



REPORT

GUNNS FOREST PRODUCTS

AFS SUMMARY AUDIT REPORT APRIL 2006

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DET NORSKE VERITAS



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1 INTRODUCTION

This audit was conducted as a normal periodic audit of the Gunns Limited Forest Management System certified to the Australian Forestry Standard.. The audit included both field and office components.

2 THE AUDIT

2.1 Scope

Gunns Forest Products Division, forestry activities in North East Tasmania.

2.2 Objectives

Conduct a periodic surveillance of Gunns Limited against the requirements of AS4708(Int):2003 including office and field based activities.

2.3 Protocols

The audit was conducted in accordance with JAS-ANZ Procedure 26 Revision 2, DNV Certification audit protocols and with the requirements of AS4708(int): 2003.

The audit was conducted by an auditor assessed by DNV Certification as meeting the competency requirements for qualification as an AFS auditor. The audit comprised 4 audit days in total, of which 1 day was in the field.

2.4 Verification Process

The audit included an opening meeting, review of system documentation, interviews with operational management and the Senior Management Group, review of records associated with management and control of the forest management system and field audits of forestry activities.

2.5 Background of Client

Gunns Limited is an integrated forestry organisation operating across northern and eastern Tasmania. Gunns achieved certification of its environmental management system to ISO14001 in 1998. It achieved certification of its forest management system to the Australian Forestry Standard in August 2003.

Gunns' forestry operations are divided into three regional business units. This audit was conducted of the operations of the North East business, headquartered at Long Reach (Tamar), north of Launceston.

2.6 Indicators

A sample of Gunns SFM indicators were reviewed during this audit and found to be fairly stated.

3 AUDIT RESULTS

3.1 Performance against Criteria & Requirements

The organisation was reviewed against the following elements:



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- management requirements contained in Element 1 of the AFS;
- productive capacity
- native forest regeneration
- plantation development
- biological diversity
- social and economic benefits
- forest conservation planning
- public participation and good neighbour

3.2 General Findings

The system documentation and management arrangements of Gunns were found to comply with the requirements of the AFS.

3.3 Areas of Non-Conformance

Context: A non-conformance can be classified as either a major non-conformance or a minor non-conformance. A major non-conformance is a failure which would cause a stakeholder to doubt the effectiveness of the forest management system. A minor non-conformance is a failure which could become a major non-conformance if it was not corrected.

Findings: There were no non-conformities identified during the audit.

3.4 Observations and Opportunities for Improvements

An observation identifies a situation where it is the auditor's opinion that further review of some element of the system by the client is warranted. An opportunity for improvement identifies a situation where it is the auditor's opinion that some further improvement could be considered.

A number of opportunities for improvement were identified.

1. Gunns' have a Forestry Policy and objectives and targets which meet the requirements of the AFS. The next review of the Forestry Policy and objectives and targets could consider whether commitments to AFS issues, other non-legislative requirements and objectives and targets could be more clearly described.
2. The representation of stakeholders on the "External Stakeholder Consultation Group" could be extended to include groups and individuals that have disparate views of Gunns management objectives and targets.
3. Gunns could investigate ways and means of measuring and reporting activities applied that demonstrate beyond compliance management (e.g. extension of habitat corridor widths and landscape requirements)
4. Gunns, especially at the corporate level, could consider how they can better acknowledge the forests' capacity to act as a net carbon sink.



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3.5 Notable or Good Practice

A notable or good practice identifies an issue or practice where it is the opinion of the auditor that the client has adopted management practices or performance commitments that are beyond the basic requirements of the standard.

A number of notable practices were identified.

1. The development and application of Forest Practices Plans (FPP) was found to be rigorous, diligent and most effective.
2. The fostering of "good neighbour" relationships in the process of buying land for plantation establishment at Caveside has resulted in "win" "win" outcomes for all despite public criticism and antagonism.
3. The development of Freehold Management Plans has enabled better understanding of bioregional impacts of forest conversion
4. The use of the DA Tracker linked to the GIS demonstrate a powerful and effective tool for silvicultural planning activities in accordance with the Native Forest Policy and Procedures Manual.
5. Gunns were found to be very supportive of local and regional industries and communities
6. Evidence was available to show Gunns to be a family friendly company.

4 AUDIT CONCLUSIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Certification of Gunns Forest Products to AFS AS4708:2003(int) continue with no additional audit requirements.
2. Given that Gunns has now had AFS certification for 3 years, audit planning commences for full recertification of Gunns to the AFS, due in August 2006.

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