

# Manulife *Forest Times*

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

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## Welcome to our final edition of Manulife Forest Times for 2025.

By Chris Barnes - General Manager

*As I am writing this, we only have 35 working days remaining for the year and by the time this is published it will be less than 20 working days. Please make it a priority to look after yourself and your workmates as we get closer to that last work day of the year, and a well-deserved Christmas break with family and friends.*

Reflecting on the year, there are several highlights across the business that have only been possible with the innovation and passion of both staff and contractors. From the development of shred roads to numerous distribution safety initiatives, continued investment in mechanisation, a new manual tree felling policy, domestic market expansion and strong performance across silviculture, we have had a year we should all be very proud of. I would also like to acknowledge there have been numerous challenges during the year including workplace injuries, environmental storm events and ongoing soft markets. Every year will bring its own unique challenges, and the collective response of staff and contractors (with the support of our clients) to these challenges has been impressive across the year.

I had great pleasure attending 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. I would like to congratulate the contractors and their employees who won an award (refer to the article later on in this publication). It was also great to see staff nominated for several awards (congratulations Shiree and Rona).

Since our last edition, there have been a few staff changes with Rose Caparon leaving the business in October. Rose was with MFM (NZ) for nearly 19 years and her friendly smile and support will be



missed. We have recently welcomed the following new staff to the business: Elvy George – Assistant Accountant, Celeste Foreman – Finance Assistant, and John Stephenson – Harvesting Forester.

As we move towards the end of the year, it is pleasing to see inventory levels dropping in China to around 2.4 million m<sup>3</sup>. However, demand remains soft with daily off-take around 50-60k m<sup>3</sup>/day and prices flat in response. Fortunately, shipping has also remained weak and the NZD/USD exchange rate has been in our favour. Our government is working closely with India's government on a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and Minister Todd McClay is leading a forestry-specific mission to India in mid-November. It is hoped we get some good news on the FTA as this will make New Zealand logs much more competitive in India.

A special note of thanks to the staff and contractors who submitted articles during the year. We are very fortunate to come to work every day and be surrounded by great people, and these articles are a nice reminder of this.

In closing, I would like to thank all staff and contractors for their support of our clients and each other during 2025, and wish you and your family all the best for a great Christmas. I look forward to seeing some of you at the various Safe Starts across January. In the meantime, please feel free to give me a call (027 257 7260) 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

As I write this operational update, the small calendar on my desk indicates we have only seven working weeks until we wrap up for the year. Once again, the year seems to have raced past and on reflection, 2025 has certainly been a busy year.

We completed our 2025 planting programme this year – 4150 hectares – ahead of schedule and without incident. Given the terrain and weather conditions over the season, this was a very good result from our forest establishment contractors and their people. Well done! In addition, overall seedling quality was noticeably improved from 2024. Over the next few months our forestry teams will focus on aerial operations comprising post-plant releasing, Dothistroma spraying and fertilising.

It is important to also acknowledge the often behind-the-scenes effort from our forest protection staff and contractors over the year who provide an important forest security and fire protection function across our client forests.

Our planning and engineering operations are moving into the construction period of the year where three quarters of our harvesting infrastructure is developed over the November to April period.

Our Harvesting Team and contractors have consistently delivered to budgeted production levels over 2025 despite some challenging weeks with severe storm events. Equally, our distribution operations have operated smoothly over the year

with good service from road and rail contractors. It's no small undertaking given our supply chain transports approximately 600 loads each day.

While we have had some challenging events over 2025, overall, our operations have performed consistently to a high level over the year – evidence of the high level of investment in plant and equipment by our contractors, and the professionalism and dedication of their people who work long hard days, rain or shine.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge the dedication and professionalism over 2025 from Laresia Heke, Darrell Tahere, Mike Baker and Geoff Gover, their operational teams, and our committed and professional contractors who perform to a high level every day.

**Stay safe.**



*The author planting in Tarawera Forest as a ranger trainee, 1981.*



## Darrell Tahere National Harvesting Manager

As we wrap up October and head into the final stretch of the year, here's a quick look back across our harvesting operations.

Our total uplift levels against budget across all clients is -0.2% YTD. When you

start factoring in severe weather events and state highway closures, that is impressive.

Ground-based harvesting produced most of the volume at 51% followed by cable at 26%, stems at 14.6%, road-line salvage at 8% and windthrow (GB) at 0.4%.

We are currently producing volume out of 29 forests with 48% coming from Central.

Mechanisation has played a critical role in achieving these production levels, with winch-assist technology now integrated into DK Logging and Trimax Stem operations. It's also becoming a standard feature in ground-based crews as they adapt to short, steep-slope terrain.



*Cummings Road, Tarawera Forest.*



*Newton 41.*



Innovation continues with the Shred Road, a concept that originated in the Pacific Northwest during the 1970s. Initial trials began at Pan Pac, and the approach has since expanded to Matariki, Forest 360, and even our own Ngunguru Forest. There, it was used to tranship logs from RCL 60 Swingyarder to a loadout point. Another trial area is the loading bays at the Kawerau Processing Yard.

Due to our diminishing work programme, we acknowledge the departure of Skyline Harvesting Limited Crew 95 and G White Logging Limited Crew 36. We thank them for their outstanding contributions and unwavering commitment to excellence. We have appreciated their professionalism, resilience, and dedication to high standards in health and safety, production and environmental stewardship.

We also bid farewell to Nathan Morshead who is taking on a role in Gisborne. We wish him all the best in his new position.

At the same time, we welcome John Stephenson. Born and raised in Putāruru, John began his forestry career in Kinleith Forest and will be familiar to some of our staff and contractors.

In closing, a big thank you to all our contract workforce both on the job and behind the scenes for making it all happen. And to our staff for your resilience and persistence to ensure we all get there.

I know many of us are looking forward to a well-earned Christmas break with our whānau and friends. Here's to returning in the New Year refreshed and ready to take on 2026.



## Mike Baker

### National Forestry Manager

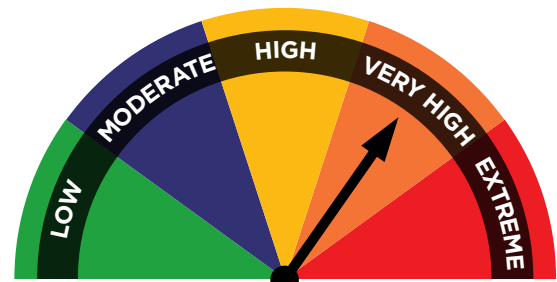
Tēnā koutou.

Thanks again to all our forestry contractors, suppliers and MFM (NZ) forestry staff for the completion of the 2025 planting programme, with over 4,000 hectares and 3.4 million trees planted. Getting the trees

in the ground is a culmination of a range of activities including mechanical land preparation, aerial desiccation, treestock nursery supply and delivery, planting and data collection.

This spring our three aerial contractors, Skywork Helicopters (Northern), Eastern Airwork (Eastern) and Heli A1 (Central) are busy getting the spring release, fertilising and Dothistroma spray programmes completed. These operations have a combined area

totalling over 20,000 hectares. Unfortunately, as I write this, the weather through October has not been conducive to progressing some of our operations to plan, with continuous windy and/or wet conditions experienced in the Central region.



## FIRE DANGER

Also, as usual at this time of year as we move into fire season, it is an important 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 2025/26 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.

Take care.



Top: Skywork Helicopters loading and applying fertiliser at Opanaki Forest (Taumata Northern). Below: Eastern Airwork completing releasing of recent plantings in Wainui Forest (Waonui estate).



Heli A1 completing aerial release on the boundary of Kinleith Forest (Taumata Central), with a smoke bomb to confirm a positive wind direction.



## Nathan Baird

**National Harvest Planning  
& Engineering Manager - on behalf  
of Geoff Gover**

At the time of writing we are well into the volatile spring weather, with heavy rains and winds lashing the regions. With the Christmas break in the not-too-distant future, we must all work to keep complacency at bay and our heads in the game. Always keep in mind that the worksite you left yesterday may not be the same today. Things change, and it is change that poses the most risk to our people. Every new situation we encounter can bring with it new risks and must be assessed individually.

The Engineering Team is out there working to keep our forests open, and due to the reactive nature of the work during weather events, they are encountering an ever-changing environment daily. When reporting new events/hazards please provide as much detail as possible so that the team is prepared and can provide the appropriate level of response. These events need to be 'triaged' and are prioritised by level of disruption/importance, so please understand engineering support may not be immediate – "your call is important to us, you are 67th in the queue!"

All jokes aside, take care out there and remember the four D's – if it's Dodgy, Difficult, Different, or Dangerous take five and have a 'hmmm'. Most importantly – never be afraid or too proud to ask for help.

On the topic of risk, we are three months on from the release of the new 2025 ACoP. The updated version introduces a more risk-based, system-focused approach aligned with the Health and Safety at Work Act (HSWA) 2015 and integration with industry best practice guidance. For engineering and planning, this places emphasis back on the New Zealand Forest Road Engineering Manual as the standard for construction and maintenance works.

The new Approved Code of Practice (ACoP) has been restructured to broadly follow the forest operations process,

from establishment to logs out the gate, and has been split into six parts (A-F). Of particular note for engineering contractors and workers are:

- **Part A**, which has new information on HSWA, the contracting chain, overlapping duties and a more in-depth section covering work-related health.
- **Part C**, which includes an all-new section covering the construction and maintenance of access roads and landings, with specific guidance on traffic management and signage.
- **Part E**, which covers mobile plant, including updated information on protective structures, emergency exits, managing risk near water, fire suppression, and repairs/maintenance.

By the time you read this you should all have copies of the new ACoP on site, complete with MFM (NZ)'s supplementary work rules. Please take the time to familiarise yourself with it and what it means for your operations.

Stay safe out there and watch out for each other in the lead-up to Christmas. Wishing you all an enjoyable and relaxing holiday season with family and friends. See you in 2026.

**Mere Kirihirote from the MFM (NZ) Engineering  
& Planning Team.**



## Competition

### Winner of Best Article in the July 2025 Newsletter

By Helen Moffatt - Administrative Coordinator, Tauranga

***Congratulations to Scott Triplow for submitting  
his article 'Paving the Way with Slash'.***

For me, this ticked so many boxes but the two that stood out were innovation and sustainability. There are some very clever and forward-thinking people amongst us.

**Good luck with this trial and we look forward to further updates.**



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: [hmoffatt1@manulife.com](mailto:hmoffatt1@manulife.com)



## Laresia Heke

### National Distribution Manager

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

- MFM (NZ) Limited training video – Banner Controlled Felling Zone
- Engagement – daylight saving barbecues and New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) field trip
- Recognition – driver safety awards
- Health and Safety – ACoP update 2025.

### Process for Banner Controlled Felling Zone

MFM (NZ)'s Distribution Team has created a training video that demonstrates the correct process for trucks and other vehicles to follow when travelling through a banner controlled felling zone on forestry roads. The video will form part of MFM (NZ)'s online forest induction that all forest permit holders must complete and can be viewed on [https://players.brightcove.net/640445594001/default\\_default/index.html?videoId=6379748161112](https://players.brightcove.net/640445594001/default_default/index.html?videoId=6379748161112).

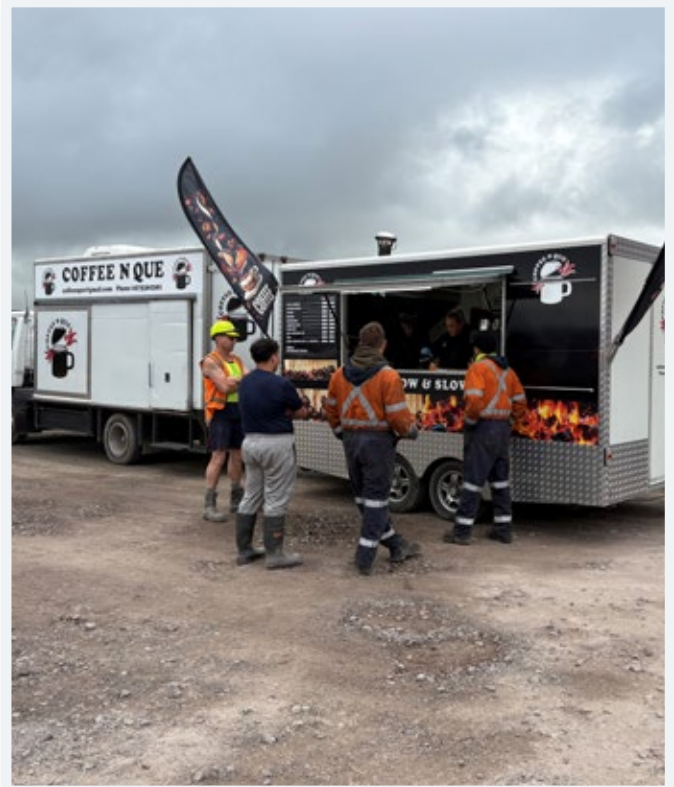
The aim of this resource is to support training to reduce breaches of banner protocol and processes that can occur on forestry roads. We would like to extend a special thanks to Gilmour Transport Limited for providing the truck driven in the video by Quintin Makene (MFM(NZ) Distribution Supervisor). Special mention should also be made of the support provided by the MFM(NZ) Harvesting Team and Rob Davy of G White Logging Limited (Crew 36).

### Daylight Saving Barbecues

Driver engagement continued this quarter with the daylight saving barbecues that were held at the Kinleith Export Yard and Kawerau Processing Yard. 'Healthy Choices' was the theme or focus area for these events. A competition was run where drivers and yard contractors could tell us about a healthy choice they had made (or could make) and how this will improve their lifestyle. Four names were randomly drawn, and the winners received a \$50 voucher.



Daylight saving barbecue at Kawerau Processing Yard.



Daylight saving barbecue at Kinleith Log Yard.

### New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) Field Trip

As part of our ongoing commitment to stakeholder engagement and safety collaboration, the MFM (NZ) Distribution Team hosted a group of compliance officers from NZTA for an in-depth tour of our forestry operations. The NZTA team regulate commercial transport and focus on key safety risks such as speed, driver impairment, restraints, and vehicle safety. This visit provided them with valuable insight into the full supply chain. The engagement began with an operational overview, followed by a visit to Arborgen nursery and a harvesting crew site to observe in-forest loading activities and to travel on the off-highway road network. The tour concluded at the Kinleith Log Yard where rail loading operations were underway. This initiative strengthened NZTA's understanding of our operational environment and highlighted a shared commitment to achieving the highest safety outcomes – whether within the forest or on public roads.



NZTA group at Arborgen Nursery and observing a truck load at Baird 24 in Kinleith Forest.

## Driver Safety Awards

To date, 121 driver safety awards have been presented to drivers in 2025 who have consistently operated within MFM (NZ) managed estates without any recorded fatigue or distraction events. In addition to this, commendable conduct is also acknowledged through special nominations made by distribution contractors, fellow drivers, harvesting crew members, and MFM (NZ) staff. A recent example of this special recognition was for Haeata Te Whaiti, manager of the Central Trimble Forestry Dispatch in Tokoroa. Haeata displayed excellent safety leadership when he encountered a truck, engaged by one of MFM (NZ)'s clients, that had run out of fuel on State Highway 29. The truck was in a hazardous location and Haeata took it upon himself to manage traffic around the blind curve, using a high visibility vest and road cones, to ensure the safety of the driver and other road users. Haeata remained on site for over an hour until support arrived.

## ACoP Update 2025

The old Approved Code of Practice (ACoP) has been revoked with a new document in effect from 26 August 2025. I would like to highlight a few key changes from a distribution perspective.

- In the old ACoP there was an exception that allowed the driver to stand at the rear stanchion to observe the setting of logs being bedded onto the trailer (previously 16.4.2). This is not stipulated in the new ACoP, which means the loading zones must be adhered to (24.3.18 in new ACoP).
- There is a new section encompassing loading in the dark (section 24.3.24).

### Loading in the dark: 24.3.24

When log loading takes place during the hours of darkness, extra precautions need to be taken:

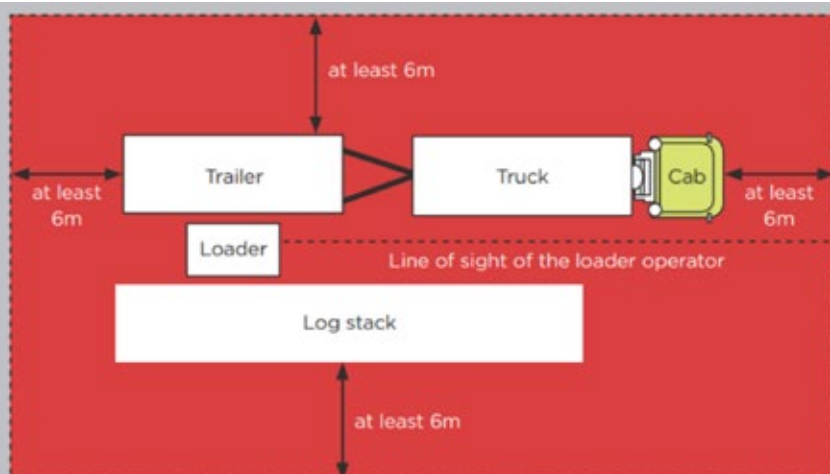
- make sure drivers, loader operators and anyone else working on the landing wear night-day high-vis vests and helmets
- make sure loading is carried out in adequately illuminated areas. Lighting could be provided by:
  - loading light truck
  - additional lighting fitted to the log loader over and above the driving lights to provide lateral as well as forward-facing illumination
  - lighting systems on the log landing.

- Self-loading trucks must have established work alone procedures and an effective method for getting help in an emergency (section 24.3.39).

Along with these changes, several of our previous Supplementary Work Rules have been incorporated into the new ACoP (sections 24.3.11, 24.3.12, 24.3.16); responsibilities have been made clear for both loader drivers and truck drivers (sections 24.3.6 - 24.3.8); and the new ACoP refers back to the Log Transport Safety Council (LTSC) for specific guidance. The Distribution Team will be discussing these changes with distribution contractors and their relevant staff at an upcoming group meeting.

**I suspect we are all hoping for some settled weather for the remainder of the year. All the best for the final quarter of 2025.**

Ngā mihi nui



### 24.3.18

The loading zone where all persons on the ground are excluded from is shown in red. The loading zone is considered to be a minimum of 6m around the truck cab and trailer and log stack. If long logs are being loaded, this zone may need to be increased.



# Harvesting



## Apex Grapple to Kinleith Forest

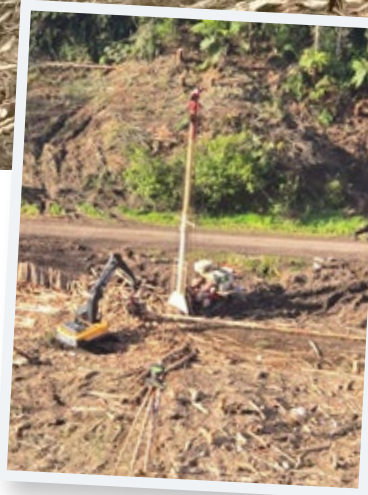
By Richard Feierabend -  
Harvesting Manager, Tokoroa

*Knight Logging Ltd, working in Kinleith Forest, has recently taken delivery of a cutting-edge electric grapple carriage from APEX Equipment, marking a significant step forward in harvesting technology.*

The APEX electric grapple carriage, available in two sizes, is a lightweight unit powered by an electric motor. Knight Logging Ltd have opted for a larger grapple. What sets it apart is its use of regenerative power to recharge a non-flammable battery pack – eliminating common issues associated with combustion engines such as cracked engine mounts and failures due to steep-angle operations.

Designed with simplicity and efficiency in mind, the carriage features a single joystick control system, streamlining operator input. High-definition, wide-angle cameras provide operators with exceptional visibility of terrain and stems, enabling faster cycle times and improved productivity.

This innovative equipment is expected to enhance both safety and performance in the forest, reinforcing Knight Logging Ltd's commitment to adopting sustainable and forward-thinking harvesting solutions.



Original shred loading bay during winter months.

## Shred Wood Loading Bay at Kawerau Processing Yard

By Peter Auge - Harvesting Manager, Rotorua

*Manulife recently conducted a trial replacing traditional metal surfacing with shredded wood on one of the loading bays at Kawerau Processing Yard (KPY). Initiated at the start of winter, the trial demonstrated outstanding performance throughout a particularly wet season.*

Unlike conventional metal bays, which often deteriorate into muddy, rutted surfaces during winter, the shredded wood bay remained relatively smooth and dry. Loader operators reported a significantly improved driving experience, noting the smoother surface and cleaner logs. Additionally, vehicle movement on the shredded surface generated noticeably less dust during dry conditions.

Economically, shredded bark presents a compelling alternative. The cost of shredding waste wood is approximately half that of metal surfacing, and since wood waste is produced on-site, there are no transportation expenses involved.

Over the past month, approximately one-third of the loading bays at KPY have been resurfaced with shredded bark. The team will continue monitoring the durability of the shred material through the upcoming dry months. Feedback from staff has been overwhelmingly positive, with strong enthusiasm for the results achieved so far.



Top: Preparing new shred loading bays.

Bottom: 3,200m<sup>3</sup> of shred wood ready for deployment in early October 2025.

# Harvesting - CNIWC Awards 2025



By Darrell Tahere - National Harvesting Manager, Tokoroa

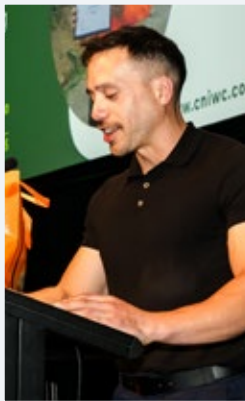
*On Friday 31 October 2025, the forestry sector came together at Rotorua's Energy Centre for an evening dedicated to honouring achievement and celebrating success.*

The CNI Wood Council Forestry Awards proudly highlighted the remarkable skill, commitment and passion of individuals within our industry. The evening was guided by MC Jackie Clarke, whose humour and energy kept the audience entertained.

## Award Winners



*Apprentice of the Year:  
Tapatahi Charlie Moana  
(known as Charlie) from  
King Country Harvesting Ltd.*



*Log Processing Excellence:  
Shaun Kapene  
of FAST Harvesting Ltd.*



*Industry Training Achievement  
of the Year:  
Levi Casey  
of FAST Harvesting Ltd.*



*2025 award winners.*



*Fast Harvesting and Jackie Clarke celebrate Shaun and Levi's success.*

## Our presenters:



*Marie Heaphy, Health and Safety Advisor.*



*Sally Strang, Environmental Manager.*

## Supply Chain



### Customer Visit to Ngunguru Forest

By Steve Weir - Supply Chain Manager, Whangārei

*We were pleased to recently host a delegation from Marusumi Whangārei Co., Ltd (MWC) at our Ngunguru Forest, where Crew 60 is currently operating. The visit provided an excellent opportunity to show our visitors some of our harvesting operations and strengthen the long-standing relationship between MWC and TPL Northland.*

MWC has been a valued and loyal customer of TPL Northland for many years and plays a critical role in Northland's forestry supply chain. As the primary purchaser of pulp logs and sawmill chip in the region, MWC's operations are essential to the efficient movement and processing of fibre products across Northland.

Pulp grade logs harvested from forests throughout the region are delivered to MWC's chip processing plant located in Portland, just south of Whangārei. There, the logs are processed into woodchip which is then transported (along with sawmill chip sourced from various Northland mills), to Marsden Point. At this location, Northport provides a dedicated chip storage and loading facility, enabling efficient export of the chip to markets across East Asia.

Thanks to Crew 60 for their hospitality during the visit, and to the MWC representatives for taking the time to engage with our team on site. It was a pleasure to meet everyone, and we look forward to continuing our strong partnership in the years ahead.

## New European Union Law Targets Deforestation: What It Means for NZ Forestry Exports

By Steve Weir - Supply Chain Manager, Whangārei

*A sweeping new regulation from the European Union is set to reshape the global trade of key commodities, including wood, with potential significance for New Zealand's forestry sector.*

The EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR), which comes into effect for large companies on 30 December 2025, aims to ensure that products entering or leaving the EU are not linked to deforestation or forest degradation. The regulation covers seven high-risk commodities: cattle, cocoa, coffee, palm oil, rubber, soy, and wood – including paper and furniture.

Under the EUDR, companies must prove that their products are:

- Deforestation-free (not produced on land cleared after 31 December 2020)
- Legally produced in accordance with the laws of the country of origin
- Traceable, with detailed geolocation data and due diligence documentation submitted to EU authorities.

Although the regulation is European, its reach is global. Exporters from countries like New Zealand must comply if they wish to maintain access to EU markets.

For Manulife-managed forestry clients, the regulation brings new responsibilities – and opportunities. Forest managers are now required to provide:

- Electronic GEOJSON map files pinpointing the origin of harvested trees
- Sustainability declarations confirming that forest management practices meet EUDR standards.

These documents are essential for downstream wood processors and exporters to demonstrate compliance and avoid potential penalties, including fines, product bans, or exclusion from the EU market.

New Zealand has been classified as a 'low-risk' country under the regulation, which simplifies some compliance steps. However, exporters must still provide full traceability and legal verification for all wood products destined for Europe.

Small and micro-enterprises have until 30 June 2026 to comply, unless they are part of a larger company's supply chain.

The EUDR is seen as a major step forward in the EU's efforts to combat climate change, protect biodiversity, and promote sustainable trade. For New Zealand's forestry sector, it underscores the importance of transparent, responsible forest management, and positions compliant producers to thrive in a more environmentally conscious global market.



Inside the head rig watching logs being processed

## Staff Visit to Rosvall Sawmill

By Steve Weir - Supply Chain Manager, Whangārei

*We recently had the pleasure of visiting Rosvall Sawmill, a valued and loyal customer of TPL Northland for over 20 years. As they prepare to receive second-rotation trees from our Northland estate, it was a timely opportunity for the Northland team to witness their continued growth and innovation.*

Rosvall Sawmill is led by the dedicated father-daughter team of Mark and Jenna Hansen, alongside their experienced Sawmill Manager, Paul Rupapera, a past recipient of the Processing Excellence Award at the Northland Forestry Awards. Their leadership has been instrumental in maintaining Rosvall's reputation for quality and reliability.

The mill processes both pruned and high-density sawlogs, supplying lumber to well-established markets across New Zealand, Australia, the South Pacific, the USA and Europe.

During our visit, we were particularly impressed by the newly commissioned treatment plant. This facility now enables Rosvall to carry out in-house CCA, MCA, and Boron treatments, eliminating the need for third-party processing. By bringing this capability on-site, Rosvall has gained greater control over its supply chain, resulting in improved efficiency and responsiveness.

We extend our sincere thanks to Mark and Jenna for hosting us and providing such an informative tour. We look forward to continuing our strong partnership and celebrating the milestone of 25 years of log supply to the mill in a few years' time.



Top: Treated lumber awaiting storage after being removed from the treatment cylinder Middle: Inside the treatment facility Bottom: Jenna Hansen, (left) and Mark Hansen (centre) explaining some of the processes at Rosvall Sawmill.

## Woodflow and Sales



*A pile of white pellets ready for delivery. Pictured are TNZ General manager Corey Hodges, MFM (NZ) Sales and Marketing Manager Lance Maclellan, and Niagara Sawmill Director Joe O'Connell*

## Forest Product Utilisation

By Thornton Campbell - Woodflow Manger, Rotorua

*In September, members of our sales team visited Invercargill to meet with TNZ Growing Products (TNZ) and Niagara Sawmill — two companies demonstrating how value can be derived from multiple forest products through three distinct, but complementary, operations: high-end clear finished goods, biofuels, and growing mediums.*

The trip was made possible because MFM (NZ) supplies bark from the Kawerau Processing Yard to TNZ's North Island site in Reporoa. There it is processed into a premium growing medium for horticultural use. This operation adds significant value to a forestry byproduct, supports sustainable practices, and supplies a growing market for high-performance substrates.

At Niagara's South Island base in Invercargill, the company's core production is finger-jointed manufactured clears, made from knotty logs. Alongside this, Niagara operates one of New Zealand's largest commercial biofuel facilities. Their biofuel system efficiently utilises sawmill shavings and sawdust to produce white wood pellets, while reject board sections are converted into dry chip, which is blended with green chip to achieve optimal moisture content – a critical factor for combustion efficiency.

This photo shows the storage area for Niagara's white pellets prior to shipment. A key limitation of white pellets is their low moisture tolerance, requiring careful handling, dry storage and covered transport to maintain fuel quality and performance.

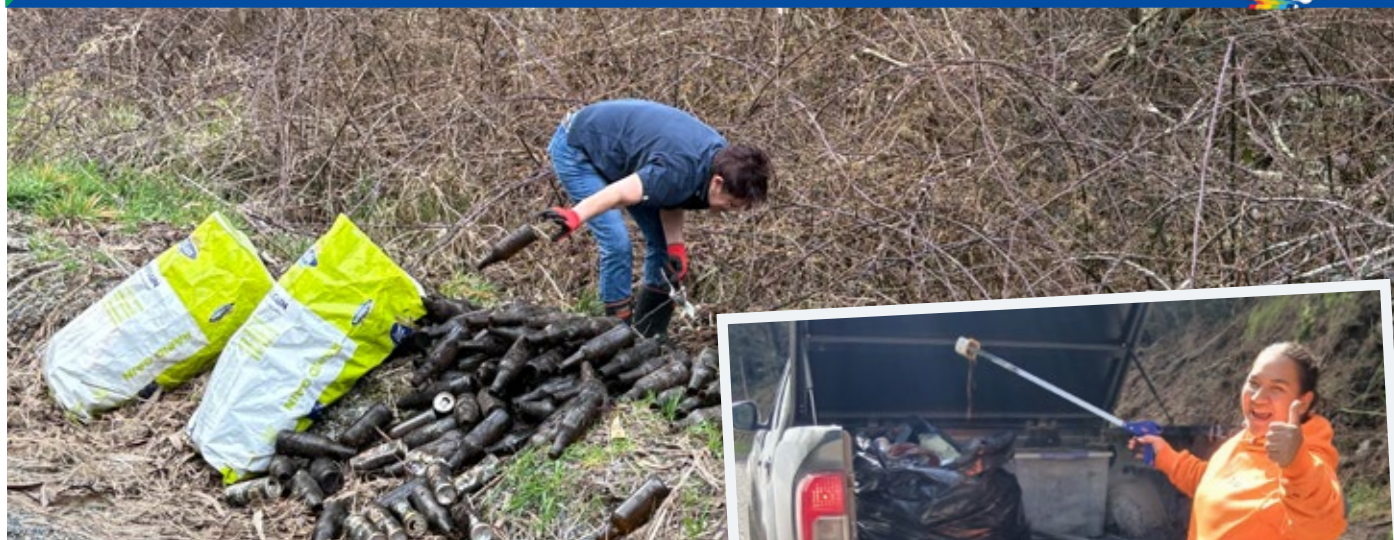
Niagara's biofuel products are distributed as far north as mid-Canterbury, with a growing customer base that has transitioned from coal to woodchip. This shift is driven by the rising cost and declining availability of coal. Importantly, coal consumers are well-positioned for conversion as existing infrastructure is often compatible with woodchip fuel, requiring minimal modification.

This visit provided valuable insight into how a functional biofuel economy can operate in New Zealand. It highlighted the importance of integrated supply chains, moisture management and infrastructure compatibility – all critical elements for scaling up biofuel adoption nationwide.

Niagara's dual approach – adding value to bark in Reporoa and converting sawmill residues into biofuel in Invercargill – showcases the potential of forestry byproducts to support both sustainable energy and horticultural innovation within New Zealand's domestic markets.

**Many thanks to the Niagara and TNZ teams for an interesting and enjoyable visit.**

# Environmental



## Keep NZ Beautiful Week

By Karl Boobyer - Environmental Forester, Tokoroa

*For the fifth year, MFM (NZ) Central has contributed to New Zealand's environmental wellbeing by participating in the annual Keep NZ Beautiful Week, an event dedicated to cleaning up and preserving the country's natural landscapes. The Keep NZ Beautiful Week is an annual initiative aimed at raising awareness about littering and encouraging New Zealanders to take pride in their environment. Through collective action, the event not only helps clean up New Zealand's roads and natural spaces but also fosters a sense of community responsibility.*

Each year we invite all staff, forestry contractors, and recreational users of the forest to volunteer some of their time to remove dumped rubbish and litter from forestry roads, gates, and forest fringes. To support the event, South Waikato District Council covers the transfer station fees for all registered vehicles.

This year's clean-up initiative, which took place between 19 and 25 September, marked Central region's fifth year of participating and the third in succession. We collectively removed an impressive 15.2 tonnes of rubbish from the environment. This year's haul included a variety of discarded materials, including recyclable items, whiteware, car parts, mattresses, and general household refuse. Notably, energy drink cans, plastic drink bottles and takeaway coffee cups were the most common items found along the roadsides, a trend that has persisted in past years. Alongside the rubbish, approximately 60 tyres were removed and two stolen vehicles were located and subsequently reported to police.

One of the most difficult issues is preventing the rubbish from being dumped or discarded in the first place. As a deterrent, South Waikato District Council has been trialing a small surveillance campaign this year and are currently increasing surveillance locations around the forest. You may have noticed newly erected signs notifying the public that surveillance is underway with up to a \$7,500 fine possible for those caught dumping.

I would like to thank all of those who participated this year and hope we can continue to build on the momentum of our past efforts. Next year's event will run from 17 to 23 September – keep an eye out for an Environmental Alert closer to the date. In the meantime, all dumped rubbish can be reported to district councils via their websites or the Antenna App.

Lastly, a special mention to the truck driver who recently confronted a local resident dumping rubbish in our forest. This person was lucky enough to discuss his actions with police.





## FSC Forest Walk

Submitted by Andrew Widdowson - National Operations Manager, Tauranga.

Article written by Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)

***In Aotearoa New Zealand's Woodhill Forest, just 50km northwest of Auckland, the FSC Forest Walk brought together retailers, manufacturers and supply chain leaders from across the local Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) network to see responsible forestry in practice.***

This was hosted by FSC certified forest managers MFM (NZ) and Matariki Forests, together with landowners Ngā Maunga Whakahii o Kaipara. The event highlighted how FSC certification safeguards biodiversity, upholds Indigenous Peoples' rights and cultural values, supports workers and local communities, and delivers certified materials to local and international markets.

Attendees represented a cross-section of New Zealand's FSC community, from Chain of Custody Certificate Holders such as Opal ANZ, Visy, Abodo Wood and OfficeMax, to Promotional Licence Holders including Mitre 10 NZ, The Warehouse, Bunnings NZ, NXP Limited and Woolworths Group (Countdown), with the New Zealand Green Building Council also in attendance. Bringing these organisations together for the first FSC Forest Walk in New Zealand created a unique forum for connection across the supply chain and underscored the growing momentum behind FSC in the region.

The day began with a pōwhiri led by Ngā Maunga Whakahii o Kaipara. Guests were welcomed with waiata (song) and the sharing of kai (food), an expression of manaakitanga, the Māori value of hospitality and care. Malcom Paterson, Chief Executive

of Ngā Maunga Whakahii o Kaipara, then spoke about the land and his people's enduring relationship with it, emphasising its deep and longstanding place within the cultural landscape of Ngā Maunga Whakahii o Kaipara.

He explained that under Crown ownership, Woodhill Forest was established to stabilise the vast drifting sand dunes which were encroaching on agricultural land, with planting beginning in the 1930s and continuing through to the 1980s. Following the 2013 Treaty of Waitangi settlement, the land was returned to Ngā Maunga Whakahii o Kaipara, who retain ownership today and have partnered with Manulife Investment Management and Matariki Forests to manage the plantations.

Integral to the management of Woodhill Forest is its function as a multi-use landscape, where recreation and community access coexist with forestry operations. Horse riding, mountain biking, tree climbing and paintball take place among the plantation trees, while its forest scenery has provided striking settings for major films and television series including The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe and The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power.

**Attendees were introduced to the recreational side of the forest at Tree Adventures and Woodhill Mountain Bike Park, where the forest managers outlined how they support public access and community use of the forest. They explained the importance of responsible forest management in balancing recreation and safety while maintaining social licence and engaging with stakeholders.**

## Health & Safety

### Grounded in Safety, Driven by Innovation

By Marie Heaphy - Health and Safety Advisor, Rotorua

*A group from the New Zealand Institute of Safety Management (NZISM) recently visited a steep-slope forestry site – a rare chance to see modern harvesting operations up close.*

The visit was part of NZISM's ongoing field trip programme, which allows safety practitioners to see firsthand how different industries manage the balance between production and safety. These regular excursions help broaden understanding across sectors and spark new ideas for improving workplace practices.

Hosted by Crew 75 of King Country Harvesting owner Will Marshall, the group explored advanced cable harvesting techniques including a yarder hauler, a mechanised grapple carriage for extracting logs, and winch-assisted harvesting. These systems are designed to improve both safety and productivity in challenging terrain.

Will's approach is grounded in research-based practice, with a clear focus on continuous improvement in both safety and productivity. His proactive investment in crew training and emphasis on work-life balance reflect a leadership style that values both people and performance.

The group gained insight into the complexities of cable harvesting and followed the journey of mechanised harvesting from setup to execution. For many, it was a unique opportunity to see how innovation and safety go hand-in-hand in one of forestry's most demanding environments.

**A special thank you to Will for his support in making this visit a success.**



*Pictured: Will Marshall (King Country Harvesting), Karl Bennett, Karin Botha, Melissa Bennett, Gordon Acres (behind), Michelle Holmes, Marie Heaphy, Stephen Jones & Rona Wheeldon. Photo credit – Phil Luton*



### Ping the Kiwi Thriving in Whanui Forest

By Steve Weir - Supply Chain Manager, Whangārei

*In a promising development for kiwi conservation efforts, 'Ping,' a monitored North Island brown kiwi released earlier this year, has been successfully located and is thriving in our Whanui Forest.*

A recent sweep of the area using radio telemetry led to the discovery of Ping nestled in a decaying pampas bush among the pines. During the encounter, her transmitter was replaced to ensure continued monitoring.

Ping's physical condition is a testament to her resilience. Since her release in March, when she weighed a lean 1550 g, she has steadily gained weight – reaching 2000 g by late April and now tipping the scales at a healthy 2350 g. Her bill has also grown from 125 mm to over 133 mm, indicating she is nearing adulthood.

With her new transmitter in place and a more precise understanding of her territory, regular data streams from her signal are now possible. This will allow for closer monitoring of her movements and behaviour.

As Ping approaches maturity, the next chapter in her journey will likely involve finding a mate and establishing a territory – potentially settling in for the long haul or continuing her exploratory travels. Either way, her progress so far is an encouraging sign for the species and the success of ongoing conservation efforts.

**Stay tuned for more updates as Ping's journey in the wild continues.**



# Collaborating to Solve Wicked Problems in Forestry Safety

By Glen Coleman - Health and Safety Manager, Tauranga

*MFM (NZ) is proud to be part of the Forest Industry Safety Council cohort, which includes Timberlands, Summit Forestry, NZFM, Matariki Forests, OneFortyOne, Ernslaw One and PanPac. Together, we represent 841,473 hectares under management.*

This collective represents a significant opportunity to lead meaningful change. We are committed to openly sharing high-potential incidents to better understand the critical risks that lead to harm. Just as importantly, we are focused on what actions we are taking individually and collectively to eliminate or mitigate these risks.

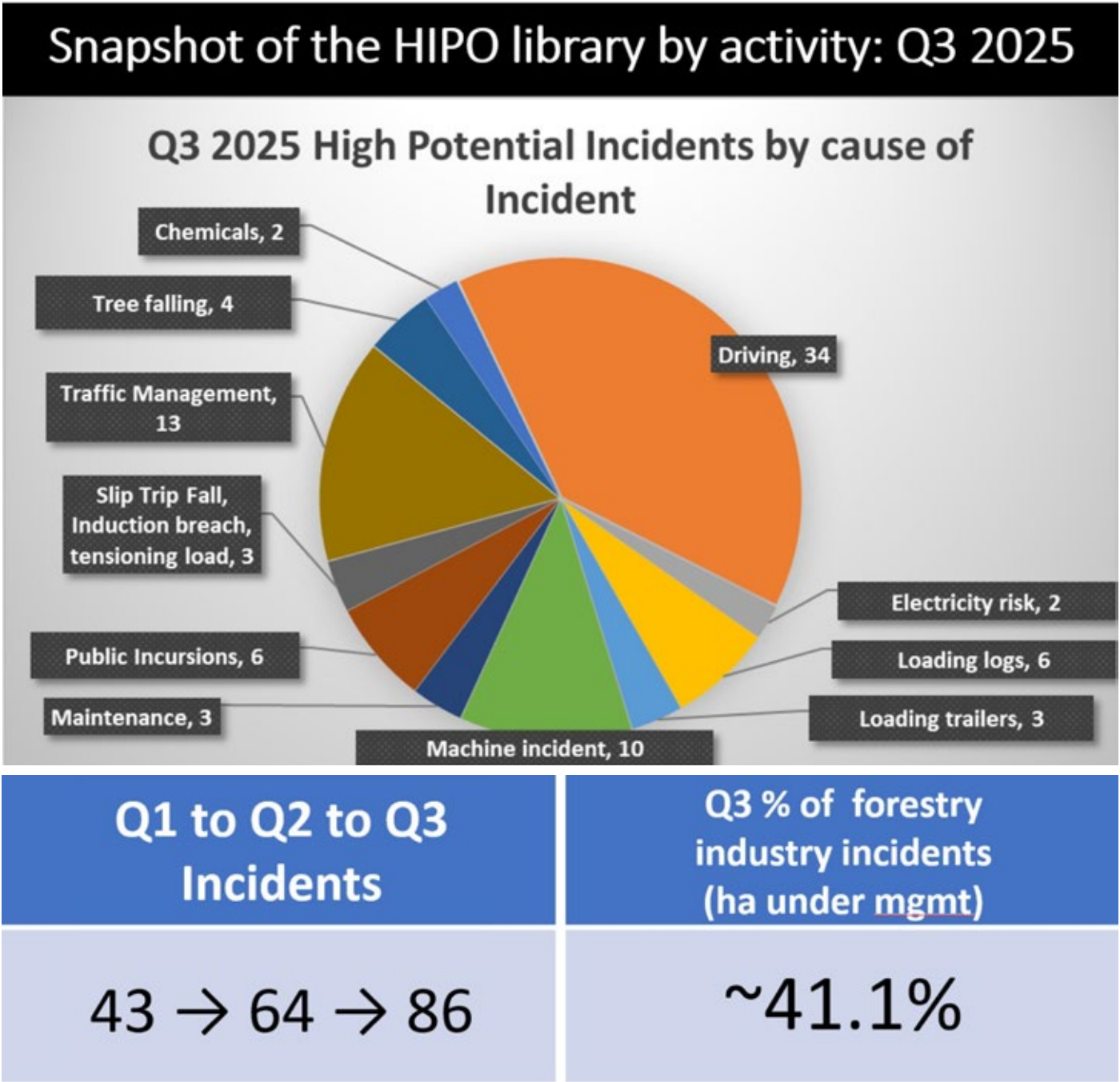
I have included an example below from quarter three (Q3).

## Spotlight on Q3 Safety Trends

Driving-related incidents continued to be the most common issue in Q3 2025, just as they were in the previous two quarters. What stood out most was a noticeable rise in traffic management problems, especially communication breakdowns on forest roads. These issues were reported across several estates.

On a more positive note, loading incidents were down this quarter. However, tensioning incidents saw an increase and will need closer attention.

By being open and working together, we can turn these challenges into opportunities to learn and improve. It's not just about reporting what went wrong; it's about understanding why it happened and taking action to make forestry safer for everyone.



# Safeguard Conference on Human & Organisational Performance

By Phil Luton - Health & Safety Advisor, Rotorua

## Introduction

In early October, the health and safety team travelled to Auckland to attend the Safeguard Conference focused on Human and Organisational Performance (HOP). This event provided an opportunity to hear from both New Zealand and international speakers about their experiences applying HOP principles in high-risk industries such as horticulture, chemical transport, major hazard facilities, construction and mining.

Speakers shared real-world examples of applying HOP principles following incidents, including a case study from a mine exploration site. Panel discussions also explored topics such as Te Ao Māori perspectives and psychosocial risks in the workplace.

## What is HOP?

HOP is a framework aimed at enhancing safety and operational excellence by examining how people interact with processes within their organisational context. Rather than viewing errors as individual failings, HOP encourages organisations to treat them as learning opportunities to strengthen systems and improve resilience.

## Keynote Summary

Keynote speaker Dr Todd Conklin described HOP as an industrial operating philosophy that recognises safety (and quality) as emergent properties of complex systems. He emphasised that good performance is not defined by the absence of errors – since human error is inevitable – but by the presence of the capacity to fail safely.

## Five Key Principles of HOP

- Error is normal – Mistakes are inevitable in complex systems.
- Blame fixes nothing – Focusing on individual fault often obscures systemic issues.
- Learning and improving are vital – Continuous improvement is essential for safety.
- Context influences behaviour – The work environment shapes human actions.
- How you respond to failure matters – Organisational responses to incidents influence safety culture.

## Engagement Tools: 4Ds and 4Ls

Attendees were encouraged to shift focus from solely investigating failures to also learning from successful work. This included engaging with the 4Ds and 4Ls frameworks:

- 4Ds: A tool for safety conversations that explores what makes work Difficult, Dangerous, Dumb, and what workers would do Differently.
- 4Ls: A complementary approach that uncovers what staff Love/Like, Loathe, Long For, and Learn in their roles.

These tools promote meaningful engagement, support team goal-setting, and help identify what truly matters to those most exposed to risk.



**SAFEGUARD**

**HOP Conference 2025**

1 OCTOBER  
PARK HYATT AUCKLAND & LIVESTREAM

With special guest  
**Dr Todd Conklin**

PEOPLE MAKE MISTAKES  
BLAME FIXES NOTHING  
LEARNING IS VITAL  
CONTEXT DRIVES BEHAVIOUR  
HOW WE RESPOND MATTERS

Thomson Reuters



## New Forestry ACoP Released

### MFM (NZ) Updates Its Work Rules

By Rona Wheeldon - Health & Safety Systems Manager, Tokoroa

*In August, a new Approved Code of Practice (ACoP) for Forestry and Harvesting Operations was introduced, replacing the long-standing guidance many in the industry knew as The Bush Bible from 2012.*

The ACoP was launched by Workplace Relations and Safety Minister Brooke van Velden and marks an exciting step forward for the forestry sector. Developed by the industry in partnership with WorkSafe, it's designed to help forestry teams better understand and meet their health and safety responsibilities.

ACoPs are practical tools that take the guesswork out of compliance. This new version brings a more risk-based, systems-focused approach that aligns with the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, making it easier to create safer, smarter workplaces. It represents a major step forward for health and safety in the industry and reflects the shared commitment to safer, smarter workplaces.

In light of these changes, MFM (NZ) has taken the opportunity to review and refresh its Supplementary Work Rules. These rules serve as critical operational guidelines that support safe and consistent work practices across all sites. Clear and current supplementary rules are essential for bridging the gap between high-level regulatory frameworks such as the ACoP and the practical realities of day-to-day operations.

To make things easier on site, MFM (NZ) has printed combined copies of the new ACoP and our updated Supplementary Work Rules for quick and easy reference. A limited number of copies are available, please reach out to your forester if you would like one.

We would like to acknowledge and thank everyone who contributed their time, knowledge and experience to the review of the ACoP and Supplementary Work Rules.

Limited printed copies available!

## Our new staff



### Celeste Foreman

Accounts Administrator, Tauranga

After becoming an empty nester, I could no longer justify only working 40 weeks a year, hence being lucky enough to land a spot on the Manulife team. Prior to this, I worked at Aquinas College in the accounts 'department' (there were only two of us). Before that, I worked at IRD (for way too long) in collections, then in child support. All in all, I have worked in finance in some shape or form for a number of years now.

I have two girls who have both flown the nest – one is in the Navy as an electronics technician, the other is in the Air Force training as a medic. I studied video and electronic media in my younger days, but all that knowledge has long since become obsolete. It was in the time of recording on VHS tapes and we would literally cut and splice these to edit the footage.

I am an outdoorsy/adventurous person who loves to hike, camp, mountain bike and kayak. In the summer of 2020/2021 my family and I walked one third of the Te Araroa Trail (about 1000km). We managed to walk from Cape Reinga all the way to Taumarunui in about 5-6 weeks before having to call it quits due to injury.



## John Stephenson

Harvesting Forester, Tokoroa

### A Lifelong Commitment to Forestry Excellence

With nearly four decades of experience in forest harvesting – from grassroots operations to senior management – John brings a deep, practical understanding of the industry. His career has been shaped by hands-on involvement in both cable harvesting and ground-based systems, complemented by extensive work as a trainer and health and safety manager.

This unique blend of operational expertise and leadership allows him to effectively support crews, enhance performance and uphold high standards in health and safety, environmental compliance and value recovery. John is passionate about crew development and takes pride in mentoring teams to achieve their full potential.

Off the job, John and his wife, Joanne, live on a lifestyle block just outside of Hamilton, where they have a menagerie of animals. Their family includes two children, Devin and Jordan, and they are proud grandparents to 10-month-old Sloane.

The couple share a love of travel, with Vancouver Island standing out as a favourite destination alongside trips to Australia. In their spare time, they enjoy hiking and have an upcoming trip planned to Sanctuary Mountain, Maungatautari.



## Elvy George

Assistant Accountant, Tauranga

Hi everyone! I'm Elvy George, and I've recently joined the accounts team. I have over seven years of experience in accounting and operations, gained across roles in Dubai and New Zealand.

I hold a Bachelor of Commerce from India and a Diploma in Accounting from Toi Ohomai Institute of Technology, gaining broad experience across finance and business operations.

I live in Papamoa with my wife and our energetic 3-year-old daughter, who keeps things lively and fun. Outside of work, I enjoy discovering new places and spending quality time with family and friends.

I'm really excited to be part of the Manulife team and look forward to connecting with you all!

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 **Manulife**  
Investment Management

# forestCHAT

Issue 05 | 31 OCTOBER 2025

## Wellbeing highlights for the quarter

This quarter, our team embraced a series of events that not only raised awareness for important causes but also encouraged everyone to get moving during the winter months.

### Run the Forest – Rotorua

In August, three team members took on the 21km Run the Forest challenge in Rotorua. The event was packed with entertainment and energy, making it a memorable experience for all involved.

### Prostate Cancer Awareness Month

Blue September was an opportunity for us to rally together and raise awareness for men's health and prostate cancer. It was a great opportunity to get everyone moving be it hitting the pavement or exploring the trails.

Steps aside, we have some serious movers and shakers! Nathan Baird our hot stepper, and walking wonder blazing through with a toe tingling 444,262 steps. Darrell Tahere, the pedal powerhouse 748km logged on the MTB, our Team Steppers, Lana McNaull and Amanda Pullen logging a lighting-fast 755,364 steps (some serious sole-mates energy!) and finally Phil Luton the Picasso of the pedometer posse – he didn't just step up but he snapped up the win for the best photo!

### Mental Health Week

Mental Health Awareness Week was marked with a focus on the Five Ways to Wellbeing – a powerful reminder to connect, give, take notice, keep learning and be active.



## Championing Wellbeing

An update from Richard...

As the festive season approaches, many of us feel a mix of excitement and pressure. Between planning, social obligations and financial strain, it's easy to feel overwhelmed. For some, this Christmas may also be the first without a loved one, making the season feel especially tender.

We've all faced other 'firsts' this year, but Christmas – with its traditions and memories can feel particularly poignant.

The good news? We can make the best of the season. Often it's just about thinking ahead and giving ourselves permission to do things differently. Here are a few gentle reminders to help make the holidays more enjoyable and manageable:

**Budget food expenses** – Plan ahead, explore affordable recipes and make it fun.

Potlucks and shared meals can be just as special

**Gift-giving with intention** – Set a budget, get creative and remember it's your presence not presents that matter

**Make time for yourself** – Do things that fill your cup, whether it's a walk, a good book or simply saying 'no' when you need to

**Family gatherings on your terms** – If it gets too stressful, it's ok to take a breather

**Travel safe** – Plan your journey, allow for delays and drive to the conditions

**Get moving** – Movement is great for your mind and body, enjoy the outdoors with family or friends

**Be mindful with food and drink** – Enjoy the treats, but listen to your body

**Remember those who have passed** – Honour their memory in a way that feels right for you

**Rest well** – Sleep is your secret weapon for staying resilient and well. This season, let's be kind to ourselves and others. Whether it's a quiet Christmas or a full house, your wellbeing deserves a spot at the top of the list.

*Picasso Phil's award winning picture, capturing Hilli and Archie paw-surfing!*

*Published on behalf of the Peak Mental Health & Wellbeing Sub-committee*

Need to talk or need help, phone Richard on (027) 777 0894 or via email at [richard@fit4work.co.nz](mailto:richard@fit4work.co.nz)