

## Waiariki Institute of Technology update

Jeremy Christmas

### 50 year celebrations

Later this year our Waipa Campus, previously known as the Timber Industry Training Centre (TITC), will celebrate its 50th birthday celebrations. In 1965, TITC was opened as part of the training arm of the New Zealand Forest Service. The sawmill and downstream processing units are still operating. With the support of our forestry ITO, Competenz, it continues to train timber machinists, saw doctors and mill workers for the industry.

Our forestry programme is actually now in its 71st year of producing skilled forestry workers to fulfil supervisory roles in the industry. We started as the Forestry Training Centre (FTC) at the commencement of the forest service, and we are still chugging along despite some name and organisational changes over the years.

### Latest intake

This year we have a good keen bunch of students in our Level 6 Diploma in Forest Management programme, although numbers are down a bit on previous years. Recently, we took our students away on their annual field trip to Minginui Forest. Here they did some exploration of the native forest, carried out GPS navigation exercises, collected herbarium samples, and looked at a range of forest management practices in both the indigenous forest and exotic plantations.

In our diploma we have 18 full-time students, including five international students. We also have four part-time students from the Graduate Diploma in Applied Management (Forestry) programme in some of our classes and they are integrating well.

For some years now, the Waiariki Institute of Technology has been producing graduates from the two-year Waiariki Diploma in Forest Management Programme (Level 6). However, next year will be the last one that this qualification will be delivered in its current form as we will be introducing a new revamped New Zealand Diploma in Forest Management (Level 6). Changes in the course material will be based on extensive industry feedback.

### Industry support

Although we have been marketing our diploma course quite actively in schools and at careers shows, we are keen to receive any industry support to encourage people to enter our industry. That support could take the form of study scholarships, school vacation jobs or

projects, or simply advocating to your local community for people to choose forestry as a career.

Most of us have either come through the forestry training at the University of Canterbury Forestry School or the Forestry School in Rotorua. It is important that the industry supports these valuable teaching institutions, or we run the risk of these programmes becoming financially unviable and going the way of many other forestry qualifications around the world that are no longer being offered.

### Review of qualifications

The introduction of this new qualification was one of the outcomes of the recently completed forestry Targeted Review of Qualifications (TRoQ). This review has been occurring for the Level 1 to 6 qualifications on New Zealand's 10-level qualification framework and was initiated by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) in 2008. The aim of the review was to ensure that all qualifications in this country are useful and relevant to current and future learners, employers and stakeholders.

The process of reviewing all the relevant forestry qualifications was led initially by FITEC in 2011 and then Competenz, the ITO which replaced FITEC in 2013. The process initially involved reviewing all the Level 2 to 6 forestry qualifications which were provided by a range of training providers throughout New Zealand. This was carried out by several working groups and a governance representing industry associations, employers and training providers. Dr Andrew McEwen represented the NZIF on the industry governance group and we are very appreciative of his time and input into the process.

### New diploma approved

Earlier this year we received notification that the NZQA had approved the new-look New Zealand Diploma in Forest Management which will be structured as follows:

Year 1	first semester
FMAN.5201	Communications, Leadership and Teambuilding
FMAN.5202	Forest Industry Overview
FMAN.5203	Forestry Science
FMAN.5204	Harvesting Operations

**Year 1****second semester**

FMAN.5205	Forest Health and Nutrient Management
FMAN.5206	Forest Operations
FMAN.5207	Plan and Monitor Production
FMAN.5208	Forestry Statistics and Remote Sensing

**Year 2****first semester**

FMAN.6201	Growth Modelling and Forest Valuation
FMAN.6202	Supply Chain Management
FMAN.6203	Forestry Business Systems
FMAN.7201	Research Forestry Economic and Environmental Factors

**Year 2****second semester**

FMAN.6204	Forest Engineering
FMAN.6205	Health, Safety and Environmental Management
FMAN.7203	Forestry Industry Project
FMAN.7202	Plan Management of Forest Estates

This new qualification will have more emphasis on health and safety and recent technological advancements in our industry, such as remote sensing and mechanised harvesting. There will continue to be a heavy use of forestry-related software such as the Integral (formerly ATLAS) suite of growth modelling software, Scion Forecaster, Remsoft spatial planning software, Cable Harvest Planning Software (CHiPS), ArcGIS (including LiDAR), GPS use and Microsoft applications. We are also very fortunate to have a John Deere Harvester/Forwarder simulator which we now use for a diverse range of applications including programming, road construction and harvest operations.

**Research focus**

The school has also become more active with research over the last few years, particularly since the appointment of Professor Glen Murphy who continues to be a prolific researcher in the areas of harvesting and logistics. He was recently recognised for his contribution to our Institute and to the industry when he was awarded the Waiariki Institute of Technology Researcher of the Year honour for 2014.

**NZIF link**

Although we did not send students to the combined ANZIF conference this year, we continue to support their research projects and encourage them to submit posters at the annual NZIF conference. This has been a very successful initiative for our students in recent years, with several winning much needed prize money and some securing job offers by actively participating in the conference. We continue to encourage our students to support the NZIF as the Institute continues to support them.

**The next 70 years**

The Waiariki Institute of Technology Forestry School continues to adapt and evolve its offerings. The soon to be offered New Zealand Diploma in Forest Management will better suit the current and future needs of the industry. Any support that the industry can give our programme and our students would be greatly welcomed and will ensure we continue to produce skilled supervisors and future managers for another 70 years or so.

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**Foundation Establishment Appeal**

The Trustees have launched a Foundation Establishment Appeal and encourage NZIF members to make donations and to encourage non-NZIF members to donate as well. Your donations will provide the capital to sustainably fund scholarships and grants that will make a real difference to forestry in New Zealand.

The purpose of the NZIF Foundation is the advancement of education in forestry. This includes encouraging forestry-related research, education and training through the provision of grants, scholarships and prizes; promoting the acquisition, development and dissemination of forestry-related knowledge and information, and other activities.