

**Australian Forestry Management Pty Limited
(AFM)**

2004 Softwood Project



2012-2013 Annual Report

Legal Context

This annual report has been prepared in accordance with Schedule 1 Part 3(h) of the Forestry Management Contract between Australian Forestry Management Pty Limited and the Forestry Commission of New South Wales (now known as the Forestry Corporation of NSW) for the 2004 Softwood Project.

Overview

The plantations at Dr Vance and The Valley are in good condition and are generally performing well.

Rainfall in Hume Region was below average, with significant dry periods during summer and autumn. Total rainfall at Tumbarumba from July 12 to June 13 was 831 mm compared to the long term average of 980mm, and rainfall for Yass being approximately 500mm, compared to a long term average of 584mm.

Stand Condition

Dr Vance

The Dr Vance plantation remains in good health and continues to perform well (refer photo below).



Figure 1: Dr Vance (2005 Age Class) June 2013 – good growth and healthy trees

The Valley

The Valley plantation continues to maintain good growth over the majority of the plantation and above average performance where stocking is adequate and particularly on lower and mid slope sites.



Figure 2: The Valley (2005 Age Class) – well stocked & good growth

Pest and Disease Information

No significant areas of pest damage were noted during the report period.

Dothistroma needle blight is present in The Valley in low levels, similar to other plantation areas in the region, however infection levels are significantly lower following seasonally dry conditions during summer and autumn. Treatment of Dothistroma is not recommended for the low level of infection currently observed.

Activities Undertaken

Planting of the area burnt by wildfire in January 2010 was completed in 2012. Weed competition and seedling survival will require additional operations in 2013 to get a satisfactory result on this difficult site.



Figure 3: The Valley 2012 seedlings planted in 2010 fire area

Grazing of cattle has continued in part of The Valley to minimise grass fuels and associated bush fire hazard. Additional areas are expected to be grazed from September 2013.

Pest animal control has occurred during the reporting period, predominantly feral pig control.

Fire trail and road maintenance and noxious weed control has also been undertaken.

Fire Incidents

There were no fire incidents within or in close to the 2004 Softwood Project plantations.

Other Management Issues

The residual effects of the significant replant program in the first three years of the plantation establishment has resulted in ongoing affects of variation in tree size and stocking. Generally, growth in subsequent years has been significant, however it is anticipated that there may be some impact on the future productivity (timber yield) of these areas. The extent of this impact will not be quantifiable until 2015 when age 10 inventory is undertaken.

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There are some remaining areas of up to 10 hectares of 2005 AC plantation that is severely under stocked due to wet and swampy ground conditions and very heavy blackberry regrowth. These sites are not considered to be practical to replant as it is likely that poor survival of seedlings on these sites will preclude successful plantation establishment. These affected areas were originally reported in the 2008-09 report.

Planned Activities for 2013/2014

- Replanting of area burnt by wildfire – additional seedlings required to achieve adequate stocking.
- Grazing in suitable areas to reduce grass fire hazard
- Pest animal control
- Blackberry spraying
- Maintenance of tracks and access roads
- Fire risk reduction works and surveillance
- Identification and signage of plantation fire roads to comply with amendments to the Plantations and Reafforestation Code.

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