malcolm Worboys for his King Country Update.

For those of us who are office-bound, it is quite an eye opener to see what goes into the engineering required to enable forests to be accessed. All that different terrain and other obstacles must make this role a challenging but rewarding one.



Figure 1 Archer bulldozer forming a new road



Figure 2 Archer excavator laying Bidum cloth and metal on a formed road

Remember anybody is eligible to win and another \$50 gift voucher will be awarded to the person who contributes our favourite article from this edition.

If you have a favourite, please email Helen:

[hmoftatt1@manulife.com](mailto:hmoftatt1@manulife.com)



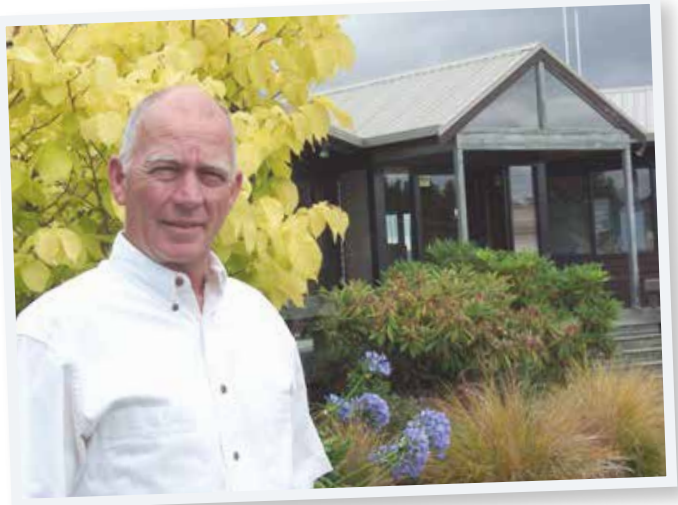
## People

### Happy Birthday - MFM (NZ) Celebrates 20 Years in Business

By Helen Moffatt - Administrative Coordinator, Tauranga

*On 1 December 2024 MFM (NZ) will turn 20 (phew no longer a teenager!). I thought the best way to document this historic moment was to revisit some key points provided by Bill McCallum, founding General Manager of Hancock Forest Management Limited (HFM NZ), from an earlier edition of Manulife Forest Times.*

- HFM NZ's story began in early 2004 when Fletcher Challenge Forests (Fletcher) sold the Tarawera and Matahina Forest cutting rights to Kiwi Forest Group (Kiwi). Kiwi hired some former Fletcher employees and formed 'Kiwi Forest Management'. Three months after start-up, on 4 June 2004, Kiwi Forests sold its newly acquired forests to HNRG clients. This deal was HNRG's first in New Zealand. HNRG contracted Kiwi to manage the forests for a term of five months. Now named Tiaki Plantations Company, this gave HNRG time to evaluate its property management options.
- When the management term with Kiwi expired, HNRG bought Kiwi and on 1 December 2004, 16 Kiwi staff were welcomed into HFM NZ by the then HNRG CEO Dan Christensen and COO Bruce McKnight.
- In 2004 the portfolio expanded when HNRG purchased Prudential Timber. Prutimber provided investment management services in New Zealand for two clients, the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan and Viking Global Timber. Prutimber had selected PF Olsen to undertake the operational property management tasks of the Ontario and Viking assets, but the investment management responsibilities were taken on by HNRG. HFM NZ assumed the role of overseeing Olsen's operational management and took on direct responsibility for all log sales, land management, and accounting and finance.
- In 2005 HFM NZ successfully bid for the property management of the Teal3 forests just north of Taupo. HFM NZ managed these forests from 2005 until the completion of harvesting in 2014.
- A year later HNRG successfully bid for the Carter Holt Harvey forests in Nelson, the CNI and Northland. On 1 December 2006 HFM NZ scaled up to take on management of the three client groups who purchased the CHH forests – Tasman Bay Forests in Nelson, Taumata in the CNI and Northland, and Mangakahia Forest Limited, also in Northland. Mangakahia was a 50:50 joint venture between Taumata and a TIMO called Global Forest Partners and after a couple of years the assets were partitioned, and half of the assets were rolled into the Taumata Northern working circle.
- The investment fund which owned Tasman Bay Forests had a 10-year fixed term and although the fund performed very well, the forests had to be sold. HFM NZ's time as property manager of the Nelson forests came to an end in 2016.
- HFM NZ's client base remained steady for the next couple of years until mid-2018 when OTTP NZ requested that HFM NZ submit a proposal to extend its management of OTTP NZ's forests to include operational property management. HFM NZ's bid was accepted and on 1 October 2018 OTTP NZ was



Bill McCallum – founding General Manager HFM NZ

brought under HFM NZ management. This returned HFM NZ to the position of managing the largest area of any forest manager in New Zealand. This title had been temporarily lost following the sale of Tasman Bay.



Nelson office – Bill McCallum, HNRG Executives and HNRG staff

There are not many of the original staff still working for us, in fact only two – Michael Elix and Henry Tibble.

Below are some thoughts/reflections from Michael Elix, Engineering Manager, Rotorua.

*"When I think back over the past 20 years working for the company, many things have changed, but almost an equal number have remained the same.*

*"Initially we only managed forests on behalf of one client and that was Tiaki Plantations Company. The forestry rights were on-sold by Kiwi Forests after they had purchased them off Fletcher Challenge Forests.*

*"The initial management team was relatively small, maybe 16 or 17 people all together. We all worked out of the Rotorua office. The office was a lot smaller than it is now. It has undergone two major renovations in that time. The tennis court is now a carpark. The first boardroom is now the smoko room in the old building. The original smoko room is now the server room. And the pergola and old outside barbeque areas are long gone.*



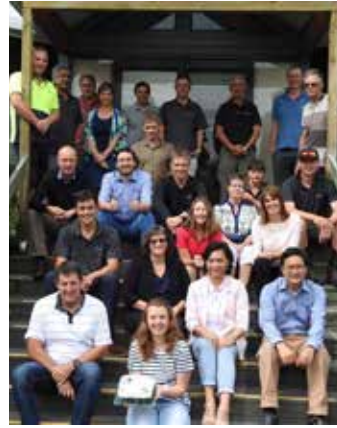
"One of the first things that I had to do as a new employee was buy a vehicle. This was a big expense at the time and new territory as well. The vehicles in the carpark back then were nothing compared to what you will see out there now. Let's just say that they were an eclectic collection at best.

"There are some things that have not changed. I still recall our induction with the senior management team from Boston. They really emphasised the importance of stewardship to the company. It was, and remains, the core ethos for how the business is managed. The other thing I remember about that day was getting the CEO's name completely wrong in a pop-up quiz, but they thought it was so funny that I was given a company cap as a prize.

"Another thing that hasn't changed is the great people that work for the company. This includes our contractors, some of whom have been with us for the entire journey so far. I have worked with many fantastic, dedicated and knowledgeable people over the years. It has been my great pleasure to get to know them, learn from them and share so many great experiences with them both at work and outside of it as well. It is also awesome to see the next generation of foresters coming through all of whom have very bright futures ahead of them.

"We are very fortunate to manage some of the best forests (or woods for our North American readers) in the world. It was a love of the outdoors that attracted me to forestry in the first place. I have been lucky enough to have witnessed an entire rotation in a number of these forests, including Tarawera Forest, which for me remains the jewel in the crown.

"The last 20 years have been great, but I'm hoping that the best is still yet to come."



Top left: Rotorua office. Top right: Tauranga office. Middle: Tokoroa office. Bottom: Whangarei office



Top left: Michael Elix 2005. Top right: Henry Tibble 2005. Bottom: HFM NZ Staff photo 2007

In 2019 when we turned 15 all the offices celebrated with personalised cakes and morning tea. Here are some photos of those office celebrations. Planning is underway to celebrate our 20-year anniversary with our staff.



A lot has changed since those early days and Jo Burrell (HR Manager) and I often comment about how many staff have come and gone since we both started here over 10 years ago. We are onto our third General Manager, starting with Bill McCallum, then Kerry Ellem and the incumbent Chris Barnes.

Kerry Ellem – General Manager 2015-2022

The full integration with our parent company, Manulife Investment Management, a few years ago was initially a shock to the system but now it's pretty much business as usual. Overnight we went from Hancock Forest Management Limited to Manulife Investment Management Forest Management (NZ) Limited – or as commonly referred to, MFM (NZ).



Top: Who remembers our original logo? Bottom: From there we began our transition into Manulife – using Manulife colours:



And finally, to where we are today.

Our New Zealand timberland team MFM (NZ) is headed by:



Tom Sarno, Global Head of Timberland Investments



Eduardo Hernandez, Managing Director of Timberland Investments



Robert Green, Managing Director, Australasia Timberlands Operations



Chris Barnes, General Manager MFM (NZ)

## Forestry



Graham Waru from Rosvall Sawmill the 2024 Northland Supreme Forest Industry Award winner

## Northland Forestry Awards

By Ursula Buckingham - Environmental Planner, Whangarei

*The 2024 Northland Forestry Awards, organised by the Northland Wood Council, took place on Friday, 20 September. It commemorated the outstanding contributions made by individuals and organisations in the forestry sector. This year's awards attracted a remarkable turnout of 450 guests and 70 nominations.*

MFM (NZ) supported the event with many of our contractors being nominated. Highlights of the evening were seeing Niha Contracting Limited and Rosewarne Cable Loggers jointly take out the Tree Faller Excellence award. Jenna Ringrose received Woman in Forestry Excellence and JSB Construction was presented with Roding Excellence.

Many of our domestic sawmillers (Crofts Poles, Rosvall Sawmill and Northpine) were also acknowledged as winners in various categories. The Supreme Forest Industry Award for 2024 was presented to Graham Waru from Rosvall Sawmill Limited.

The evening showcased the best of Northland forestry in a professional engaging event with Te Rada as MC. A list of all winners follow on the next page.





Supreme Forest Industry Award	Graham Waru (Rosvall Sawmill LTD)
Forestry Family of the Year	Cale and Dane Subritzky-Clark (Subritzky-Clark Logging 2024)
Outstanding Innovation of the Year	Ian Newey (IK and SM Newey Transport)
Outstanding Health and Safety Management	John Lumby (Northpine Limited)
Outstanding Environmental Management	Ngati Hine Forestry Trust
Forestry Excellence	Stuart Warren
Roading Excellence	Nik Birch (JSB Construction) & Andrew Bradley (JSB Construction)
Harvesting Excellence	Richard Connolly (Rosewarne Logging)
Distribution Excellence	Russell Masters (IK & SM Newey Transport)
Primary Wood Processing & Manufacturing Excellence	Jonathon Lawson (Croft Poles & Timber)
Secondary Wood Processing & Manufacturing Excellence	Graham Waru (Rosvall Sawmill LTD)
Tree Faller Excellence	Joel Niha-Neumann (Niha Contracting Limited) & Derek Rosewarne (Rosewarne Cable Loggers)
Woman in Forestry Excellence	Jenna Ringrose (Rosewarne and Ringrose)
Log Truck Driver Excellence	David (Billy) Kanara (IK & SM Newey Transport)
Emerging Talent of the Year	Jess Winikerei (Mold Logging Ltd)
Trainee of the Year	Taasi (Lapi) Peletana (Croft Poles & Timber)
Good Deed Award	Jack Ratu (Rosewarne Contractors – Crew 89)



Jensen Logging John Deere harvesting machines



Jensen Logging forwarder loading logs onto the stack after picking them up from the bush

## New Production Thinning Operation – Matahina Forest

By Jack Higby - Forester, Rotorua Office

*In an exciting development for the Rotorua forestry team, we have been given a new operation to manage with the commencement of production thinning operations in Matahina Forest in September. The operation is part of a pulpwood supply obligation under the Waonui Forest Investments Ltd estate acquisition and is planned to continue through until early 2025.*

The primary goal of this operation is to thin the stand and lower the stocking to 450 stems/ha, thereby increasing the diameter of the remaining logs. It is achieved by selectively thinning out the smallest and poorly formed trees and selling them as pulp wood to the mill.

The operation employs a forwarder, two harvesters, a loader, and a dozer (to form skids) ensuring efficiency and precision in the thinning process. Jensen Logging, a well-qualified crew with extensive experience in production thinning and Matahina Forest, is leading the operation. Their familiarity with the area and expertise in thinning operations make them an invaluable asset to this project.

This operation has been beneficial by showing me how a harvesting operation runs and works. Working primarily in silviculture for my entire forestry career, it has been a real joy to experience what a harvesting operation is like. With the help of the harvesting foresters in the Rotorua office and Jensen Logging, it has been a fun, exciting and easy process.





*TTW contractors meeting: Mike Bruce (certifier) presenting on TTW certification assessments and learnings.*

## Manual Thin to Waste (TTW) Certification Programme

By Mike Baker - National Forestry Manager, Rotorua

*In September, a meeting was held in Rotorua with all MFM (NZ) manual thin to waste (TTW) contractors, certifiers, Competenz and MFM (NZ) forestry staff, to present and discuss the MFM (NZ) manual thin to waste certification programme.*

The objective of the certification programme is to:

1. Ensure manual thin to waste operators maintain a high level of health, safety and productivity while consistently producing quality results.
2. Provide thin to waste operators a pathway for training, development and ultimately, through certification, recognition of their unique skills and experience.

To achieve certification, TTW operators are required to hold certain forestry, TTW and first aid unit standards, and then pass a knowledge and practical assessment.

This year Mike Bruce has been brought on board as an additional certifier, along with current certifiers Wayne Henman and Alby Kurei. This has helped provide good momentum for the programme with regular visits to crews across the country.

Prior to this meeting, a thinning exercise was also held in Kinleith Forest with all MFM (NZ) forestry staff and certifiers. This involved discussions on auditing as well as thin to waste selection and felling. It was an opportunity for all staff, new and old, to be involved in the discussions, and provide learnings and consistency to the team.



*MFM (NZ) forestry team TTW field exercise. Discussion with Mike Bruce (TTW certifier) on PPE and chainsaw audits (top) and tree felling and selection (bottom).*





## Forestry



*The career of Patrick (Paddy) Aislabie (back row third from the left) took an unexpected yet rewarding turn when he transitioned from teaching to silviculture with Ace of Spades Contracting.*

## Students Discovering Forestry Beyond the Classroom

By Peter Houston - Northern/Eastern Silviculture Manager, Whangarei/Rotorua

*Ace of Spades Contracting Ltd recently featured on the Bay of Plenty's news website, SunLive, for their innovative efforts to introduce forestry as a viable career option to high school students.*

After many years teaching, Patrick (Paddy) Aislabie switched careers to become a silviculture crew manager in forestry. Recognising Paddy's value due to his teaching background, Cain McKenzie (the Director of Ace of Spades Contracting), brought him on board. Despite initial doubts, Paddy's transition to forestry was seamless thanks to the support from Competenz and Ace of Spades. Paddy has since used his teaching skills to train new workers in forestry.

Ace of Spades Contracting is actively engaging with young people to introduce them to forestry careers through partnerships with local schools. Their pilot programme with Rotorua Boys' High School offers students hands-on experience in forestry, allowing them

to earn NCEA credits. Paddy wants to change the perceptions of forestry and highlight the numerous opportunities it offers. According to Cain, the programme helps students gain an understanding of what a career in forestry is like before they make a commitment. Ace of Spades also strives to provide job opportunities for interested students within their company.

**Cain points out, for those who are committed to the industry, forestry can be both rewarding and lucrative, offering good pay and clear career progression once qualified. Paddy adds that silviculture is diverse, with no two days being the same, and welcomes people at any stage of their career.**

## Distribution



*Lance and Jenna prior to departure.*

## Customer Log Truck Experience

By Steve Weir - Supply Chain Manager, Northland

*Earlier this year, we had the opportunity to host one of our valued domestic customers on a log truck ride, allowing them to experience our supply chain in action.*

Jenna Hansen from Rosvall Sawmill spent the morning alongside Lance Stubbs, an experienced and trusted driver from Mike Lambert Limited. She gained an up-close look at the essential role our transport operations play in delivering logs from forest to mill.

The journey took them to Mamaranui Forest, located north of Dargaville, where they collected a load of structural sawlogs. These logs were destined for processing at Rosvall Sawmill. The trip provided a great opportunity for Jenna to witness the complexities of the logging process firsthand – from the safe loading of the truck, to navigating the sometimes challenging terrain and ensuring the efficient transport of the logs to the mill.

After four hours on the road, they returned to Rosvall Sawmill with a full load of logs. The successful trip was a positive experience for Jenna. She gained valuable insights into the logistics and coordination required, and Lance took pride in showcasing the professionalism and efficiency of our operations.

## Harvest



Scott from Trimax logging discussing stem breakage with students from Toi Ohomai.



Ari from DK Logging talks to Rotorua Boys' High School students about working in a harvesting crew

## Students Visit Tiaki Plantations

By Peter Auge - Harvesting Manager, Rotorua

*During this quarter Tiaki hosted students and staff from Rotorua Boys' High School (Discovery Forestry Programme) and Toi Ohomai (Forestry Diploma).*

Students from both parties were very engaging, and we hope a number of them will soon be joining the industry.



Te Uranga Forest 6 January 2024.



Te Uranga Forest 3 October 2024.



Crew 75 Madill 124 Swingyarder .

## Te Uranga Forest Harvest Progress

By Richard Feierabend- Harvesting Manager, Tokoroa

*Te Uranga Forest, planted in 1997, is a 780-hectare first rotation forestry right block with extensive native vegetation. It is located on Uepango Rd approximately 25km north of Taumarunui on the eastern side of the Ongarue River.*

Tombleson Logging Crew 85 have spent the last two summers opening up road line salvage, and clear fell harvest began earlier this year with King Country Harvesting Crew 75 and Loggabull 14 currently chipping away.

There is approximately another 300,000 tonne in this forest to harvest, predominantly cable with a small amount of ground base. We aim to have this forest completed by the end of 2027.



Crew 75 Thunderbird 110 Tower.



## People



In-field chipping operation.

## NZIF Conference 2024

By Cole Grace - Resource Forester and Thornton Campbell - Woodflow Manager, Rotorua

*Five MFM(NZ) staff recently attended the NZIF 2024 Conference in Nelson. Key focuses were alternative species, biofuel applications, environmental issues and innovative management practices.*

While Radiata pine remains dominant, commercial interest in alternative species is growing. Key challenges include the scale and consistency of harvest of alternative species to facilitate an efficient domestic processing market. Internationally, it is thought the changing export market and impending EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) could create opportunities for high-value alternative species. Companies like Ikea (INGKA) are investigating non-radiata species, suggesting a shift in market dynamics. These species might outperform traditional sources in New Zealand, especially as international demand for Radiata pine fluctuates.

Biofuel was another hot topic. Multiple companies highlighted their in-field chipping biofuel programme which, when including waste control, are considered financially viable. Discussion reiterated that scalability hinges on sales point locations and customer maturity. Carbona, a European oriented pellet company, emphasised that New Zealand is at the beginning of its industrial energy challenges, particularly in the gas sector and that biofuels could become increasingly important.

Environmental issues were a major focus, particularly in the Gisborne and Marlborough regions. A key takeaway was that engineering solutions alone are not sufficient and that understanding micro-landscape features and accurate and smart planning is essential. Les Basher from Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research introduced an erosion susceptibility classification (ESC) tool offering more detailed, Lidar-based susceptibility assessments to improve foresters' ability to manage erosion-prone land and better inform future legislation. Warren Rance, regional manager of Forest Enterprises Ltd (FEL) in Gisborne, discussed the multitude of severe challenges the region faces, particularly regulatory. He called for industry-wide collaboration and assistance, emphasising that local efforts alone are insufficient.

Field trips provided valuable case studies, such as Tasman Pine Forests Limited's (TPFL) experience with the Pigeon Valley fire and

innovative slash recovery methods. Despite challenges, replanting post-fire resulted in superior growth. Their millennial regime trial to create profitability on poor sites proved disastrous with average piece size below 0.5 and TRV of 363 m<sup>3</sup>/ha at age 21.

As a highlight, Sally Strang was awarded a Fellow of the New Zealand Institute of Foresters. This prestigious award is well-deserved recognition for Sally's 29 years of contribution to the forest industry and a reflection of how well-respected Sally is both within and outside the sector.

The NZIF conference highlighted innovations and challenges in the forestry industry. The discussions emphasised adaptability and forward-thinking. Special thanks to all those involved in the organisation of the conference and field trips.



Great growth post-Pigeon Valley fire.

## Environment



Sally chats to Peter Wayne (a forest neighbour).



Sally on Butler Road Bridge.

## Sally Strang Elected NZ Institute of Forestry Fellow

By Peter Houston, Northern/Eastern Silviculture Manager, Whangarei/Rotorua

*On Friday 7 September at the New Zealand Institute of Forestry's AGM in Nelson, Sally Strang was elected by members as a Fellow of the Institute. The Institute said Sally has achieved eminence in the forestry profession in New Zealand, particularly in environmental regulation and management. She is well-known and highly respected within the sector.*

Sally holds a Bachelor of Civil Engineering and has been employed in environmental management roles in commercial forests for over 29 years including Carter Holt Harvey (Wood Products and Forests). She has been Environmental Manager for MFM (NZ) since December 2006.

Environmental management and social license are critical components of the New Zealand forestry sector. Sally has made a very significant contribution to this and taken on several national and regional responsibilities, all aimed at improving the forest environment.

In her role, Sally has been involved in all aspects of environmental management and stewardship related to forest operations. These have included:

- Developing and overseeing of MFM (NZ)'s network of stewardship projects to maintain and (where possible) enhance biodiversity values within our forests
- Developing and maintaining MFM (NZ)'s environmental management systems to ensure operations are carried out in compliance with relevant environmental regulations and the requirements of our third-party certification.

Sally has chaired the NZFOA/NZFFA Environment Committee since 2020 and has been a member of the committee for 15 years. The committee works on a range of environmental forestry interests - including RMA reform, national regulation, powerlines issues and research needs. Sally is involved in all sub-committees and carries the burden of most submissions.

Sally is a board member of the NZ Forest Certification Authority and a member of the Standards Development Group. Sally was appointed by the government to the Waikato River Authority and is forestry representative on the Waikato Regional Council Collaborative Stakeholder Group.

Sally has been instrumental in the success of several high impact initiatives for New Zealand. Foremost of these was the development of the NES-PF/CF – national environmental standards for commercial forests across New Zealand to vastly reduce transactional costs associated with regulatory compliance and the need to meet different standards across councils. She continues to be involved.

Sally has been deeply involved in the development of forest management certification systems for New Zealand's planted forests. Her involvement and wide-ranging knowledge helped develop the FSC® national standard and also engaged with Responsible Wood's Standard for Australia and New Zealand. This enabled a second forest certification for New Zealand (PEFC). Her involvement has continued through the board of the NZFCA.

Sally has ongoing engagement with forestry stakeholders and regulatory bodies through numerous submissions for proposed regulations (e.g. the draft National Policy Statement on Indigenous Biodiversity) and plans. This has raised the forestry sector's voice significantly whether on behalf of NZFOA, MFM (NZ) or others, often leading to changes in the proposals based on her insights.

Sally was recognised by her peers as NZIF Forester of the Year in 2016. She is regularly invited to speak at events and as a panelist at forestry-related events such as the 2024 Field Days where her insights featured in a panel discussion alongside Hon Minister Todd McClay and on Radio New Zealand.

**When not at work, or serving the industry or community, Sally can be found at home riding her horses on a mixed cropping and dry stock farm in the South Waikato, and cooking game from her husband (Richard) and two sons' (Ben and Daniel) infamous hunting expeditions.**



## Health & Wellbeing

### Health and Safety Systems Update

By Rona Wheeldon - MFM (NZ) Health & Safety Systems Manager, Tokoroa

#### *Successful trial of the Velocity mobile application in harvesting operations.*

MFM (NZ) uses the Velocity EHS (Environmental Health and Safety) software platform to capture health and safety-related information. It is a comprehensive solution designed to help organisations such as MFM (NZ) manage and improve their environmental, health, safety and sustainability programmes.

In July, a successful trial of the Velocity Health and Safety mobile application was undertaken with the harvesting operations working in the OTPP NZ and Tiaki managed estates. This trial provided harvesting contractors with access to Velocity, enabling them to input incidents, near misses and hazards directly into the system.

As part of the trial, we conducted a comprehensive group training session for the contractors involved and their foresters who were tasked with supporting them during the trial period.

The new process has significantly streamlined the reporting procedure, ensured timely submissions and allowed foresters to follow up on reported events more promptly.

Building on the success of this trial, we are planning to roll out the Velocity mobile application across the remaining MFM (NZ) operations over the next several months. We are confident that this initiative will enhance our reporting efficiency and contribute to a safer working environment for all.

Stay tuned for further updates and training sessions as we expand the use of this innovative tool.

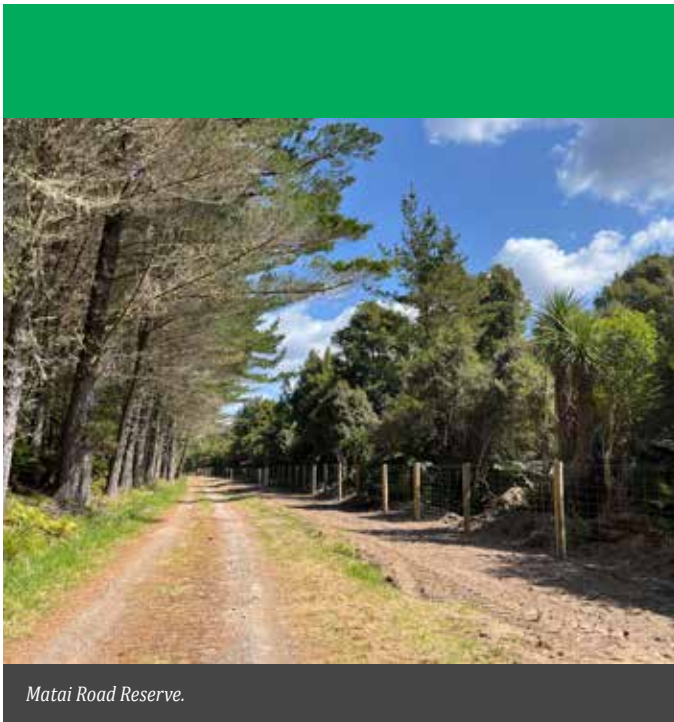


#### *New guidelines for working near powerlines - ensuring safety and compliance*

Working near powerlines and related structures presents significant risks that necessitate careful management. To enhance safety and support our operations, we are pleased to announce the release of a new guideline – “Working around powerlines and related structures.”

This comprehensive guideline was developed in collaboration with our operations team and provides clear, actionable guidance for MFM (NZ) staff and contractors when working near powerlines and associated structures.

All MFM (NZ) staff and contractors are encouraged to familiarise themselves with this document.



Matai Road Reserve.

### Matai Road Reserve Restoration - Matahina Forest

By Sally Strang- Environmental Manager and Reuben Hawtree - Environmental Forester

*Matai Road Reserve is a 290-hectare indigenous forest that runs along the eastern side of McKee Road in Matahina Forest. The reserve is ecologically significant as one of the larger remaining remnants of the native forest that once cloaked the Kawerau area and contains matai, rimu, miro, kahikatea, totara and northern rata.*

When OTPP NZ recently purchased the land under Matahina Forest, they inherited an environment programme agreement that the previous landowner had signed with Bay of Plenty Regional Council. The agreement includes a range of animal pest control and monitoring requirements. A more unusual aspect of the agreement was the plan to construct a deer fence around the reserve to exclude pigs, deer and wallaby from the forest to remove animal browsing and improve the health of the forest understorey. Construction of the deer fence is now well underway and is aimed to be completed by the end of this year.

The next phase of the project is to undertake a 1080 drop over the forest to reduce the numbers of possums and other predators. At this stage the 1080 drop is planned to be undertaken in the winter of 2025. In the longer term, OTPP NZ, in conjunction with BOPRC, will continue with animal pest control and monitoring of the reserve to hopefully show an improvement in the condition of the native vegetation.



## Pre-Holiday Awareness

By Richard Stringfellow - MFM (NZ) Health & Wellness Leader, Tokoroa

*With just one month left until the Christmas break, it's natural for our minds to start drifting towards holiday plans. However, this can lead to a loss of focus on the job, increasing the risk of incidents or injuries, which could spoil your holiday for you and your whānau.*

Here are some tips to help identify distractions and minimise injury risks, ensuring you can enjoy your well-deserved break:

- **Discuss distractions:** Talk about the increased distractions (and risk) that an upcoming holiday can bring
- **Maintain a steady pace:** Avoid rushing and taking risks
- **Avoid social media:** Stay off social media (including texts, phone calls, apps) while on the job; it diverts your focus from the task at hand
- **Stick to routine:** Keep to your normal daily lifestyle routine and try to avoid making major changes before you go on holiday.

## Work Ready for 2025

Returning to work after a holiday can be challenging for various reasons including disrupted routines, increased financial pressures, whānau responsibilities, lack of exercise, poor sleep patterns and overindulgence in food and alcohol.

It's crucial to return to work as physically and mentally prepared as possible. Here are some suggestions to help you prepare in the week leading up to your return, as well as during your first few weeks back:

The week before returning to work:

- Re-establish your routine
- Go to bed early and wake up early

- Reduce your alcohol consumption
- Eat healthy
- Get some exercise and incorporate physical activity into your daily routine
- Check your PPE and tools to ensure they are ready for use.

The last day of your holiday and day of return to work:

- Pack your lunch and hydration
- Lay out your clothes
- Eat a good nutritious breakfast
- Plan a longer toolbox meeting to refocus on safety
- Manage your workload, don't get overwhelmed – not everything needs your attention on the first day
- Ease back into work by setting realistic and achievable goals
- Take short breaks to rest and refuel periodically throughout the day
- Minimise distractions, stay off phones and social media during work hours.

**By following these tips, you can ensure a safe and smooth transition back to work, making 2025 a productive and injury-free year.**



## What's Your Everest?

By Marie Heaphy - Health, Safety and Wellbeing Coordinator, Rotorua

*MFM (NZ) staff recently took part in a virtual challenge to scale Mount Everest by counting steps over a period of four weeks, raising \$480 for mental health awareness. This year's theme for Mental Health Awareness Week was "community is – what we create together."*

Collectively, the team logged over 9 million steps, covering a distance of 69 kilometers from base camp to the summit. Their combined efforts equated to scaling Mount Everest 90 times. Participants reported that the challenge encouraged them to be more active.

Thank you to all who participated and contributed to this meaningful cause.



Northland team taking part in a gym challenge.



Rotorua and Tokoroa staff at Tikitapu, Rotorua, following a group walk

## Woodflow & Sales



Mid-quarter catch up with McAlpines. Left to right: Grant Williams (incoming Rotorua General Manager), Thornton Campbell, Grant Schooley, Roman Spiers (McAlpines CE), and Darryn Adams (current Rotorua General Manager).

## Partner Spotlight: McAlpines Rotorua Limited

By Thornton Campbell - Woodflow Manager, Rotorua

*At MFM (NZ), fostering robust partnerships is key to our success. A recent partnership is with McAlpines Rotorua Limited, a sawmill located on Vaughan Road, Rotorua, just 2km from the Rotorua MFM (NZ) office. They specialise in structural lumber for the New Zealand domestic market, processing around 50 loads per week.*

The key is matching the forest resource to customer needs with minimal operational impact.

McAlpines Rotorua Limited is part of the McAlpines group, which operates three sawmills across New Zealand, employing over 300 people. Their sites in Nelson, Rangiora and Rotorua ensure they consistently deliver high-quality lumber products.

We recently began supplying McAlpines Rotorua Limited with S30 logs from the OTPP NZ estate, primarily sourced from the Pinnacles and Waiotahi forests. These logs are from higher density, renewable pine forests and are 100% FSC® certified for Chain of Custody.

Thanks to everyone involved including James McQuade, Grant Schooley, Chris Carter, Dacian Pullen, Kim O'Leary, the KPY team, Crew 13 and the Pedersen's team.



## People



*Richard Feierabend discussing the ground-based crew configuration with the students.*

## Generation Programme Student Visit

By Shiree Marshall - Harvesting Forester, Tokoroa

*On Thursday 26 September, eight students from the Tokoroa intake of the Generation Programme visited the MFM (NZ) Tokoroa office as well as a couple of our work sites in Kinleith. They were also accompanied by their tutor, the CEO of the Central North Island Wood Council, Richard Feierabend, Geoff Parsons and myself.*

An hour was spent going over the different roles of each department within the MFM (NZ) Tokoroa office. The students had some good questions and were very attentive.

We then visited a thinning crew, a ground-based crew and a swing yarder crew not far from the office.

The students thoroughly enjoyed the day and were very keen to complete another visit in the future.

The Generation Programme is a 15-week course available in Rotorua and Tokoroa. The students develop skills that are needed for entry-level roles in commercial forestry operations or commercial harvesting operations.

Upon completion, students can seek entry-level forestry roles or complete further study with the New Zealand Certificate in Forest Harvesting Operations (Level 3).



*Geoff Parsons discussing manual thinning tree selection with the students*





## Introducing our new staff



Double trouble.

### Aaron Huggins

Risk & Assurance Manager, Tauranga Office

*I started out studying computer engineering, spent seven years in the RNZAF as an Avionics Technician, and then studied psychology. I spent a year and a half working in community mental health before going back to school (again) to study accounting and then got into auditing.*

Most of my time was spent as a consultant in a mid-tier accounting firm in Wellington providing internal audit, risk, IT audit, and various business improvement services. After that, a family move to Tauranga led to four years at the Bay of Plenty Regional Council leading their internal audit programme.

Outside work I'm a suburban Dad – I've got two awesome kids (Samantha, 9, and Jack, 7) and a highly tolerant wife (Kerryn). So between family and trying to hold our decaying 1940s/70s house together (YouTube and Bunnings are great), I occasionally find time to read or watch movies. I wired up surround sound

and installed a 120" projector, so family movie night is pretty decent at our place. I'm slowly building towards becoming a hobbyist woodworker, but good things take time.

**I'm excited to join the team at MFM (NZ). Forestry is a fast moving and complex business and with so much to learn it's refreshing to be involved in an industry that's one of the prime drivers of the New Zealand economy.**

### Contact Us

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# forestCHAT

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## Success Stories and Initiatives

*A word from Richard...*



Over the past several months, during my rounds, I have been inspired by numerous wellbeing initiatives that have not only improved individual morale but also strengthened crew culture.

One standout initiative is the effort made by operations to come together daily for smoko, or at least once a week. Spending all day alone in a cab can be mentally taxing, especially if you're dealing with personal issues or ruminative thoughts, coupled with the inherent pressures of the job. Social interaction with peers is crucial-it provides a much-needed opportunity to talk, relax, listen, and support one another.

Here are some other amazing initiatives I've encountered:

- **Reward Vouchers:** Recognising performance or health & safety improvements vouchers
- **Wellbeing Funding:** Providing funding that enables workers to invest in something that enhances their wellbeing, such as fitness or health-related activities
- **Heated Containers:** Ensuring containers are equipped with heating for a warm welcome on frosty mornings
- **Barbeques:** Hosting barbeques to acknowledge and celebrate crews demonstrating good practices

We'd love to hear from you! What initiatives are you implementing to boost crew wellbeing and culture? Share your stories and let's continue to inspire each other.

## Introducing the 'Be a Mate' Awareness Programme



The "Be A Mate" Awareness Programme is something Richard has been working on with several others diligently developing the programme to suit the unique needs of our industry. The goal of this initiative is to foster a workplace environment that not only recognises signs of distress and suicide risk but also responds with empathy and effectiveness.

This programme aligns seamlessly with MFM (NZ) Mental Health and Wellbeing strategy, emphasising our commitment to proactively addressing issues rather than merely responding to crises. Through this programme, participants will gain invaluable insights into identifying signs and symptoms of distress, learning how to initiate supportive conversations and understanding the resources available for further assistance.

We are thrilled to announce that the programme is now ready for launch and has received full backing from MFM (NZ), who are committed to delivering it across the organisation and to their stakeholders. The training session is concise, lasting no more than one hour.

The "Be A Mate" Awareness Programme will be implemented across all MFM (NZ) managed estates. To schedule your session, please contact Richard at (027) 777 0894 or via email at [richard@fit4work.co.nz](mailto:richard@fit4work.co.nz)

## Looking for a wellbeing Initiative? Try a team Check-In?

Consider implementing a "Team Check-In" as your next wellbeing initiative. This can be easily conducted online via MS Teams on Friday mornings or during your Monday tailgate meetings with crews.

The purpose of a Team Check-In is to focus on personal wellbeing rather than work-related matters. It provides a valuable opportunity for everyone to share what's happening in their personal lives and to keep an eye on each other's mental and emotional health.

By dedicating time for these conversations, we can foster a supportive environment where team members feel heard and cared for. So why not give it a try?