



New Zealand Institute of Forestry — President's Report to 1998 AGM

Early in 1994 the NZIF Council undertook a census survey of its membership. The objective of the study was to systematically explore the needs and perceptions of its members with respect to professional development and the goals and objectives of the Institute.

The survey achieved a very high response rate of about 80% — an indication of the interest and supportiveness of the membership.

Last February a strategy session of the NZIF Council reviewed progress against the conclusions and recommendations of the survey.

Significant progress has been made in a number of areas, including:

- Mission and Objectives.
- Policy Formation.
- Revised Code of Ethics.
- Adoption of a formal Registration Scheme.
- Promotion of Continuing Professional Development.

However, the structure and level of activity of the Institute at branch level continues to be patchy, and the Institute is not yet effectively marketing and promoting itself internally and externally. This is not to down-play the efforts of many branch committee members and chairpersons in organising interesting meetings and local seminars such as the very successful seminar organised by the Otago section last year.

While Institute membership has grown 30% in the four years since the survey, our numbers are still well short of what they could be. The reality is that a relatively small number of the potential membership of the Institute supports and underwrites the valuable work carried out by the Council and its various working groups, on their behalf.

Professionalism

The year past has seen further consolidation in the professionalism of the Institute and its members, with the implementation and consolidation of the Registration Scheme; further development of the Forest Valuation Standards, and publication

of the Forestry Investment Information Standards and draft Indigenous Forest Policy. These high-quality documents are a credit to the considerable effort and expertise provided by the working group convenors and their teams. The revisions to the Code of Ethics are also intended to support a higher level of professionalism amongst Institute members.

With professionalism also comes a duty to uphold standards and provide guidance. In the year past, the NZIF Registration Board has pursued investigation of a complaint against a member consultant, and Council itself commissioned an investigation of a matter of concern. The President was also requested to act in recommending the appointment of an arbitrator to a dispute.

Finances

The healthy financial position of the Institute has been eroded somewhat in the past year due to the (expected) start-up costs of the registration scheme and the lack of a profitable conference in 1997. The position will improve with prudent management of funds through the next year or so, but again underlines the relatively narrow membership base.

Council

The 1996/98 Council has again worked tirelessly through the past year, in conducting the business of the Institute and in convening or contributing to a number of important working groups. This annual meeting is the only real opportunity for Councillors to report on their various areas of activity, and for members to recognise the significant efforts on their behalf.

I would like to record my sincere appreciation for the support of Council members in the year past, and in particular to recognise the contribution of those who will be leaving Council at this time: Peter Olsen, Mike Orchard, Tim Thorpe, and Colin O'Loughlin.

We are fortunate that a solid core of Council is happy to continue to lead the Institute forward and I welcome the new nominations.

I shall be standing down after six years on Council, two as President. It has been a stimulating and broadening experience for a humble engineer and I thank members for the opportunity.

John Galbraith
President

(Slightly amended — Ed.)

Obituary

Rex Monigatti

Members will be saddened to learn that their publisher of 'NZ Forestry', C. Rex Monigatti, died on the 12th May in Wellington. Although Rex was not a member of the Institute he did sterling service to it through its production — many consider that the journal is one of the major benefits they obtain from their membership. Rex took over as publisher at the time the new format was introduced some 12 years ago, and in those 12 years always had the journal out on time. He assisted greatly in developing its style and helped us to move towards the inclusion of colour and advertising. Rex made many of the contacts with advertisers and developed a professional relationship with

many of the big companies who have advertised regularly. Rex also was the publisher of the Tree Grower.

At the time of his death Rex was in the middle of putting together this issue. The current and past editors will miss Rex's insight, assistance and friendly relaxed manner. We knew we could always rely on him when the pressure was on. I am also grateful that his daughter Debbie Monigatti has been able to help us at such short notice.

Our condolences and sympathy go out to all the family. Rex is survived by his wife Bobbie and their two children.

Don Mead