

Forestry for life Logistics



Eastland Wood Council

PORT LOGISTICS – it's all about the logs

FOR people passing by the Gisborne Port and looking into the yard, it must appear a reasonably simple operation going on behind the fences.

Logs are taken off the trucks and put into rows and then at some point put back onto trucks and loaded onto the log ships.

What is not seen is the work that goes on behind the scenes by almost 200 people to track every log that enters the port, organise the sale and payment of the logs, manage the loading of the ships safely and accurately during their time in Gisborne and ensure everyone involved in the process gets paid — which in the end is why the forestry industry does this.

When you consider almost 3 million tonnes or over 6 million logs go through the Port annually, it is a big task.

Technology is at the forefront of all this work where pieces of paper are rarely seen, and most people working on the Port are continuously collecting and transferring data between each other with the help of various wands, scanners, tablets, computers and smartphones.

At the centre of all this activity are two companies, ISO and C3, that control the flow of logs through the yard and onto the ships. They have two main roles; The first is to 'marshall' the logs on the Port where they receive and store the logs, and then the work of stevedores who load the logs onto the ships.

The process starts before a logging truck even arrives at the port when the truck drivers "pre-notify" their arrival with a photo and details of their load which is sent several hours before arrival by a mobile phone app. This allows the marshalling company to prepare tickets, and set up their computer system with the details of the load to ensure the truck is processed as quickly as possible.

On arrival at the Port, each log has a



ticket stapled to it with a unique number and bar-code which will identify the log all the way to its destination at a port in Asia. The log will be measured to give its size in cubic metres and this information is recorded along with the details around its grade, length, where it came from, who logged and transported it.

Each load is then assigned for storage in a specific row on port where it is unloaded. Because the marshalling company has to know exactly where every log is at all times, the load has to be "confirmed" by the loader operator and then a number of checks are carried out in subsequent days by scanning rows for individual logs by the "Yardies" to confirm each log's actual location.

While this activity is being carried out, the company exporting the logs is busy working on the sale and transportation of the logs. About 6 weeks before a ship arrives a decision is made to hire a ship and arrange the sale of the shipment.

These are big commitments made by the exporters, where the cost of hiring the ship is close to \$1 million and the value of the cargo around \$4m in today's market. There are about 10 ships being loaded in Gisborne most months of the year.

About four days before a ship arrives to load the logs, it needs to be identified to match the requirements of the sales contracts for the shipment. This will be a combination of up to 25 different log grades and lengths in specific volumes and each log has to be cleaned and pass inspection to meet the bio-security regulations of the importing country.

Once the ship has been tied up at the berth and loading commences, each log that is loaded on the ship then has to be accounted for, so a process of photo counting and ticket scanning takes place at shipside to ensure the identity of each log loaded and accuracy on where it is on the ship. Gisborne is the second largest log exporting port in New Zealand and

logs make up about 98 percent of the total volume going through the port. It is also the most efficient log-loading port in New Zealand, and probably the world. This is due to a combination of large logs and a port that is specifically set up to load log ships.

Pacific Forest Products (PFP) is a privately owned New Zealand company that specialises in the export of logs.

PFP exports about 4 to 5 million tonnes of logs annually out of New Zealand.

Peter Clayton is the vessel manager, having worked for PFP for the past 14 years. His principal role is the planning of PFP's shipping requirements out of New Zealand, which is about 14 to 16 ships per month taking logs from five ports around New Zealand.

He also looks after the Gisborne port operation where PFP purchases around 1.4 million tonne of logs annually, and ships about 2 million tonne in total in partnership with Aratu Forests Ltd.

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2019 Notice of Election to FGLT Board

Nominations for board members are called for. Two are to represent forests larger than 1000 hectares and one member for forests less than 1000 hectares.

Nominations close 5pm Friday 4 October.

Go to Forestvoice.org.nz for a nomination form, or email glen.mackie@nzfoa.org.nz

www.fglt.org.nz

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Work Culture and people stand out

ANOTHER big part of the loading efficiency is the high level of skill and work culture of our local work-force which is not matched anywhere else in New Zealand.

Tahurangi Moana is one of the shift managers working on the stevedoring operation. She runs and manages a 12 hour shift each day a ship is loading in Gisborne. It is the ultimate job in multitasking where every log being loaded by the four ship cranes has to be tracked in real time. This is done while dealing with ship officers, exporters, ship agents and supercargoes, and managing the 16 staff that work on her shift at "shipside".

Tahu has an interesting background having worked in hospitality most of her working life. She joined ISO on the stevedoring side of the business in 2016 as a slinger and tally-person before spending eight months as the driver of

an digger in the hold of the ship stowing the logs.

She has been working as a shift manager or foreman since then and enjoys the challenge that every shift brings with changing ships and people she deals with each day and a different set of problems to be solved. A big part of the enjoyment of the job is the "family vibe" that is part of the work culture amongst the wharf staff.

They often work in difficult conditions, so having workmates to rely on helps make the work easier and more rewarding.

In the future, Tahu would like to become more involved and specialised in health and safety management. In order to achieve this, she has started to attend courses organised by ISO for their staff.

Sam Harrison is the vessel planner for ISO in Gisborne, working on the

marshalling side of the business. She has the responsibility of co-ordinating the selection and preparation of the logs to be loaded on each ship. It is a job that requires the ability to have good data management and communication skills, along with an attention to detail to avoid costly errors.

She has been doing a vessel planning role for the past seven years in Gisborne, with some time taken out to work on Log Marshalling IT development and maintenance systems in Mount Maunganui, plus some regular overseas travel.

Sam takes the "loading instructions" from the log exporter on what they want to load on an individual ship and selects the rows of logs that are to be loaded. An important part of the job is to ensure the logs meet the biosecurity regulations for the importing country, so she organises the logs to be scraped of dirt and then

brings in a biosecurity inspector who inspects each log to confirm it is fit for export. Any reject logs (usually due to rot, or insect damage) must be removed and are not able to be exported.

Once the logs have been selected and pass inspection, she prepares a data file, which is sent to the stevedores and only logs on this data file can be exported on that specific ship.

On completion of loading, Sam then confirms the final volume of logs loaded and helps create the ship manifest. This is a legal and financial document that provides proof of what has been loaded on the ship and forms the basis of what the ship owner and exporter will be paid.

She enjoys the challenging and busy nature of the job and working in a team environment with good people around her. The only downside are the late-night calls if there is a data issue that has bought the ship loading to a stop.



Generation Programme trainees Mahuta, Billy and tutor Henry, getting a chance to see the logistics side of forestry operations and careers.



Tahu says "I'm just checking off the completion of another log ship in Gisborne".



Sam checking on the scaling of a load going through the check-point.



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The Gisborne Herald

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