
NELSON MARLBOROUGH
INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Course length reduced

Although the National Diploma in Forestry (Forest Management) is being increased to a Level 6 to recognise the number of higher level units being included, the Diploma in Forestry programme at Richmond Campus is being reduced to two years. This will make the course more attractive for prospective students by getting them into the workforce 6 months earlier than before.

The graduates from the course that finished in June 2001 are now in the workforce. Jeff White, who received the award for Top Academic Student and for Best All Round Student, has taken up a position with Carter Holt Harvey as a financial analyst. Most of the others have found employment in contract crews in silviculture and harvesting. One student decided to upgrade his practical logging skills by completing the 6-month Forest Harvesting course, while another is now working in Arboriculture. It confirms the versatility of Diploma graduates with their blend of practical skills, technical forestry and business knowledge.

A new harvesting course is being offered in Christchurch by the Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology to provide students with basic harvesting skills and meet the expanding industry demand for a skilled logging workforce. Students will graduate with the Certificate in Forest Harvesting after six months. It is a venture with Christchurch City Council that runs alongside the existing Certificate in Silviculture course at Bottle Lake Forest.

SCHOOL OF FORESTRY

Fund will allow visitors and travel

The School has recently become eligible for the prestigious University of Canterbury Erskine Fund, which will allow us to bring two prominent forestry visitors a year to enhance our teaching and research programmes, and also to permit School staff to travel overseas. This is a most important development that will strengthen our contacts with international forestry.

As well, the School, with the support of the NZ Forest Industries Council and NZ Forest Owners' Association, have announced a "Visiting Industry Fellow" programme, designed to attract middle and senior management personnel to the School for short periods and thus strengthen the interaction between the School and industry. Contact: r.sands@fore.canterbury.ac.nz for more details.

Dr. Euan Mason is collaborating with Nick Ledgard (Forest Research), David Lane (Egressive

Ltd.) and Patrick Milne (ex Forest Research) in the construction of web-based forestry decision-support for farmers. The project was sponsored by the New Zealand Farm Forestry Association and is financed by a grant from the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry's Sustainable Farming Fund.

Connections with the National School of Agricultural Engineers of Bordeaux have also been strengthened with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding, which will permit exchange of staff and students and joint research activities.

Jim Anderton, Deputy Prime Minister, recently visited the School and discussed, among other things, the School's expertise in roading, transportation and wood processing research. As a result, the School will be represented on the Working Groups of the Wood Processing Strategy Steering Group.

Dr. Ted Bilek has recently resigned from the School to return to the U.S. His position as Forest Economics lecturer will soon be advertised. Victoria Mackisack has also left after 15 years of exceptional service to the School. Karen Bain has taken over as Roger Sands' PA.

WAIARIKI INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

New Diploma draws FIT praise

The Chief Executive Officer of Forest Industries Training praised the new wood National Diploma in Wood Processing Technology launched at Waiariki in early July, but warned it was no time for people to rest on their laurels. John Blakey told students and guests at the powhiri for the new Level 5 National Diploma aimed at those already in industry, that New Zealand must close the gap in training. He said New Zealand has a big challenge to build the training and education programmes to give us an international advantage.

He said Forest Industries Training planned to develop a Level 6 programme, and hopefully a degree in wood processing technology. The Chairperson of Waiariki's Council, Deryck Shaw, said the powhiri and launch of the programme was an historic moment, and it was great to see 20 first-class candidates begin the first level 5 course in wood processing offered in this country. The new Level 5 Diploma will provide a means for those in the wood processing industry to develop and attain supervisory and higher skills and positions. The 20 students, who come from all over New Zealand, will attend TiTC on a block course basis, for three days a month (Thursday, Friday and Saturday). The Diploma has been structured this way to reduce disruption of production. The first class includes people with extensive wood processing backgrounds, who have worked in major companies over many years.