

The Way Forward for Government Involvement in Forestry

The Cabinet decision to merge its Ministries of Agriculture and of Forestry followed strategic review undertaken in the first half of 1997. The merger took place on 1 March 1998. Separate from the merger decision was the decision to reduce forestry facilitation activities carried out by the forestry Development Group in the Ministry of Forestry, saving \$2m per annum. Some of the activities to be stopped will be phased out eg. solid wood processing technology transfer. Other activities will stop more quickly, eg. investment promotion, marketing promotion, some forestry publications. This 'purchase' decision reflects the ongoing trend/process of Government's hands-off approach to business and industry generally.

The 'new MAF' structure and functions are noted (see chart). Government is mindful of industry concerns that forestry focus and forestry knowledge is not lost. Forestry is now woven through the new Ministry. The Ministry will help Government create an environment allowing the food, fibre and forest industries to make the best contribution to sustainable economic growth and environmental quality while managing risk to human, animal and plant health and safety resources.

Our focus will be on policy, standard setting, border and certification operations, and management of Crown contracts and

assets. We will continue work on:

- Market access issues.
- Resource management issues.
- Environmental issues — national and international.
- Enhanced quarantine operations.
- Port environs surveys.
- Forest health surveys.
- Gathering and provision of information including the NZ land cover database.

The merger resulted in the following staffing changes

- The MOF Policy, MAF Policy and MOF Forestry Development Groups were merged to form the new MAF-Policy group which now includes regional policy representation in Auckland, Hamilton, Rotorua, Palmerston North, Nelson, Christchurch and Dunedin.

There was some staff reduction, eg. the old Forestry Development Group, because the Government made the decision to exit from some of the facilitation activities that had been undertaken by MOF.

- The MOF Quarantine function merged with the MAF Quarantine function as part of the new MAF-Operations group. There were some staff reductions.
- The MOF Quarantine function merged with the MAF Quarantine function as

part of the new MAF-Operations group. There were some staff reductions.

- The Crown Lease Forests; Forest Health; East Coast Scheme; Indigenous Forest Unit; and Northland Project groups amalgamated to form the new MAF-Forest Management Group. There were no staff reductions.
- The MOF Standards team (3 people) joined the MAF Regulatory Authority.
- The Corporate support functions of the two ministries were merged.

In January there were 135 staff in 'old MOF'. At the end of April there were 114 ex MOF people in 'new MAF'. New MAF has 870 staff. Two ex MOF people (Murray McAlonan, Forest Management, Doug Graham, Finance) are members of the MAF Senior.

The management team structure is outlined below. One ex MOF person (Mike Jebson) is the Director, Sustainable Resource Use, one of the five directorates in MAF-Policy. Gordon Hosking who joined MOF during the year has been appointed Chief Forestry Officer in the MAF Regulatory Authority. Gordon previously worked for "Forest Research".

From notes provided by:
Murray McAlonan
Group Manager
Forest Manager

Ministry of Agriculture & Forestry

