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HEALTH | SAFETY | ENVIRONMENT



Review of Forest Industry Safety Council's Strategic Priorities – 2024: Summary Report

Organisational Performance Review

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Summary of Findings

In the ten years since it was established, FISC has undertaken a range of initiatives supporting the sector to improve its health and safety performance. There has been a reduction in forest fatalities over this time, and some reduction in serious injuries. Serious injury rates have improved in comparison to other high-risk sectors, but remain high. Different methods of data collection make comparisons with other jurisdictions challenging; however benchmarking tends to show health and safety performance is better in Australia and British Columbia.

FISC is a respected and highly committed industry body. It has strength through its representation and has the potential to make further gains by sharpening its focus, extending its reach, and strengthening its sector leadership role.

We have found that its strategy, though sound, is not sufficiently specific and targeted to enable it to focus its effort on the things that matter most. Without this, it is difficult for FISC to explain its value proposition. Without a clear value proposition, strong sector leadership is more challenging, as is the case of sustainable funding connected to outcomes.

We are recommending FISC refresh its strategy, so it is laser-focussed and clearly demonstrates FISC's value proposition. It should aim for greater reach and influence, be clear about data needs, including lead indicators for harm, and support the case for sustainable funding connected to outcomes.

We found that FISC's initiatives supported effective health and safety risk management within forestry, and were generally perceived as contributing to better health and safety outcomes and sector capability. However, intervention logic needs to be strengthened and evaluation of the connection between initiatives and outcomes more consistently undertaken. Product development, operations and training dominate the work programme, other levers such as advocacy and driving accountability are used less often.

We are making recommendations to strengthen FISC's approach to designing its work programme and initiatives. There needs to be more consistent use intervention logic, initiatives need to be clearly connected to strategy, mutually supporting and prioritised. We also recommend FISC use a broader range of levers in its initiatives – including an increased focus on leadership, influence, driving accountability and advocacy.

The Safetree certification scheme is an important product. It has had success but needs to build on this to extend its reach. To do this, it needs to evolve to reflect the different needs of sector participants. It also consumes a significant proportion of FISC's time and operational capacity. This may not be the best use of resources for a sector leadership body, and risks diverting it from its core purpose.

We are recommending FISC evolve its Safetree certification scheme. In doing so, we think it should consider differentiated classes of certification. It should also explore alignment with the Log Transport Safety Council scheme, and separation of its operation.

There are other initiatives we view as important which require ongoing focus and effort. Strengthening worker engagement, participation and representation should lead to improved health and safety outcomes. -Effective Māori engagement is critical to expand the reach of FISC's initiatives, and safety by design and supply chain initiatives can support a whole of system approach to reducing harm. While there have been some gains made in these areas, the work needs to be focussed and driven to have more impact.

Our recommendations include that FISC re-invigorate and refresh initiatives in safety by design and supply chain reach. It should also seek to learn from its Toroawhi pilot to design new WEPR initiatives, and strengthen Māori engagement, partnering with others to expand reach and influence.

FISC's membership is highly committed to its goals and puts considerable voluntary effort into making it successful. However, we found that the Council has retreated from a core leadership focus. It straddles strategy and operations, and has not achieved the breadth of representation it is intended to have. It is not always clear about its role and where it should focus its effort.

One of our key recommendations is that FISC re-confirm its core role as both a governance and a leadership body. We think it should consider different operational delivery models - through an operational group, other partners, or both.

As a governance entity, we recommend FISC prioritise worker representation on the Council. It should also prioritise Māori representation, working with Ngā Pou a Tāne. -We also recommend that FISC extend its representation to include the Log Transport Safety Council, and that it consider partnerships with other sector bodies across the supply chain.

The strategy refresh will be an important reflection point for FISC, and we have high ambitions for it. While the strategy refresh is underway, we recommend clarifying expectations and communication flows between the Council and OAG. Following the strategy re-fresh, we recommend undertaking a capability review to ensure FISC is effectively positioned to deliver on it.

Review terms of reference and our approach

The goal of the review is to provide a comprehensive and definitive “where are we at and where do we go now”, to inform the overall approach to Health and Safety in forestry for the next 10 years including what continues, what stops, what changes and what starts.

The scope of our work has been to consider:

- Does the current work programme and safety initiatives of FISC align with its current strategic priorities – (Our Strategy on a Page)
- Does the current work programme fulfil the recommendations of the 2018 Cosman Parkes Review Report
- How effective have the FISC safety initiatives been in reducing fatalities, serious harm or enhancing skills and capabilities within the forestry workforce.
- Explore benchmarking NZ Health & Safety Performance in forestry with the nominated peer group of Australia and British Columbia forestry sectors.
- In preparation for the next 5 years, what, if any, are the gaps or refinements in our strategic priorities, that FISC should anticipate and reflect in its work programme.
- Are the identified critical safety risks within the forestry sector still a robust and complete set.
 - tree felling (including branches and spars from above)
 - breaking out / extraction
 - driving vehicles
 - processing on the skid site
 - repair and maintenance
- What are the positive attributes of FISC that could be leveraged to extend its current operating scope to include the log transport and wood processing sectors i.e. a broader supply chain approach. What would be the advantages and barriers to FISC advocating for this approach with adjacent sectors.

How we have conducted the review

We have undertaken a review of key documents and literature, set out in Appendix one. We also conducted interviews with the following stakeholders:

- Members of the Council
- Members of the Council’s Operational Advisory Group
- Representatives of key sector leadership groups outside of the Council (Construction Health and Safety New Zealand, Log Transport Safety Council, Ngā Pou o Tāne, New Zealand Institute of Safety Management, New Zealand Institute of Forestry, Safer Farms, and Wood Processors and Manufacturers Association)
- Representatives from key government agencies (WorkSafe, ACC, and Te Uru Rakau)
- Mike Cosman (Cosman Parkes)

Our Recommendations

	What continues, stops, changes or starts	Recommendations
Strategy	<p>What changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The strategy is refreshed 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> We recommend FISC’s strategy be refreshed so that it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is laser focussed and clearly demonstrate FISC’s value proposition Aims for greater reach and influence across the supply chain Includes targets Is clear about data needs, including lead indicators for harm Supports the case for sustainable funding connected to outcomes.
Work Programme	<p>What continues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work on safety by design <p>What changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent use of intervention logic Use of a broader range of levers Evolution of Safetree Partnering for greater Māori engagement Build on programmes to support WEPPR 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> We recommend work programme initiatives consistently use intervention logic, be clearly connected to strategy, be mutually supporting, and prioritised. We recommend FISC use a broader range of levers in its initiatives – including increasing the use of leadership, influence, driving accountability and advocacy. We recommend FISC evolve Safetree certification – it should offer graduated classes of certification, alignment with the Log Transport Safety Council scheme, and separation of ownership from operations. We recommend FISC re-invigorate and refresh initiatives in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety by design and supply chain reach Learn from Toroawhi to design next stage of WEPR initiatives Māori engagement, partnering with others to expand reach and influence.

<p>Governance and scope</p>	<p>What continues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WorkSafe retained as member of Council <p>What changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FISC confirms core role as governance body focussed on sector leadership • Worker representation on the Council is prioritised • Māori representation on Council is re-invigorated <p>What starts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of different operational delivery models • Extend membership to Log Transport Safety Council • Consideration of partnerships across supply chain 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. We recommend FISC re-confirm its core role as governance body focussed on sector health and safety leadership. 7. We recommend FISC consider different operational delivery models - through an operational entity, other partners or both. 8. We recommend FISC support and prioritise worker representation on the Council. 9. We recommend FISC re-invigorate Māori representation on Council, working with Ngā Pou a Tāne. 10. We recommend extending FISC's membership to include a Log Transport Safety Council representative, and that it consider partnerships with other sector bodies across the supply chain. 11. We recommend retaining and better leveraging WorkSafe membership on FISC. 12. While the strategy refresh is underway, we recommend refreshing expectations and communication flows between the Council and OAG. 13. Following the strategy re-fresh, we recommend undertaking a capability review.
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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Document Review

The documents below were reviewed by HSE Global to assist with developing a detailed understanding of the current state of health and safety across the business. Documentation included, but was not limited to the following:

FISC 2023 and 2024 Work Programmes

FISC dashboard reports - last 5 years

IRIS database quarterly reports – last 5 years

Worksafe quarterly reports – last 5 years

ACC Quarterly reports – last 5 years

FISC Annual Reports - last 5 years

Work health and safety: An overview of harm and risk in Aotearoa New Zealand 2024, WorkSafe New Zealand

Programme/Initiatives Review and evaluation reports - last 5 years

Key insights from the evaluation of the Toroawhi Initiative, Litmus, April 2021

Forest Industry Safety Council (FISC) Evaluation of ACC-funded projects – Projects delivered from July 2019 to June 2022. Litmus, February 2023

FISC Case Studies

Project FutureSafe Aotearoa - Health, Safety and Wellbeing New Zealand. FutureSafe Aotearoa Initiative, July 2024

FutureSafe Aotearoa & Partnering for Value. FutureSafe Aotearoa Initiative, February 2024

State of a Thriving Nation. Business Leaders Health & Safety Forum, August 2024

WorkSafe Data Centre, accessed 21/11/2024

WorkSafe Forestry Sector Plan, August 2024

Tū Mai Rā! Te Whānau o Tāne - Growing the total economic value of our national Māori forest. Ngā Pou a Tāne, 2024

Forestry safety – Impact of economic changes on safety practice across the forestry sector. BERL, March 2020

Forest Industry Health and Safety Data Intelligence Review. Marketview Ltd, July 2021

WorkSafe British Columbia Website: Industry health and safety data, accessed 21/11/2024.

British Columbia Forest Safety Council Website, accessed 21/11/2024

A Report and Action Plan to Eliminate Deaths and Serious Injuries in British Columbia's Forests
– Final Report of the Forest Safety Task Force, January 19, 2004

The official website of the Government of British Columbia, Forestry. Accessed 21/11/2024

Safework Australia datasets, website accessed 21/11/2024

Website of Australian Government, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry –
Australia's forests – overview. Accessed 21/11/2024

Australia's State of the Forests Report 2018, Department of Agriculture and Water Resources.

Forestry and wood processing labour force survey, NZIER report to Ministry for Primary
Industries, July 2021

Facts & Figures 2022/23, New Zealand Plantation Forest Industry. Forest Owners Association

Websites of SafeWork New South Wales, WorkSafe Queensland, Northern Territory WorkSafe,
Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety, Government of Western
Australia