



ForestFitTM

NATIONAL FOREST SERVICES COMMERCIAL MANAGEMENT

DRAFT_DEC2024



Australian
Forest
Products
Association



ForestFit™ Standard

Certification to the ForestFit™ Standard provides assurance, backed by an annual, independent third-party assessment, that forest service businesses have implemented effective systems, procedures, and practices.

The ForestFit™ Standard utilises the requirements outlined by international standards ISO 9001, 14001 and 45001 and is specifically contextualised for active forest operations.

ForestFit™ criteria are benchmarked for alignment to relevant contracting business criteria within the recognised Australian Forestry Certifications – the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and Responsible Wood (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification, PEFC).

Australian Forest Industries ForestFit™ MOU

The development and adoption of a national approach has been formalised within the Australian Forest Industries ForestFit™ Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

Piloting the draft National CFSCM

The pilot is about the relationship between the Grower and their partner forest services business and the willingness to define a different approach.

Project and pilot background

The National Certified Forest Services Commercial Management (CFSCM) Steering Committee (SC), was convened by Growers and is supported by AFCA, to help drive long-term industry transformation, including:

- Define the approach to commercial management approach for active forest operations.
- Identify how Grower cost savings from reduced assessment activities and management of certified forest services businesses (FSBs) will be recognised and incentivised.
- Explore alignment and streamlining of current audit arrangements with ForestFit™ Certification.
- Cooperate and work together to maximise efforts and resources.
- Share consistent information and messages.

The SC is comprised of 11 Grower representatives.

Formerly the National OAP

The project was formerly referred to as the National Optimal Auditing Pathway. Throughout the process of clarifying due diligence and compliance roles and responsibilities, the SC recommended the project name be updated to reflect the scope of work and outcomes.

Joint pilot participation

Participants can join the DRAFT National CFSCM pilot at any time.

The pilot supports FSBs to become ForestFit™ certified while testing and validating the Grower and certified FSB requirements through commercial and operational management, including acknowledgment that:

- Each party is a key stakeholder of the other party.
- Each party is integral to each other's future business viability and success.
- ForestFit™ certified FSBs are responsible for all site operational assessment activities and incident investigations.

Beyond the pilot

The data captured throughout the pilot provides the baseline and framework for ongoing data capture beyond the conclusion of the pilot in June 2025.

This enables the industry to have cross referenced data rather than anecdotal information.

Pilot benefits

Increasing and maximising efficiencies with businesses certified to a national Standard

ForestFit™

Standard

The national Standards to which your system, product or service must conform

Standard 1: Mandatory Requirements
Standard 2: Business Sustainability
Standard 3: Work Health and Safety
Standard 4: Environmental Practices

Scope

Range or characteristics of objects of conformity assessment covered by certification

Management systems and practices requirements for forest services operations:

- Harvest
- Haul
- Civil
- Silviculture
- Minor forest products

Certification scheme

Owner/Operator responsible for the daily operations of the certification scheme

Australian Forest Contractors Association

Object(s) of conformity

Management system(s) and practices

Assurance

Assessment that systems and processes are risk based, successfully operationalised and continuously improved.

Independent third party conformity assessment by JASANZ accredited Certification Bodies

Audit frequency

Certification: 5 years
Surveillance: Annually

National alignment

Pilot participation provides an opportunity for feedback into the refinement of the draft National CFSCM that will be finalised post pilot and adopted by signatories to the MOU and other industry stakeholders.

Forest services businesses

- The cost of the certification is provided by the Grower.
- Opportunity to test and influence the finalised National CFSCM that:
 - clarifies due diligence and compliance roles and responsibilities.
 - identifies processes to reduce audit duplication and frequency.
 - streamlines commercial management requirements.
 - recognises and incentivises (eg) preference in the tendering process
- Access to a leading resource centre to strengthen internal processes.
- Dedicated support provided by a specialised team.

Growers and managers

- Risk management through clarifying due diligence and compliance roles and responsibilities
- Establishing a national commercial management approach of certified FSBs based upon trust and verify principles.
- Increasing value of site visits and eliminating duplicated assessment activities.
- Accessing lead indicators that industry standards are met by certified FSBs.
- Identifying internal management system updates required ensure appropriate risk allocation when managing certified FSBs.

Next steps

1. Sign up to the [ForestFit™ Portal](#) to familiarise yourself with the resources (see page 8) available to support preparation for certification.
2. Contact the ForestFit™ team.

The importance of the data to test and validate

Pilot process

Forest services businesses

1. Sign up to the the [ForestFit™ Portal](#).
 - a. Review the Participant guide which provides the step by step process for becoming certified.
 - b. Submit an application to become a Registered User.
 - c. Complete the Readiness Assessments.
 - d. Submit Certification Application.
2. Complete surveys as required.
3. Undertake certification
 - a. FSBs will be required to be certified to Standard 1: Mandatory Requirements and Standard 3: Work Health and Safety.
 - b. Option of certifying to Standards 2: Business Sustainability and Standard 4: Environmental Practices.

Growers and managers

1. Sign up to the Sign up to the the [ForestFit™ Portal](#).
 - a. Review the Certification Framework.
2. Complete surveys as required.
3. Confirm certification payment arrangements with FSB.

Project deliverables

Upon project completion at June 2025 the Growers Chamber and interested stakeholders will be provided with:

- Finalised National CFSCM.
- Supporting guidance document for the implementation of the National CFSCM.
- Baseline data for ongoing monitoring of National CFSCM implementation.

Audited project financials provided to funding bodies.

Data capture and surveys

The methodology is anticipated to evolve as the pilot progresses to test whether the National CFSCM changes the relationship...

- Are the FSBs empowered to manage their own business.
- Do the Growers have confidence the FSBs are effectively managing their businesses and operational risk.

This will also include considerations of:

- Change management requirements (eg) system processes that need to be updated to align with the new approach.
- Any external requirements of Growers (eg PEFC, FSC, ILO, EUDR) relevant to ForestFit™ certified FSBs.
- How ForestFit™ certified FSBs can demonstrate conformance.

Engagement and Commencement

Contracts are underway so the survey information collected will be a reflection on the process:

- What was the estimated time to complete the tender process
- What were the tender specs
- What was the requested documentation
- How were the supplied documents utilised (Growers only)

Implementation and reporting

Survey completion post key assessment activities identifying:

- What are the conversations, reason for interaction
- Frequency and duration
- What information was transferred, perceived benefit

Review

What does the performance review documentation provided by ForestFit™ certified FSBs need to demonstrate.

Creating a common language

Key assessment activities

The key assessment activities required during the operations management stage have been identified, defined and agreed upon by the SC (July 2023) to create a 'common language' for Growers and FSBs that are ForestFit™ certified.

AUDIT

A systematic, independent and documented process conducted by a third party (Conformity Assessment Body) for obtaining evidence and evaluating it objectively to determine if the audit criteria is fulfilled.

VERIFICATION

A documented process conducted by a second party to assure the information provided is valid and compliant with contractual requirements and system implementation.

COMPLIANCE

A documented systematic check conducted by the first party to ensure adherence to the required laws, regulations, policies or standards. This involves reviewing documents, conducting interviews and inspecting operations and sites.

INSPECTION

A documented visual examination process completed by the first party to assess the condition of a site, operation, system or process for a specific purpose, such as identifying safety hazards, quality controls or environmental concerns.

OBSERVATION

A physical examination completed by the first party of a site, operation or process to gather information, assess conditions and identify potential issues or opportunities for improvement.

FORESTFIT NON CERTIFIED

RESPONSIBILITY

FCB Forest grower
External independent third party

FREQUENCY

Annual Biannual

CRITERIA*

Work Health and Safety
Environmental Practices
General Requirements (People)
Business Sustainability

VALUE

Reputable assurance and confidence for all stakeholders, including forest grower and FCB, that the systems and processes are risk based, successfully operationalised and continuously improved.

FORESTFIT NON CERTIFIED

Forest grower

Annual

Work Health and Safety
Environmental Practices
General Requirements (People)
Business Sustainability

A validated approach confirming systems and processes are implemented and assessed. Generally undertaken when a new process occurs (ie new contract).

FORESTFIT NON CERTIFIED

FCB

Quarterly

Work Health and Safety
Environment

A risk based approach to systematically assess, manage and implement systems and processes to ensure responsibilities and obligations are met.

FORESTFIT NON CERTIFIED

FCB Forest grower

Monthly

Work Health and Safety
Environment

Systematic monitoring of on site processes, ensuring alignment with sustainable practices and identifying opportunities for improvement, including areas that may pose risks.

FORESTFIT NON CERTIFIED

FCB

Weekly (minimum)

Work Health and Safety
Environment

Fostering a culture of continuous improvement through knowledge sharing and feedback utilising tools such as risk assessments, toolbox meetings, etc, to ensure daily operations are safe and environmentally sustainable.

National CFSCM draft for pilot

Commercial Management

Engagement

Growers procure outsourced providers for harvest, haulage, civil, silviculture and/or minor forest products operations.

ForestFit™ certified business tender documentation:

- ForestFit™ Certificate
- Other certifications or accreditations.

Commencement

[HOLD] Pilot to identify and validate any external requirements of Growers (eg PEFC, FSC, ILO, EUDR) relevant to outsourced providers who are ForestFit™ certified.

[HOLD] Pilot to identify and validate, as appropriate, how ForestFit™ certified businesses can demonstrate conformance.

Implementation and reporting

Periodic performance review

ForestFit™ certification requires recording and consolidation of key performance metrics.

Review

Annual performance review

- Assurance that systems and processes are risk based, successfully operationalised and continuously improved.

ForestFit™ certified business documentation:

- Incident investigation outcomes.
- Annual management review.
- Audit outcomes report.

Operational Management

	GROWERS	FORESTFIT™ CERTIFIED BUSINESS
Planning	<p>Preplanning - identify key characteristics and controls.</p> <p>Planning - identify legal, regulatory, site and method requirements.</p>	<p>Preplanning - participate with Growers as required</p> <p>Planning - internal allocation of resources to meet contract requirements.</p>
Implementation	<p>Site handover - induction of principal contracting business, acknowledgement of known hazards and site sign off.</p>	<p>Site risk assessment - updates to safety and/or environment plans.</p> <p>Site operations - initiation of activities as per plan method and specifications.</p>
Measurement	<p>Commercial risk assessment activity</p> <p>Inspection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 hour per month.• FSB has undertaken assessment activities.• Any identified issues, hazards or risks and/or guidance questions. <p>Incident investigation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stakeholder who receives a copy of incident investigation outcomes. <p>Reporting [HOLD]</p> <p>Pilot to identify and validate data.</p>	<p>Operational risk assessment activities</p> <p>Compliance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quarterly documented systematic checks. <p>Inspection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monthly documented visual examinations. <p>Observation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Weekly (minimum) physical examination. <p>Incident investigation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Undertakes investigation.• Incident investigation outcomes provided to stakeholders as required. <p>Reporting [HOLD]</p> <p>Pilot to identify and validate data.</p>
Review	<p>Final site assessment - upon completion</p>	<p>Management review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• internal systems review and audit preparation. <p>ForestFit™ Certification audit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Audit (annual) - external third party procured to undertake management systems audit.

Data to be collected to test and validate

The surveys are business specific, so your survey may contain “All” questions related to the subcategory or it may only contain ‘Specific’ questions relevant to your business. or are not applicable ‘--’.

Estimated total duration to complete all surveys for the pilot is 16-18 hours, however using the ‘voice upload’ option may reduce this time.

	FREQUENCY	ESTIMATED SURVEY TIME	GROWERS	FORESTFIT™ CERTIFIED BUSINESS
ENGAGEMENT	Once	30 min		
Tender and/or procurement process			All	All
Specifications			All	All
Evaluation and criteria			All	Specific
Contract negotiation			All	All
Change management			All	Specific
COMMENCEMENT		20 min		
Contract commencement process	Once		All	All
Operations commencement	As required		All	All
Hazard and risk management	As required		All	Specific
IMPLEMENTATION AND REPORTING				
Audits	Annual	30 min	--	All
Compliance	Quarterly	20 min	--	All
Verification	Monthly	5 min	All	Specific
Inspection	Monthly	15 min	--	All
Observations	Weekly (minimum)	10 min	--	All
Incident investigations	As required	20 min	Specific	Specific
Other visitations	As required	5 min	--	All
REVIEW				
Performance review	Annual	To be determined	To be determined	To be determined

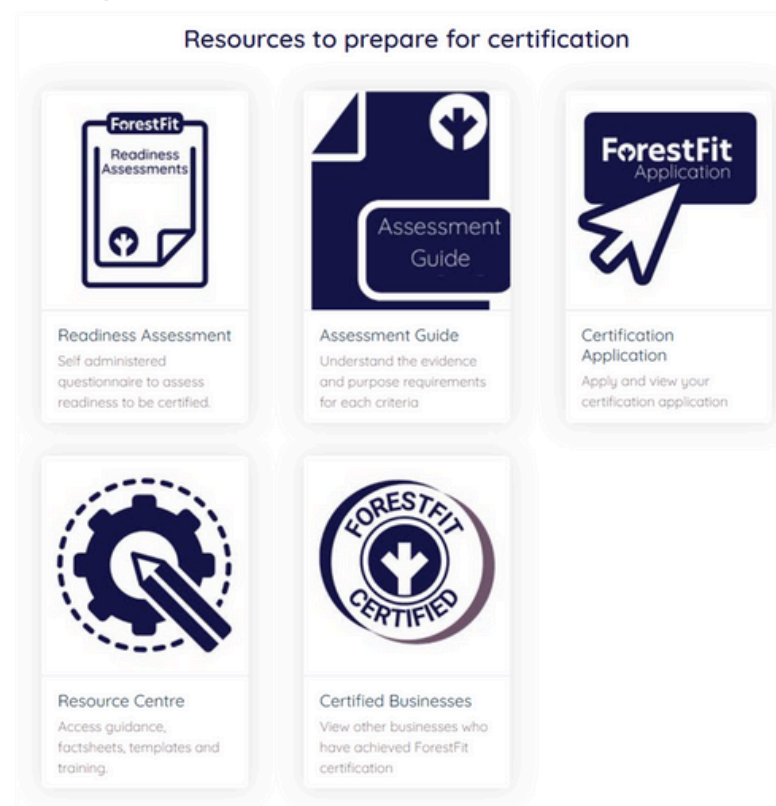
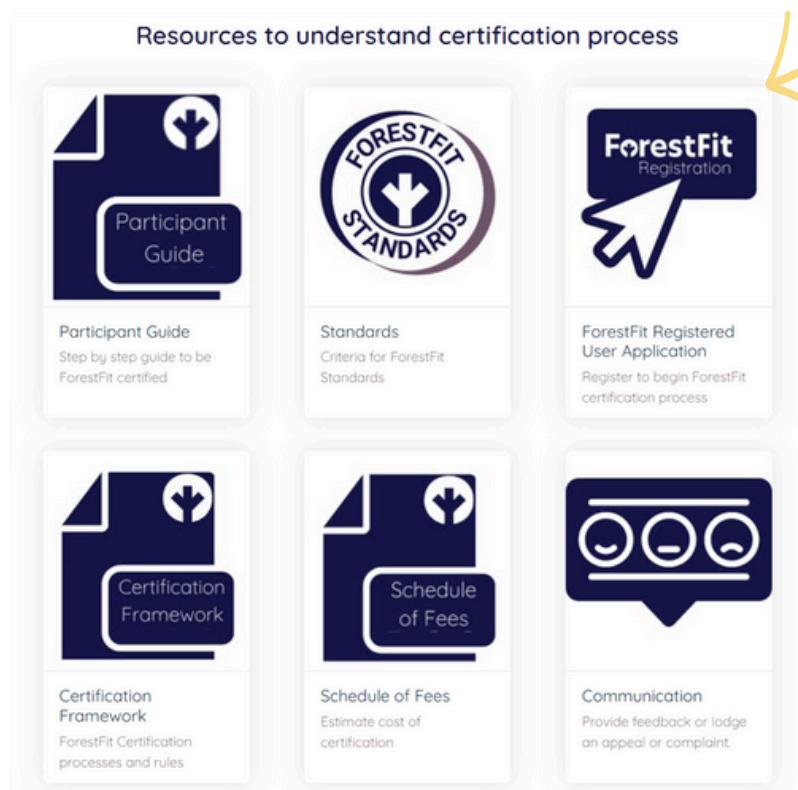
ForestFit™ Portal Resources

Want more information, visit the [ForestFit™ Portal](#) to sign up.

- This two step verification process provides you with access to the resources of the Portal User dashboard.
- When logged into the Portal click on the 'ForestFit™ Registered User Application' to access the Register User dashboard.
- Only forest services businesses can access the Registered User resources.

Portal User dashboard

Registered User dashboard





ForestFit™ Training and Certification has been codesigned by national representatives from forest growers, forest contracting businesses, processors, industry associations, existing industry certification schemes and the New South Wales (NSW) Government in partnership with Australian Forest Contractors Association (AFCA).

The National CFSCM project is multiparty funded by the financial contributions of the Australian Forest Products Association's Growers Chamber with matched from the Commonwealth Government through the Forest and Wood Products Australia (FWPA) Voluntary Matching Program.

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