



Press Release

19 May, Friday 2017

Embargoed until 10pm Friday 19 May, 2017 – please respect this with confidentiality

Brian Deam was a popular winner of the Eastland Wood Council Skilled Professional of the Year at the 2017 awards.

Nearly 500 people packed Showgrounds Event Centre last night to applaud his efforts and the others who were honoured for their work in the local forestry industry.

It is the eighth year the Eastland Wood Council Forestry Awards have been run, and again they attracted some stellar entries.

EWC chief executive Prue Younger paid tribute to the thousands involved in the industry that means much to the wider region.

“These awards are a chance to celebrate the efforts of those out there doing it, but are also an important part of the on-going promotion of the industry and recognition of the continual upskilling of our workforce,” she said.

While there had been, huge inroads made across the industry, there was still plenty to work on.

Chief judge Julian Kohn said that while the region faced challenges around infrastructure, the industry was in very good health from a commercial point of view.

“We are moving into a very strong growth phase from a harvesting perspective,” said Kohn. “A lot of the plantings from the early to late 1990s are now coming up to a harvestable age, and when you look at that in conjunction with strong development in the Chinese market and to a lesser extent, the Indian and domestic onshore markets, it augers well for the future.”

The stars had lined up for supply and demand.

“We face issues around infrastructure and specifically skilled labour for local roading.

There is a serious constraint on the size of the port and capacity, which means the costs are particularly high. However, the industry is working hard alongside the port, as it has done for some years, to improve the efficiency there.”

Those number had improved dramatically over the past six years, but Kohn said there was still a long way to go until it became as cost effective as many of the other ports around New Zealand.

Finding good skilled labour was also a challenge.

“The perception of forestry as an employment opportunity for a lot of young New Zealanders is not a positive one, so it is a harder task to attract people into a labour force competing against other industries that also faced labour shortages.”

But Kohn said the opportunities for those in the forestry were huge, with jobs spanning administration to harvesting, planning, plotting, engineering, management, planting and more.

“We have been at a critical point for labour for three or four years already, but somehow the logs are still going out over the wharf and we find the people. Seven or eight years ago when we were doing 700,000 tonnes a year we were having the same conversations.”

Now, the district produces around 2.8 million tonnes annually, and over the next five years – subject to market and infrastructure capacity – Kohn expects that to be “north of 3.7 million tonnes”.

Training Excellence

NZ Apprentice of the Year	Angus Fraser – Blackstump Logging
Trainee of the Year	Kevin Leopard – Down n Out Logging
Training Company/Contractor Of the Year	Ian & Marcella Diack – Diack Contractors

Skilled Professionals

Forestry Excellence	Jesse Kapene – TKT Limited
Roading Excellence	Brian Deam – Big Bark Loading
Harvesting Excellence	Matthew MacIntosh – Big Bark Loading
Distribution Excellence	Richard Bronlund – STS Transport
Wood Processing Excellence	NO AWARD
Breaker Out Excellence	Tom Wehi – Blackstump Logging
Faller Excellence	Steve Maynard – Blackstump Logging
Extraction & Skidwork Excellence	Phillip Cossgrove – Raywood Contracting

Industry Development Awards

Contractor of the Year	Blackstump Logging
Outstanding H & S Management	Eddie Te Kahika – Kimberly Contractors
Outstanding Environmental Management	Patrick Bethel & Wayne Trafford – Hikurangi Forest Farms

Outstanding Regional Service Turanga Ararau
Performance

**Eastland Wood Council Skilled Brian Deam – Big Bark Loading
Forestry Professional of the Year**

Check out our website at: www.eastlandwood.co.nz for full results.

ends.

For more information please contact –
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