

Forest Management System – Summary Audit Report			
Client name:	HVP Plantations Pty Ltd	Certificate #	AFS 603858
Client address:	World Trade Centre L12, Tower 4 MELBOURNE VIC 3005	Website:	www.hvp.com.au
Audit type:	Recertification Assessment	Audit date:	4 - 8 February 2019
Standard:	AS4708:2013	Auditors:	Ross Garsden and Gerard Moore
<p>This document provides a summary of the findings contained in a report to this client with respect to the implementation of the client’s management system as determined during an audit conducted by BSI.</p>			

Scope of certification:

Activities associated with the sustainable management of HVP Plantations’ softwood and eucalypt plantations, including the planning and management of forest operations; the delivery and sale of forest products, the management of planned and un-planned fires and the management of Custodial Lands for conservation purposes.

Executive summary:

BSI conducted a recertification assessment of HVP Plantations Pty Ltd in February 2019. The scope of the audit was the organisation’s activities with respect to the requirements of AS 4708:2013 as detailed in the company’s Forest Management System. The audit assessed activities associated with the central management functions at Head Office, and the operational performance in the Gippsland and Northern Regions.

The aim of the audit was to verify continuing compliance with the Standard and assess progress towards achievement of the company’s objectives. The audit included assessment of: a range of forest management processes and associated activities including: operational planning and supervision of harvesting and site preparation; fire salvage operations; research activities; road maintenance and bridge construction; chain of custody and chain of responsibility procedures; fire management and fire season-preparedness; management of depots at Myrtleford, Shelley, Benalla, and Flynn; and the operation of the Gelliondale Nursery.

Planned stakeholder consultation included interviews with a range of contractors involved in harvesting and haulage particularly with respect to chain of responsibility requirements and management of overloads. Additionally, the audit provided an opportunity for direct engagement with the Alpine Community Plantations Committee at Bright and Koetong Landcare and North-East Blackberry Management Group at Shelley.

Strengths of the HVP Forest Management System (FMS) system identified in this assessment include:

- Continuing corporate support for ongoing high quality, in-house and collaborative research underpinning forest management and support for innovation throughout the organisation underpinning all aspects of the business;
- Continuing corporate focus on safety and improvement in systems, e.g. HSE Strategic Plan, SDS Online and Corporate Induction Program and adoption and uptake of the Velocity EHS system.
- Corporate focus on strategic planning and the development of the process mapping framework.
- Corporate risk management especially with respect to fire management, planning and capacity.
- Continuing development of stakeholder engagement and external relations processes, e.g. contractor engagement and willingness to drive continual improvement.

Significant improvements noted in this assessment include:

- The integration of the management review processes to support the Business Strategy
- HOPS - Harvest Optimisation & Production System
- The roll-out of the 5-Star Depot management process
- Improvements in the integration of operations with a single contractor taking responsibility for harvest, site preparation and planting.

HVP has reviewed the range of opportunities for improvement noted in the previous report and these have been actioned appropriately. Four minor non-conformances were identified in relation to:

- Management of impacts of forest operations on soil in hand-back areas;
- Emergency preparedness and testing;
- Operation of vehicle wash-down facilities; and
- Management and monitoring of truck overloads

Details of these are provided in the full report along with a number of opportunities for improvement.

State government requirements with respect to the condition of leased lands occupied by bluegum plantations in Gippsland, prior to handback, are leading to unacceptable levels of site disturbance and adding unnecessary costs. It is acknowledged that this is outside the control of the company.

HVP continues to demonstrate effective processes for planning and conduct of forest operations. As reported previously, the processes for management of social and environmental impacts of these activities are effective. The system provides a robust framework for identification and protection of biodiversity values in the forest landscape; protection of soil and water; management of cultural heritage values; fire, forest productivity and forest health. Likewise, the company continues to demonstrate effective stakeholder engagement at both strategic planning and operational levels and its contribution to the regional economies of Victoria is significant.

As with the previous audit, all personnel involved in this assessment provided positive and constructive support throughout the audit process. HVP's management system continues to evolve with continual improvement clearly evident. HVP continues to meet the requirements of AS4708:2013 and the report includes a recommendation for recertification.

Defined forest area statement

The defined forest area comprises approximately 135,000 hectares of pine plantations (mostly *Pinus radiata*), 18,000 hectares of hardwood (eucalypt) plantations and over 50,000 hectares of custodial lands (mostly native forest) in three geographical areas (Gippsland, Northern and Western Regions) of Victoria.

Defined forest area (in hectares):

238,118 Ha

Advised to AFS Limited on:

31 July 2018

Certificate expires on:

31 March 2022

Report prepared by:

Ross Garsden

Technical Specialist (Forestry) – FMS Lead Auditor

Name of person who prepared this report

Position

END OF REPORT