
Audit Report

Re-Certification audit for

VicForests

Corporate Support Office
Level 7, 473 Bourke Street, Melbourne, VIC, 3001, Australia

Regional Office
7-13 Symes Road Woori Yallock VIC 3139 AUSTRALIA

Certificate No.: FMS20003

Audit Date: 30/11/2015 - 22/12/2015

Work Item I.D.: WI-790163

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Revision Level: Final V2

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

SAI Global conducted an audit of VicForests on 30/11/2015 - 22/12/2015.

The purpose of this audit report is to summarise the degree of compliance with relevant criteria, as defined on the cover page of this report, based on the evidence obtained during the audit of your organisation. This audit report considers your organisation's policies, objectives, and continual improvement processes. Comments may include how suitable the objectives selected by your organisation appear to be in regard to maintaining customer satisfaction levels and providing other benefits with respect to policy and other external and internal needs. We may also comment regarding the measurable progress you have made in reaching these targets for improvement.

SAI Global audits are carried out within the requirements of SAI Global procedures that also reflect the requirements and guidance provided in the international standards relating to audit practice such as ISO/IEC 17021, ISO 19011 and other normative criteria. SAI Global Auditors are assigned to audits according to industry, standard or technical competencies appropriate to the organisation being audited. Details of such experience and competency are maintained in our records.

In addition to the information contained in this audit report, SAI Global maintains files for each client. These files contain details of organisation size and personnel as well as evidence collected during preliminary and subsequent audit activities (Documentation Review and Scope) relevant to the application for initial and continuing certification of your organisation.

Please take care to advise us of any change that may affect the application/certification or may assist us to keep your contact information up to date, as required by SAI Global Terms and Conditions.

This report has been prepared by SAI Global Limited (SAI Global) in respect of a Client's application for assessment by SAI Global. The purpose of the report is to comment upon evidence of the Client's compliance with the standards or other criteria specified. The content of this report applies only to matters, which were evident to SAI Global at the time of the audit within the audit scope. SAI Global does not warrant or otherwise comment upon the suitability of the contents of the report or the certificate for any particular purpose or use. SAI Global accepts no liability whatsoever for consequences to, or actions taken by, third parties as a result of or in reliance upon information contained in this report or certificate.

Please note that this report is subject to independent review and approval. Should changes to the outcomes of this report be necessary as a result of the review, a revised report will be issued and will supersede this report.

Standard(s):	4708:2013 Certification
Code(s):	02, F01-F06
	Processes involved in the planning for, harvesting and haulage of native eucalypt forest and post harvest regeneration. The Defined Forest Area is as per the area defined in the Timber Release Plan encompassing the geographic region located east of the Hume Highway and extending to the coast and the Victoria/NSW border.
Scope of Certification:	Further information regarding the DFA, including all reports and maps, can be obtained from the Corporate Support Office address listed above or the VicForests website.
Number of Staff:	110
Shifts:	1
Total audit duration:	104 hrs
Audit Team:	Sabrina Kerber - Lead Auditor
Other Participants:	Gary King – Technical Specialist

Definitions and action required with respect to audit findings**Non-conformance:**

Based on objective evidence, the absence of, or a significant failure to implement and/or maintain conformance to requirements of the applicable standard. Such issues may raise significant doubt as to the capability of the management system to achieve its intended outputs.

NOTE: The "applicable Standard" is the Standard which SAI Global are issuing certification against, and may be a Product Standard, a management system Standard, a food safety Standard or another set of documented criteria.

Action required: This category of findings requires SAI Global to issue a formal NCR; to receive and approve client's proposed correction and corrective action plans; and formally verify the effective implementation of planned activities. Correction and corrective action plan should be submitted to SAI Global prior to commencement of follow-up activities as required. Follow-up action by SAI Global must 'close out' the NCR or reduce it to a lesser category within 90 days for recertification audits.

If significant risk issues (e.g. safety, environmental, food safety, product legality/quality, etc.) are detected during an audit these shall be reported immediately to the Client and more immediate or instant correction shall be requested. If this is not agreed and cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of SAI Global, immediate suspension shall be recommended.

In the case of an already certified client, failure to close out NCR within the time limits means that suspension proceedings may be instituted by SAI Global.

Follow-up activities incur additional charges..

Area of Concern: Area of the system for which the client is required to investigate potential nonconformity.

Action required: SAI Global may require client to formulate preventive action plan for approval prior to next planned audit / certification decision or alternatively may follow up client's preventive action at the next planned audit. Lack of client attention to such issues implies that a preventive action system is not working effectively, and could result in an NCR being raised at a later date.

Opportunity for Improvement:

A documented statement, which may identify areas for improvement however shall not make specific recommendation(s).

Action required: Client may develop and implement solutions in order to add value to operations and management systems. SAI Global is not required to follow-up on this category of audit finding.

Executive Overview

The purpose of this audit was to determine the capability and effectiveness of your organisation's management system in: ensuring continual compliance with customer, statutory and regulatory requirements; meeting its specified objectives; and conformity of the management system to stated criteria.

This audit was initially scheduled to be undertaken in June 2015 as per the usual six monthly cycle to encompass seasonal activities over the summer and winter months. Due to various circumstances relating to the availability of personnel, it was moved to December 2015 still within the required annual frequency. As a result, and the fact that this was a recertification audit, the duration was longer and broader. Moving forward, the audit cycle will change to a nine monthly schedule to capture the seasonal variation required for auditing this Standard.

This re-certification audit focused on West Gippsland with visits to Swifts Creek, Noojee, Powelltown and Erica District offices, the new Woori Yallock Regional Office and the Corporate Support office located in the Melbourne CBD.

Further progress has been made with the development and consolidation of VicForests forest management systems. A significant improvement was noted in the quality of maps now available and being prepared by personnel. Accurate information and a full suite of values is now being presented at a scale and in a useful format. There were no issues found with legends, lack of detail beyond the coupe boundary and values not relating to the coupe plan. This is a key communication component and it is of great value to staff and contractors.

Another new development is the improvement in checklists to be used to monitor some of the key focus areas including roading. Silvicultural documentation and instructions have been recently reviewed to reflect changing practices and a comprehensive training and assessment programme will shortly be developed. This was previously an area that had not been updated for some time however, with new information from the various research trials and a focus on decision trees and instructions, the procedures have been made current.

Areas that still require attention include training records, some documentation, keeping up to date with the new Code and reflecting requirements in the system.

Recommendation

The recommendation from this audit is that your certification continues.

Audit recommendations are always subject to ratification by the SAI Global certification authority.

This report was prepared by: Sabrina Kerber and Gary King

The assistance of VicForests field staff from each location is acknowledged in providing the basis for this report.

Meeting Attendance Register

Name	Position	Entry	Exit
Nathan Trushell	General Manager Stakeholders & Planning	✓	
Krystina Kny	Manager Forest Performance	✓	✓
Gary King	SAI Technical Specialist	✓	✓
Sabrina Kerber	SAI Global Lead Auditor	✓	✓

Past performance including a review of the results of previous SAI Global audits

The system has been certified since December 2006 and upgraded to two changes to the AS4708 Standards. During that period, it has consistently and continuously been improved and enhanced keeping pace with changes to the operating climate of the timber industry and stakeholder expectations. There have been very few non-conformances raised during the overall certification period and VicForests personnel and management have shown a strong commitment to dealing with any issues raised. All have been taken seriously and continue to be fully investigated with implementation examining all potentially related components of the business.

This recertification audit has again found the continuous improvement cycle to be in place with more innovative changes completed and planned.

Review of any changes

Changes to the business and system since the previous audit undertaken in December 2014 have included the following:

- A financially good year with 1.28cu metres sold and net debt reduced
- A small amount of log exports have been undertaken
- The socio-economic analysis of the Central Highlands has been completed
- East Gippsland has a new Regional Manager with a potential shift in silvicultural practices being considered moving away from clearfall/seed tree harvesting
- The logging allocation process has concluded with some Ash customers transitioning to Mixed Species
- OHS reporting is still good with only two LTIs recorded and strong reporting amongst personnel of near misses
- Community Forestry operations been underway for twelve months
- Stakeholder engagement has ramped up with a series of Open House sessions run in Healesville, Bairnsdale, Alexandra, Orbost and Heyfield. Open Tent sessions have also been run on coupes as a follow on from these.
- The Forest Management portal has been set up on the VicForests website with biodiversity information loaded
- The Leadbeaters Possum has been recently listed as critically endangered. VicForests is on the reference group with actions continuing including awarding of new contracts to undertake pre harvest surveys
- FSC certification has been placed on hold whilst the industry taskforce terms of reference are released and work through
- Additional staff have been added to the compliance team
- A new Biodiversity Research Officer has been appointed with two ARC projects underway
- A full reconciliation of regeneration performance has been undertaken
- Move from Healesville office to Woori Yallock

Actions taken on previous audit issues

As previously identified, VicForests takes a far more thorough approach to determining improvement opportunities as most businesses and all areas of concern have been appropriately documented in the system using Risk Wizard for root cause analysis and allocation and application of actions.

Below are the previous surveillance audit areas of concern in italics with a comment on the information provided to close them out. All were discussed at management review and have had good progress. There are processes to ensure that these are actioned within thirty days if they rate as either high or extreme risk.

- *The new audit programme will also need to ensure it picks up the system components and seasonal activities as the current intent will be focussed on implementation.*

The new program is now taking into account the seasonal variations with three internal audits to be run annually. System components are yet to be included with a system versus the Standard check required. This will remain open and must be addressed prior to the next audit.

The traditional audit format has been reinstated with initial changes incorporated into the revised Internal Audit Instruction. A risk based approach to the selection of audit components, an explanation of what levels of risk relate to in this context and checks on staff use and understanding of newly implemented electronic systems as well as consideration of the seasonality of activities have been included in the Instruction.

- *Standards for coupe road profiles are still to be fully developed for VicForests to ensure there is a consistently built design for drainage etc. Once completed, this will need to be rolled out to all contractors currently tasked with preparing these access points.*

A work group is being developed specifically to address the roading issues previously identified including those picked up by the DEPI audits. As this is still not yet in full progress, this area of concern remains open and will be followed through at the next audit.

A roading process workgroup is being assembled and an external engineer engaged to develop a works and maintenance manual which will include all specifications for VF road construction. Standards for coupe road profiles will also be defined to ensure consistency in the built design.

The system issue identified that a lack of focus in this area of the business was due to the generally good understanding of requirements by contractors and a small handful of staff and roadworks completed were generally successful.

Skills Development

- *Tracking of contractor training is currently left to the contractor. As contractors are involved in some key decisions in relation to seed/habitat tree selection, roading and landing preparation etc. the system should have a process of ensuring records of their training and skills development are retained where relevant.*

Records of contractor training has been limited in the past to log grading however, a new staff training database ELMO will now allow the option to record contractor training. The SharePoint database is also available and new courses include the Biodiversity Awareness presentation for Contractors.

Identification of environmental, social and economic aspects and determination of their significance

- *There are no aspects (risks) rated in the register as significant and it is not clear in the system that pre control high or extreme risks were previously considered to be significant.*

Risks have been reviewed, updated and re-categorised and increased system knowledge is allowing these to be easily identified. Significant risks are those deemed to have a rating of high or extreme. Part of the issue was the identification of the section in Risk Wizard that noted risks i.e. Attributes.

Orbost Office

- *Whilst the new Forest Management Plan had been sent out to local groups for comment, there has not been any further consultation and proactive discussion which is the intent of the Standard.*

Actions taken to encourage Stakeholder engagement have included letters of response prepared for stakeholders, links to the online survey, a review of results, open house events and open tents to enable further consultation.

- *Several staff members were not able to attend some of the scheduled training. An email has been sent but this is yet to be followed up on to ensure that personnel who do not attend training are picked up by the system and complete training as soon as practicable.*

The limitations to the previous training record management system have been identified and the business is now transitioning to ADP and then ELMO. As the EBA was delayed, formal training was not delivered but will be completed in 2016.

- *It was noted that the conditions in the Timber Sales Agreement are yet to be picked up by some form of systematic monitoring or audit process.*

The response to this area of concern from Sales referred to monitoring of sales, supply progress, final sale quantity and reconciliation. There are other conditions that have been outlined in the agreement that were referred to and this will be held over for the next audit and discussion with the Sales team.

Bendoc Office

- *Documentation in the Surprise coupe indicated the potential for threatened fauna within 500m of the coupe. A field check was required however; the context map provides no indication of what the issue was and in what location. Further information should be clarified to enable foresters and contractors to be made aware of the issue and therefore be alert to any indicators that may be found within the coupe.*

Changes have been made to the system however, one of the key causes was that the map was produced by a forester on secondment who accessed the wrong map and did not recall how to check the correct layer. Additional instruction and training has been provided.

Findings From This Audit

Management Responsibility

The support from the senior management of VicForests for the management system is very strong with a number of members of the team having been involved in the initial establishment and implementation of the SFMS. Funding continues to be allocated to improvements in training, databases and personnel to ensure the system is adequately resourced and supported.

Systems/Identification of environmental, social and economic aspects and determination of their significance

The Sustainable Management Policy has been adjusted following consultation but is yet to be approved by the Board. Changes relate to statements on stakeholder engagement and review processes. The scope of activities has remained the same with greater involvement with DELWP including monthly meetings.

A comprehensive internal audit report for the 2014|2015 period has been prepared and notes the auditing of compliance against the VF Operating Procedures, Utilisation Procedures, regulatory

documents, BMS documents and the AFS. Audit plans were created by the Manager Operational Performance and audits conducted by suitably qualified internal auditors. Areas of higher risk have been part of the focus with rainforest, LBP included. Emerging themes have been very well categorised and specific issues noted.

The Sustainable Forest Management System Management Review was completed in August 2015 and a full report prepared. This excellent summary document captures all key components of the SFMS with discussion points well documented outlining outcomes and actions. The actions are numbered and included in Risk Wizard.

The minutes from management review indicate that the majority of the objectives and targets that were in place in 2014/2015 should be rolled over into 2015/16 with any non-relevant targets removed. Further feedback on future targets has been encouraged.

System documentation is constantly being updated and adjusted to suit changes in strategy and requirements. Pre Harvest Survey Instructions, Noxious Weeds, Disease and Pest Management, Apiary Buffer Analysis, Coupe Planning etc. were all updated more recently.

Mid and end of year performance reviews are in place to ensure training needs are discussed and identified. Records are held in the system and were viewed with HR personnel.

Monitoring and measurement of controls in place continue to be very well done through the coupe monitoring forms and inspections. Records are located in the coupe files and actions recorded in Risk Wizard.

Areas of Concern

- Lack of training in the identification of listed endangered plants and implementation of appropriate management action.
- Mandatory training for field personnel in relation to field activities is still to be fully outlined.
- The system is currently not adequately capturing training and assessments where personnel are being mentored i.e. the progression through various tasks and competency sign off by the mentors.
- Procedure alerts may not be currently getting through to new starters.
- Some documentation was found to require control to ensure it is incorporated into the system e.g. Monthly Haulage Schedule.
- The determination of significance for aspects and impacts will require further review in the system as residual risk is being used on the basis of controls being in place. The location for significance is current estimation which notes absolute and residual. There did not appear to be values for absolute with high and extreme chosen as significant. This may not be ensuring that the full significance of an impact is determined and appropriate controls identified in the system and monitored.

Opportunities for Improvement

- Greater consistency in coupe file records. It should be clarified as to which planning, activity and monitoring documentation that tracks processes should be present on the coupe file - either as digital or paper records.

- Currently there are only two personnel within the system utilizing the Risk Wizard database to review and include aspects. Greater use and understanding of the system and the aspects within it may be required.

Periodic Evaluation and Review of Compliance with Relevant Legislation and Regulations

The new Code of Practice for Timber Production 2014 and the Management Standards and Procedures for timber harvesting operations in Victoria's State forests 2014 have been reviewed and included into the management system. The Operating Procedures are still being adjusted in line with the new requirements and personnel have been tasked to complete this.

A forest audit programme undertaken by DELWP has recently been completed with a focus on areas not performing well in the past including boundaries and exclusion zones, in coupe roading and drainage and crossings. Three different auditing bodies examined the three focus areas. At the time of this audit, a draft report had been prepared on Code compliance.

The most recent legal challenge regarding owls and fire in East Gippsland has been settled out of court with an agreement not to harvest 90 coupes.

Area of Concern

- There are still some components of the SFMS that are yet to be adjusted to reflect the new Code including induction checklists and coupe plan templates.

Progress of Planned Activities to Improve Performance – Objectives and Targets

There are strong objectives and targets outlined in the system and reported on regularly through the senior management team. These are very well documented in the management review minutes.

In addition to the set objectives and targets, each section of the business has performance improvement targets that are monitored and each individual has an EPP against which they are judged twice annually.

DFA Changes/Maps/Logo Use

Very good changes have been made to the VicForests website with an interactive map now available with all current Timber Release Plan (TRP) coupes listed. These represent the current DFA. It is possible for stakeholders to click on and off various layers and download shape files to put on hand held units and visit sites.

The total gross area in the DFA is 114,197ha with a total net area of forest of 66,720ha. This is consistent with the TRP Amendment issued in August 2015.

Further detail of the DFA is located in the internal GIS system with tables and maps able to be produced to indicate all changes in addition to the current status.

Evidence was available to indicate that VicForests have advised AFS of the DFA by providing an annual statement and have paid the logo usage fee directly to AFS in July 2015.

The AFS/PEFC logos are in use on policies, printed handouts and presentations. The SAI Global logo is not being used.

Stakeholders

The full suite of external audit reports are available in their entirety i.e. not summarised, on the VicForests internet site www.vicforests.com.au. A full summary of stakeholder engagement survey results has been prepared for the FSC Stakeholder process. The key issues of concern include water quality and yield, protection of habitat for native species and Leadbeaters Possum, management of feral animals and noxious weeds, protection of old growth, fire prevention and suppression, sustainability and being a good neighbour.

All offices demonstrated good use of the communications register to note the notifications that are being sent, communication with neighbours and other relevant stakeholders. A large focus has been on apiarists and they have been happy with the process and the outcomes particularly in the Swifts Creek area. Assessment sheets for site management are being completed and recorded in the system.

Stakeholder engagement has improved significantly over the past few years with more proactive processes in place to gather information and listen to views. There were no specific issues raised in relation to the communication process however, there continue to be groups fundamentally opposed to native forest timber harvesting.

Area of Concern

- The Stakeholder Engagement Policy has no date to indicate currency.

Forest Management Plan

VicForests Ecologically Sustainable Forest Management Plan has now been adopted as a working plan (Nov. 2015). There were two public consultation periods followed by open house and open tent (in the field) consultation. Communication, Engagement and Consultation work plans directed the process. The 681 stakeholders within the VicForests database were provided with the opportunity to comment. Seventy four public submissions were received and 69 stakeholders participated in the open house process. Public input has been responded to by VicForests with changes and improved wording in the plan.

The Plan addresses the requirements of the Australian Forestry Standard (AFS), is transparent and takes on board stakeholders' concerns. It is able to be adapted in response to new science or other information and is subject to annual review.

In 2014 VicForests received 2 Australian Research Council grants for biodiversity research. They are:

- To identify the underlying patterns and processes that determine how forest biodiversity is distributed across the landscape (in partnership with Forestry Tasmania, University of Tasmania and the University of Melbourne); and
- To investigate and develop a range of stand-scale silvicultural prescriptions to accelerate the development of key Leadbeater's possum habitat features (in partnership with DELWP and the University of Melbourne).

Both these projects are still in the development stage with VicForests assisting with site selection and the provision of spatial layers

Research and Development

VicForests continue to be involved in a variety of research projects as noted below and previously

discussed. There have been no significant changes since the previous audit.

Complaints and Non-Conformities

Stakeholder groups continue to be busy notifying of alleged breaches in relation to rainforest species being harvested. VicForests have forest indicators to trigger management actions and alerts in the Cengea system. Targeted surveys are being undertaken with 117 new colonies of Leadbeaters possum located through ARI. Any LBP identifications are notified to the compliance section and added to the Reserve layer in the system.

A register of alleged breaches is still being well maintained with all reports fully and thoroughly investigated and very well documented. Some changes in the system have included greater protection of larger canopy trees.

The CAIR database is no longer in use to record non conformances and complaints. These are now all being recorded in Risk Wizard.

Biodiversity

VicForests is continuing with pre harvest surveys for threatened species with plans to manage any detections. This may include placing the forest area into a reserve and including it on the VicForests' Reserves layer in the system.

- VicForests continues to assist in the implementation of the recommendations of the Leadbeater's Possum (LBP) Advisory Group as approved by the Victorian government. DELWP has produced a report "Supporting the Recovery of Leadbeater's Possum (October 2015) which demonstrates VicForests involvement in the process.
- A desktop analysis is carried out to determine whether a biodiversity survey for LBP is required. As a result of this process and subsequent surveys 123 new colonies have been identified. The process will be reviewed after 200 colonies have been identified.
- The implementation of regrowth retention harvesting in 2014 to assist in maintaining biodiversity, particularly LBP habitat, is going well with 4 coupes inspected in the field (see Appendix 1 - Whitelaw's Track, Bullseye, St Gwinnose and Lower Growlers). In all cases the regime was well implemented with retained areas protected and regeneration burns restricted to the harvested sections. Field Guidance notes for the implementation regrowth retention harvesting were completed in October 2015 to further assist field foresters in the implementation of the regime.
- The LBP habitat checklist is being well used and is ensuring foresters demonstrate due diligence in the identification of habitat.
- An alleged breach of Zone 1A LBP habitat in Bullseye coupe (see Appendix 1) was field investigated with the report on the coupe file. No breach was found as there were insufficient pre 1900 trees present to meet habitat requirements.
- Investigation of potential Red-tailed Black Cockatoo habitat was carried out on one coupe at Swifts Creek (see Appendix 1 - Silver Toe)
- Mountain galaxis was identified in a stream adjacent to a coupe at Swifts Creek and the area buffered as required (see Appendix 1 - Dapples Creek).

- Requirements for the protection of Sooty Owl roost sites included in Swinglow coupe (Appendix 1) due to their potential presence.

Forest Productive Capacity

VicForests continues to use the same wood supply model based entirely on the organizations controlled and managed data. Loss of timber production area due to increased protection of LBP habitat and habitat retention in regrowth retention coupes is being taken into account. All LBP sightings require buffering reducing the harvestable area and this information is fed back into the spatial layer. Data from completed coupes, such as net harvested area and actual coupe timber yields is fed back into the database and informs future modelling.

The organization is identifying potential Ash thinning areas and verifying them in the field prior to appointing contractors.

VicForests has commenced work towards building a new integrated planning system. This system will couple the entire available State Forest estate subject to topography and coupe size restrictions. The system will also have LIDAR and logging history input. It is intended to achieve a longer term planning horizon of at least 10-15 years.

The PGP (permanent growth plot) system is going well. Most of the old plots obtained from DSE in 2011 abandoned due to the poor data quality. About 40 new plots have been established. Plots are being randomly located and established in important commercial forest types that cover large areas in a range of age cohorts such as 1926 and 1939. Plots will be required in areas subject to wildfire in the early 2000s but they will not be installed until the stands are about 20 years old. It is intended to ultimately have a rolling 5 year measurement program of about 30 plots per year. The program is being implemented in accord with VicForests Instruction - Permanent Growth Plot (PGP) Management (January 2014).

Coupe Planning and Implementation

The content of the coupe files although improved remains inconsistent. This is possibly due to the front page stating that some components "may" be included rather than stipulating the minimum expected. It was noted that where weeds were encountered a weeds assessment form was completed.

The detail now being shown on the operations map and context map continues to improve. The maps to guide regrowth retention are excellent.

The use of checklists for LBP, Rainforest and buffers demonstrates due diligence and appears to be working well.

Opportunities for Improvement

Whilst not a major issue, the following inconsistencies were noted and could be improved:

- The silviculture section of the coupe planning checklists (CPC) had not been completed on most coupe files. For CPCs to be meaningful they could be completed progressively to ensure that all requirements are met. In the CPC, silviculture is separated into 2 broad sections - site preparation and regeneration establishment. The completion of these 2 sections can be 2 to 3 years apart. Clearly the site preparation section may require progressive completion.

- The inclusion of site establishment (burning and seeding) processes is much better than in the past including details of the burn coverage but it is not always completed (proforma of burn plan only) and not always present.
- Detailed copies of coupe diary sheets were observed to be present on some files and none on other coupe files
- Coupe Monitoring Records found to be missing from one file
- Tactical planning records missing from one file
- Although identification of most special values is now high on the radar of Tactical Planners with specific focus on rainforest and montane riparian thicket. The identification of individual endangered species that appear on the DELWP overlay may now require more focus for tactical planners to ensure they have been trained in the identification of the relatively few endangered plant species that may need to be considered in harvesting and may require identification or management guidelines for these endangered plant species.

Salvage

There has been no requirement for any salvage operations to be undertaken since the previous audit.

Carbon

The report "Carbon stocks and flows in native forests and harvested wood products in SE Australia" prepared for Forest and Wood Products Australia has just been released. Vic Forests made a significant contribution to this work. The report found that that the relative differences in the greenhouse gas balance of production and conservation scenarios do not warrant policies that aim to halt native forest management for timber production. However they also concluded that there are opportunities for improvement in greenhouse gas outcomes in forest managed for production. These opportunities could be realized in the forest, in the processing of wood products and by diverting wood material to different uses at the end of life, such as biomass energy. The report also demonstrated how the utilization of local timber has a much lower carbon emission footprint than the use of alternatives such as concrete or steel.

Vic Forests is currently developing a new carbon monitoring and reporting plan for its operations. This plan is likely to monitor the carbon position in the tree component of standing forest, the impact of forest operations including emissions and the carbon position of timber products in service.

Forest Ecosystem Health

In accord with the Code of Practice (2014) VF has produced a report (November 2015) reconciling the area harvested and the area successfully regenerated since 2004. The area harvested is 46,615 ha of which 37,024 ha has regeneration finalized. The remaining 9591ha is either still being harvested, undergoing the regeneration process or awaiting final regeneration survey.

In West Gippsland 41 coupes covering an area 768ha were successfully regenerated and handed back to DELWP for regeneration verification. Three coupes needed retreatment by mechanical disturbance followed by re-sowing as small areas (less than 5ha) had inadequate stocking of seedlings. There are 41 coupes to survey for regeneration success this summer covering an area of 711ha.

Silvicultural Planning

- Silvicultural Decision Support System (SDSS) trees on coupe files are not always completed past harvesting nor are the prescriptions outlined in the decision tree necessarily consistent with what happens in the field. In some cases the decision tree used was for a different forest type to the predominant forest type.
- Silvicultural System Planning Instruction has recently been reviewed (November 2015) and is awaiting approval. It places silviculture in the context of delivering economic, social and environmental outcomes. Also SDSS for a range of forest types have been rationalized (e.g. Mt Ash and Alpine Ash have been combined) and a series of decision points introduced to justify the silvicultural system selected which can then be highlighted on the updated decision trees for each broad forest type. The decision points ensure that values other than timber production are considered in the process. This should ensure that future implementation of SDSS in coupe planning represents current practice and the concern mentioned in the dot point above is addressed.
- A paper "Growth stages of Ash forests" (June 2015) has been prepared by VicForests. This paper guides foresters in the identification of growth stages and will assist in determining silviculture, identification of old growth and identification of LBP habitat.
- A trial using a drone to assess seed crops was carried out. It was successful at identifying flowering intensity (12 months before seed maturity) and less useful for seed crop assessment as seed heads are often hidden by leaves.
- It was noted that the flowering and seed forecast for both Mt Ash and Alpine Ash for the period 2015 to 2019 has been completed. A seed assessment for Messmate and mixed species is not done as their seed crops are much more reliable.
- Operations in regrowth retention coupes directed at maintaining improved biodiversity values were seen in the field and have been particularly well done achieving retention objectives.
- Site preparation by burning has been well done with all coupes reviewed achieving greater than 90% burn coverage except one coupe that achieved 80% burn coverage (See Appendix 1). The burns inspected, in the field, have generally been well executed with only one burn scorching most retained trees. There has been an increase in hand burning, particularly in regrowth retention coupes to ensure retained areas and retained trees in the coupe are not burnt.

Chemical usage is very limited in the business and preparation for unplanned fires is well managed through DELWP. Personnel undertake specific fire training and pre fire season preparation of vehicles is mandatory. Contractors interviewed in the field were well aware of the system requirements during the fire season which commenced at the start of the audit.

Soil and Water Resources

The Operating Procedures have summarized all of the relevant catchments and requirements with Cengea advising which catchment any given coupe is located within. Instructions were viewed for the Mitchell and Hume Catchments relevant to Swifts Creek operations.

Soil assessment field sheets are in use by the Tactical Planners during reconnaissance with soil samples taken and assessed as per the procedure. Information is added to the soils database and in the recce notes and included in the coupe plan for roading consideration.

Improvements are being made in the preparation and planning of roading with an engineer being used to assist with development of a manual outlining the specifications for roads, crossings, drainage etc. This will ensure greater consistency and provide a legacy should some of the specialist roading personnel leave the business.

- VicForests has carried out a small catchments (less than 2000ha) study of the impacts of harvesting through time on water yields. The study was contracted to hydrologist Dr Leon Bren who produced the report "Production of the Model 'Outflow Change' to Assess Change in Water Yield of Small Catchments." (April 2015). The paper was reviewed by hydrologist Dr Patrick Lane. The model enables the forest manager to manipulate the time and area of harvest to maintain or change water yields. This work followed earlier concerns raised by strawberry farmers in Campbell's Creek catchment.
- Landing rehabilitation and snig track drainage works are being completed as required on field inspected coupes (See Appendix 1).
- On the coupes inspected streamside buffers were well marked and their integrity maintained. A gully crossing on Big Moose coupe was well constructed - no running water (see Appendix 1).

Cultural Values

Heritage issues were well addressed both during the planning process prior to harvesting (see Appendix 1 - Billygoat and Hack). The Cengea system is being used to track all values that have been identified and planners are required to check layers and conduct field checks of any known locations.

During the coupe marking stage, all cultural or heritage values are ground truthed and marked if appropriate. They are then included on the maps and clearly communicated to the contractors.

Checks are always undertaken with Aboriginal Affairs Victoria to ensure any registered sites are included or any that are not made publicly known.

Social and Economic Benefits

Maps have been produced in the system indicating all Eastern Victoria mill locations, contracted supply as of December 2015, direct mill employment and the species mix that is being supplied. There continues to be a focus on the supply of mixed species and ash sawlog with export pulplog shipped through Port Melbourne and sold through contracts with SEFE in Eden, Australian Paper in Maryvale and Midway in Geelong.

Skills Development

The HR department is managing the training database ELMO and the listing of completed e learning modules. Essential core competencies have been identified and there is an Organisational Development Plan for 2015-2016. Identification of any additional training needs are noted in the EPP.

Areas of Concern

- The link from the significant aspects to required competencies and training is not clear in the system.
- There was some difficulty in locating the training register at the time of the audit.
- The training modules are being currently reviewed by HR however, as there has been no background on the system and requirements of the Standard in relation to significant aspects etc., this is proving to be difficult and may lead to errors being made or components being removed that have been included due to linkages .

OHS

There is an OHS policy in place and an OHS noticeboard in each office. Contractors are subject to OHS audits and VF have had gap analyses completed on their OHS system. There is a strong focus on ensuring risks are identified and assessed with adequate control measures put in place. The system includes hazard and incident reporting, investigation etc.

Adequate provision has been made to manage working alone, driving long distances and related fatigue, appropriate PPE, dehydration, exposure, slips and trips etc. There are toolbox meetings being conducted and reported, processes for employee consultation and representation and committee meetings held to discuss metrics on improvement. A separate Designated Working Group has been set up separate from DELWP.

The region has experienced several health issues in the past with a key focus on ensuring there is early identification of any Myrtle Rust which is currently only known in nurseries in northern Victoria and Tasmania. Weeds are being recorded prior to and during harvesting with further information gathered during the regeneration surveys. Noxious weed assessments were viewed in coupe files.

The current EBA is being negotiated and will be finalised in the coming months.

Chain of Custody/Sales and Supply

The audit included a discussion with the Sales and Supply team and a visit to two customers at Powelltown and Swifts Creek to view the tracking of product and handover to the next owner. Log docketts are clearly marked with VicForests coupe numbers and are segregated in the yards until the quality is assessed.

Operations and Site Visits

Swifts Creek Office and Field

There is a small team of four personnel operating from this office including tactical planning, operations planning and operations foresters. Personnel had moved into the new DELWP offices since the previous audit. The DELWP external auditors had been through assessing the roading and at the time of audit, one harvesting contractor was in action. There has been no change to contractors and no specific incidents.

A new operations planner joined VF in March 2015 and had completed the online training and was now undergoing mentoring by local staff. Duties have included notifications to apiarists and grazing personnel. Field surveys are being completed by the biodiversity planner based in Orbost with the Black Cockatoo a key value for the area in addition to Montane Riparian Thicket. TRP amendments were being prepared for April 2016 with approval expected in April 2016. Field guides to rainforest identification were available.

New cultural heritage values had been located with a tramway on Big Moose and gold diggings opposite New Rush coupe. These had been included in the system and coupe plans/maps. Weed identification had noted English Broom in the Knock which had been sprayed by DELWP. An alert had been placed in Cengea for inclusion in coupe plans i.e. instructions for washing of vehicles as a precaution. Evidence was available that roading had been passed through AAV to ensure there were no sites that could be impacted on.

Personnel continue to be well aware of the system and partake in system improvements and enhancements. Harvest planning is being tracked on the whiteboard. The communications register is being well used to note neighbour and stakeholder communication and notifications.

Local support is provided to the Omeo show, the local football club and children in Omeo at Christmas.

Customers include Heyfield, Fennings in Bairnsdale, Dormit at Swifts Creek, Walkers in Corryong and Benalla mills.

The visit to Swifts Creek included a field tour of a variety of coupes. At Big Moose and Middle, roading and drainage had held up well following heavy rains. Bracken was observed to be overshadowing the seeding and rock had been placed to protect soil and water values and avoid excessive rutting. Access had been obtained via grazing land and the property owner was happy with the communication and arrangements put in place. Further details on the visit are noted in Appendix 1.

Opportunity for Improvement

- Consideration might be given to development of a field training log that would allow mentors to sign off on hours spent coupe marking, supervising etc.

Noojee Office and Field

This office is becoming a key hub with operational planners, regeneration, roading and harvesting foresters all based here. At the time of audit, 12 personnel were available for interview and to assist with the field visit.

A large programme of winter harvesting had been completed in the Matlock region with around 7 contractors in operation. This was due to customer demand and issues with supply. A large burning season had also taken place with around 996ha burnt and sown.

Seed collection was underway during the audit and discussions were held with the seed tester and the seed laboratory visited. The laboratory includes three incubators. The 1993 Rules for Seed Testing were being used with a change noted for *E delegatensis* requiring eight and not six weeks incubation. An A3 sheet is being used to note the sowing rates required as per the seed test instruction and the International Rules. Seed stores are now located in Erica, Noojee, Powelltown, Heyfield, Alexandra, Bairnsdale, Orbost and Bendoc.

Seed viability tests are being recorded and there is good tracking of deliveries, seed lots, required test methods, coupe location, species, elevation and aspect.

Contractor issues are well recorded in the coupe diaries and any off specification are also noted there or as a breach notice. An external consultant is being used to undertake OHS audits.

Area of Concern

- Location, use and knowledge of the current seed testing instruction will require further enhancement as squash test forms are located in the instruction but were not being

used.

Opportunities for Improvement

- The CNR Seed Management Services document is being used to note the squash test. This has been photocopied and may require adding to the system documentation.
- Calibration records for the scales and service invoices for incubators could not be located at the time of the audit suggesting documentation may require further control and recognition in the system.

Powelltown Office and Field

New personnel had started in this office with goals outlined in the EPP and a development plan in place. A list of key competencies had been outlined including coupe marking, coupe plans, log grading, rainforest and LBP training.

Local stakeholder engagement had been taking place in relation to a local mountain bike track. There has been good communication with local residents regarding specific issues, all documented in the system.

Work instructions for the Distribution section were viewed and a record of updates known. New coupes have been added to the TRP Atlas. The field visit is documented in Appendix 1.

Area of Concern

- The Monthly Haulage Schedule has not been document controlled and therefore recognised in the system documentation.

Woori Yallock District Office

A section of the DELWP office has now been refurbished to house the team previously based in Healesville. That office has been closed. Personnel in this office include the community liaison personnel, some Sales and roading and community forestry team which are likely to be included in the next audit.

Discussion were held on the success of the Open Houses and Open Tent events with notes recorded in the system. Discussions have also been held with stakeholders in the Toolangi region regarding catchment management. All communication is well documented in the communications register. There is very good participation in contractor briefings and attendance at group meetings to maintain knowledge of local activities and communicate stakeholder issues.

Opportunity for Improvement

- Phone numbers for stakeholders are being stored in the Stakeholder Database and not in the Communications register. There may be a need to cross reference or start determining which is the best location to look up contacts.

Erica Office and Field

There were three personnel available at the time of audit for interview including the Acting Senior Forester Harvesting, a tactical planner and an operational harvester. The key focus for the office

has been on regrowth retention harvesting and implementing the LBP recommendations. It was noted that personnel have been locating some different EVCs including Scented Paperbark on the streamsides.

Good notations had been placed in the communications register with regard to landholders and the Karingal Scout Camp with some modifications to activities as carting was being undertaken through there. No carting has been included on weekends or before 6am. Communications had also been recorded with local catchment authorities, Parks Victoria and various secondary colleges.

To avoid potential issues with boundaries, the coupe edge is now being well marked with a bulldozer after flagging has been placed during the coupe marking process. This also creates a fire trail around the site.

Contractor briefings are being undertaken at the start of each season with inductions noting the issuing of new Utilisation Procedures, Operating Procedures, log grading cards and safety books.

Demonstration of the use of the VF Reserves layer indicated how it is being kept up to date and is well communicated to district offices. Tactical Planning now includes a QA checklist to note all requirements have been include in the process.

Area of Concern

- It was noted in this area that the training database currently has no method for capturing on the job training and that EVC identification has also not been included.

Coupe Visits and Coupe Plan Reviews

The following coupe plans (28) were reviewed. Thirteen coupes were inspected in the field. Notes relating to each coupe below appear in Appendix 1.

Silver Toe	Dapples Creek
Billy Goat*	Big Moose*
Crown*	Barbarossa
Texas Ranger*	Pheasant Creek*
OJ*	Small Charity
Stumpy Spur	Sammy Davis
Titleist	Calloway
Fitzzy's Clavicle*	Bullseye*
Split	Bomba*
Hack	Bells Road
Swinglow	Plump*
Whitelaw	Prospect
Young Buddy	Whitelaw's Track*
St. Gwinnose*	Lower Growler's*

APPENDIX 1 – Coupe Plans checked					
Office	Coupe name	Coupe number	Species type	Area (ha)	Notes
Swift Creek	Silver Toe	743/501/0008	Foothill Mixed Species	37	Seed tree retention coupe. Tactical planning completed with peer review. Coupe Planning Checklist (CPC) and Coupe Plan completed with sign offs. Biodiversity planning checklist completed triggering a survey of Casuarina stands present as likely Red-tailed Black Cockatoo habitat. Although the Casuarina stands did not meet habitat requirements at present the larger stands were set aside. As the coupe fell within 1km of a highly valued apiary site an apiary assessment was completed. the current plan fell within planning requirements but future coupes in the vicinity may require establishment of an exclusion zone. Coupe Monitoring Records (CMR) completed with no issues identified.
	Dapples Creek	720/505/0018	Alpine Ash	28	Clearfell coupe. Tactical planning completed. Tactical planning identified the presence of extensive montane damp forest along the creek triggering a biodiversity survey carried out by Wildlife Unlimited. Mountain galaxias identified in stream leading to the establishment of a 42ha reserve with a 100metre buffer on the stream. Management requirements documented in a VicForests SMP. CPC, and coupe plan well done with sign offs. Galaxias requirements in the coupe plan. Streamside reserve protected during post logging burning by ensuring the fire was kept on the other side of a nearby access road. Coupe monitoring records and coupe diary completed. Unsigned copy of the burn plan on file. Aerial seeding completed in April 2015 with seeding map on file.
	Billy Goat*	774/503/0015	Mt Mixed Species	19	Seed tree retention coupe. Tactical planning well done with old logging tramway identified. DELWP notified and they required a 5m buffer on tramway. This requirement documented in the coupe plan. CPC completed with peer review and sign offs. Coupe plan excellent with appropriate sign offs. CMRs well documented, Silvicultural Decision

					Support System (SDSS) completed. Burn plan on file with tramway site excluded from the burn area. Seeded with Messmate only with other species expected to regenerate from seed trees. Aerial seeding map on file. There is currently heavy bracken cover little eucalypt seedling germination. The coupe may require mechanical disturbance and re-seeding.
	Big Moose*	774/503/0014	Mt Mixed Species	21	Seed tree retention coupe. Drainage depression (dry gully) crossing well done and in accord with the Code of Practice. Otherwise as for Billy Goat.
	Crown*	749/501/0001	Alpine Ash	17	Clearfell coupe. Tactical planning completed including noxious weed assessment (blackberries). CPC completed to level of coupe completion. Coupe plan completed with appropriate sign offs. Coupe only just commenced. Flora and fauna survey in November 2014 detected presence of Greater and Yellow-bellied Gliders - no specific management requirements. SDSS completed. Grazing lessee notified of proposed harvesting operations.
	Barbarossa	749/501/0007	Alpine Ash	26	Clearfell coupe. Tactical planning field check not on file (done elsewhere). Desktop analysis present. CPC completed. Coupe plan well done with appropriate sign offs. Coupe in a designated water catchment triggering a commencement after a specified date. No additional requirements. No coupe monitoring records on file.
Noojee	Texas Ranger*	464/502/0002	Mt Ash	9	Clearfell coupe. Tactical planning completed with quality assurance. CPC completed with sign offs. Checklists for buffers, hydrology and Leadbeater's Possum (LBP) habitat were implemented. Buffers were applied to rainforest and stream. LBP habitat not present but mature trees and stags in one corner of the coupe were retained and cleared around. Coupe plan completed with appropriate sign offs. CMRs well done. SDSS completed. In the field boundaries marked, exclusion area noted, mature trees retained, drainage done on completed snig tracks, and landing corded

					and matted.
	Pheasant Creek*	467/504/0006	Foothill Mixed Species	24	Seed tree retention coupe. Tactical planning completed with quality assurance and CPC completed. Coupe plan completed with appropriate sign offs. CMRs and coupe diary well done addressing issues including the need for a buffer on an unmarked stream and a tree head over the coupe boundary. Private property boundary confirmed with landowner and signed off. In the field boundaries marked, hydrology buffers implemented, snig track drainage completed, and landing rehabilitated. There is an excellent distribution of marked seed trees.
	OJ*	461/502/0004	Foothill Mixed Species	15	Seed tree retention coupe. Tactical planning completed with quality assurance and CPC completed. Coupe plan completed with appropriate sign offs. Coupe within Tanji catchment with management requirements in the coupe plan. Special Protection Zone (SPZ) for Sooty Owl external to the coupe. LBP checklist completed but not identified as LBP habitat. A few mature trees retained in the north-east corner of the coupe. Neighbours notified of proposed harvesting. SSDS completed. CMRs and coupe diary well done. In the field boundaries marked, snig track drainage completed and landing rehabilitated. Excellent distribution of marked seed trees.
	Small Charity	460/510/0001	Mt Ash	7	Clearfell plus regrowth retention coupe. Tactical planning completed with quality assurance and CPC completed. Coupe plan completed with appropriate sign offs. Telstra fibre optic cable runs parallel to the coupe - excluded. Visual screen (50m) required adjacent to Baw Baw Road. Checklist for buffers done and outcome applied. Retained area includes habitat retention (14.2ha), hydrology buffer (2.6ha) and visual buffer (1.6ha). CMRs excellent. SDSS completed. Burn plan well documented with burn achieving 90% coverage. Burn map on file. Aerial seeding map completed.

	Stumpy Spur	463/502/0005	Foothill Mixed Species	27	Clearfell coupe. Tactical planning completed with quality assurance. CPC completed. Coupe plan completed with appropriate sign offs. Modelled LBP habitat nearby but external to the coupe. LBP habitat checklist completed with additional prescriptions required. CMRs well done. A few minor boundary incursions due to falling trees or branches - documented in Coupe diary. Burn plan and burn map completed and well documented. Burn achieved 90% coverage. Aerial seeding with Messmate with the map on file.
	Sammy Davis	469/502/0008	Foothill mixed species	27	Seed tree retention coupe. Tactical planning completed with quality assurance. CPC completed. Coupe plan completed with sign offs. Regeneration from the 1970s at the northern end of the coupe retained for habitat. Coupe diary and CMRs well done, SDSS completed. Burn plan and burn map well documented. Burn achieved 95% coverage. Aerial seeding map on file. Coupe seeded with Messmate and Mt. Ash.
	Titleist	461/510/0014	Shining Gum predominant	9	Clearfell coupe. Tactical planning completed but not peer reviewed. CPC completed. Coupe plan completed with appropriate sign offs. Hydrology and rainforest buffers marked on Operations map. Coupe diary and CMRs well documented. A few minor boundary incursions. SDSS completed. Burn plan and burn map completed but burn outcome not documented. Aerially seeded with Shining Gum and Mt. Ash - map on file.
Noojee	Calloway	461/510/0011	Mt. Ash predominant	24	Clearfell coupe. Tactical planning completed with quality assurance. CPC completed except silviculture section. Coupe plan completed with appropriate sign offs. Habitat patch excluded from coupe - shown on Operation map. CMRs and Coupe Diary well done. Two minor boundary incursions. SDSS completed. Burn plan and burn map well documented. Burn had a few minor spot-overs that were blacked out. Aerially seeded with Mt Ash and Shining Gum - map on file.

Powelltown	Fitzy's Clavicle*	347/511/0002	Foothill Mixed Species	17	Seed tree retention coupe. Tactical planning completed with quality assurance. Noxious weed assessment completed due to presence of blackberry. CPC completed except silviculture. Coupe plan well done with sign offs. LBP habitat checklist completed - no pre-1900 trees present and no management action required. CMRs and coupe diary wee done. SDSS completed. Burn plan and map completed. Burn coverage 95%. Aerially seeded with Messmate - seeding map on file. Boundaries marked. Snig track drainage completed. Burn was hot killing most retained trees. Messmate seedlings present.
	Bullseye*	345/503/0005	Mt Ash predominant	9	Clearfell with regrowth retention coupe. Tactical planning well done with quality assurance. CPC completed except silviculture. LBP habitat checklist completed. A large number of pre 1900 trees found in SW corner of coupe - area excluded from the coupe. Buffer checklist completed leading to rainforest exclusions from the harvest area. Coupe plan and Operational map well done with sign offs. Regrowth retention met requirements of the VicForests instruction and looks good. Field investigation of an alleged breach of Zone 1A LBP habitat showed no evidence of a breach. Liaison with ANU regarding harvesting near an LBP monitoring site carried out. CMRs and coupe diary well done. SDSS completed. Burn map completed with burn achieving 94% coverage. No burn map on file. Coupe aerially seeded with Mt Ash and Messmate - map on file. Boundaries marked. Snig track drainage completed. Messmate and MT ash seedlings scattered - still early.
	Split	469/501/0004	Foothill Mixed Species	24	Seed tree retention coupe. Tactical planning completed with quality assurance. CPC completed. LBP habitat checklist completed. Insufficient mature, hollow bearing trees present to warrant further exclusions from harvest. Individual mature trees to be retained. Coupe plan and Operational map well done with sign offs. CMRs completed. SDSS completed.

	Bomba*	348/517/0007	Mt Ash predominant	28	Clearfell coupe. Tactical planning well done with quality assurance. CPC completed. LBP habitat assessment completed - no action required. Coupe plan well done with sign offs. Excellent context and operational maps. Alert to the possible presence of Notched Phebalium - DELWP to be notified if found. CMRS and Coupe diary well done. SDSS completed. Burn plan and burn map completed - 80% burn coverage. Aerially seeded with Mt Ash - map on file. Regeneration area on steep upper slope not scorched in burn. Landing rehabilitated and snig track drainage completed. Good distribution of Mt Ash seedlings.
Erica	Hack	487/506/0011	Foothill Mixed Species	35	Seed tree retention coupe. Tactical planning done with quality assurance. CPC completed. Coupe plan well done with sign offs. Catchment restrictions relating to harvesting time and altitude. Old tramway external to coupe. Coupe diary and CMRs well done. SDSS completed. Burn map on file but burn yet to be carried out.
	Bells Road	480/503/0003	Mt Ash predominant	12	Clearfell coupe. Tactical planning well done with quality assurance. LBP Zone 1A habitat external to the gross coupe area. COPC completed. Coupe plan well done with sign offs up to provisional clearance. Coupe within Thompson catchment seasonal closures and no harvesting on slopes greater than 30 degrees. Buffer and LBP habitat checklists completed - no management actions required. CMRs and coupe diary well done. Three minor boundary breaches. SDSS completed.
	Swinglow	317/508/0005	Alpine Ash predominant	21	Clearfell plus regrowth retention coupe. Tactical planning well done with quality assurance. Potential rainforest to be further investigated. Harvesting to be excluded from the Yarra catchment. CPC completed to pre-harvest stage but harvesting has been completed. Coupe plan well done with sign offs. Boundary of Yarra catchment/Yarra Ranges NP signed off with Parks, Victoria. Requirements for possible Sooty Owl roost sites and rainforest in the coupe plan. Regrowth retention met requirements. SDSS completed.

					While clearing campsite on access road external to the coupe there was a minor incursion into the National Park (8mx14m). Investigation completed. In future all campsites to be approved by VicForests.
	Plump*	480/505/0014	Mt Mixed Species	14	Clearfell coupe. Tactical planning completed with quality assurance. Coupe within Thompson catchment. CPC completed. Coupe plan well done with sign offs. Rainforest checklist completed but all rainforest species in areas less than 0.2ha - no further action. LBP habitat checklist completed with 5 large trees identified with majority excluded from the coupe. Any further large trees found to be retained and protected. CMRs completed. SDSS completed. Boundaries marked. Snig tracks drained and landing rehabilitated. Regeneration burn yet to be carried out.
	Whitelaw	480/504/0023	Alpine Ash predominant	8	Clearfell coupe. Tactical planning completed with quality assurance. CPC completed. Coupe plan well done with sign offs. Thompson River catchment restrictions on harvesting applied. Rainforest identified as present and 40m buffer applied. Written request to DSE (now DELWP) to road through rainforest buffer. LBP habitat identified and excluded from coupe. Baw Baw Berry records external to coupe. CMRs completed. Some windblown trees fell across coupe boundary. SDSS completed. Aerial seeding map on file but no burn plan on file.
	Prospect	484/504/0006	Foothill Mixed Species	37	Clearfell coupe. Tactical planning completed with quality assurance. CPC done up to harvesting completion (not done nor was the silviculture section). Coupe plan completed with sign offs. Excellent context map detailing values in adjacent SPZ. All pre 1900 Ash trees to be retained if found. Sooty Owl requirements detailed if roosting site found. Tramway requires 5m buffer if found. Sign off on SPZ boundary to ensure no incursion. CMRs well done. SDSS completed. Burn plan and burn map completed. Burn achieved 97% coverage. Aerially seeded with Messmate.

Young Buddy	483/501/0014	Foothill Mixed Species	16	Clearfell coupe. Tactical planning completed with quality assurance. CPC completed except silviculture. Coupe plan well done with sign offs. Fire salvage prescriptions applied. Habitat trees retained. CMRs completed. One tree across coupe boundary. SDSS completed. Burn plan completed - 990% burn coverage. Aerially seeded with Messmate and Mt Ash.
Whitelaw's Track*	480/504/0026	Mt Ash predominant	8	Clearfell with regrowth retention. Tactical planning well done with quality assurance. CPC completed except silviculture. Coupe plan well done with sign offs. Rainforest checklist completed - two areas identified as rainforest, excluded from harvesting and buffered. LBP checklist completed - pre 1900 trees identified near the Whitelaw Tree which were excluded from the coupe and buffered. CMRs and coupe diary well done. Two additional pre 1900 trees identified during coupe marking - both tree retained and protected. Although the coupe is 70% Mt Ash the Alpine Ash SDSS was used. Boundaries well marked. Landing rehabilitated and snig tracks drained. Buffers well done. Regrowth retention areas retained in accord with requirements. Coupe will be hand burnt in 2016 to ensure good control and protection of retained areas.
St. Gwinnose*	481/501/0012	Mt Ash predominant	13	Clearfell with regrowth retention. Tactical planning completed with quality assurance. CPC completed except silviculture. Coupe plan well done with sign offs. SPZ boundary marked in the field with sign off (DELWP). Special Management Plan for scenic landscape values along St Gwinnear Road - screen required. Regrowth retention harvesting plan map on file and the prescription well implemented. Rainforest checklist completed - not present. LBP checklist completed - no pre 1900 trees on coupe. CMRs completed. SDSS done for Alpine Ash when the coupe is 80% Mt Ash. Burn plan completed - 96% coverage achieved. Burn hand lit from above with a good result. Aerially seeded with Mt Ash and a smaller amount of Shining Gum - map present. Boundaries

					marked. Snig track drainage completed and landing rehabilitated. Some Ash seedlings present.
	Lower Growlers*	483/504/0025	Mt Ash predominant	8	Clearfell with regrowth retention. Tactical planning section not on coupe file but management issues present. CPC completed except silviculture. Coupe plan well done with sign offs. Operations map and Regrowth retention maps well done. Rainforest checklist completed - not present. LBP habitat checklist completed - Zone 1A habitat identified and excluded from the coupe. Roading access plan completed with specific instructions also recorded in the coupe diary. CMRs completed. SDSS completed Burn plan on file (no map) - burn achieved 95% coverage. Boundaries well marked. Integrity of the SPZ and regrowth retention maintained. Drainage of snig tracks completed.