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## Happy New Year

By Wenita CEO David Cormack

Happy New Year everyone and welcome back.

### Market

The outlook for the first half of 2017 looks promising – hopefully this year will turn out to be similar to last, with steady log prices, low-ish ocean freight and a manageable New Zealand dollar/United States dollar exchange rate.

### Health and safety

My main message at the SafeStart breakfast this year was for everyone to return to work safely and not be tempted to take risks or shortcuts. The consequences when things go wrong in forestry can be very serious.

Despite all the hard work put into health and safety over the last three years the forest industry still has far too many serious accidents – four fatalities last year. While that is much better than the 10 fatal accidents in 2013, it is three more than 2014 and one more than 2015, so it shows we still have plenty of hard work ahead of us.

We still have too many accidents at Wenita as well (actually one accident is too many). Last year we had four lost-time incidents (LTIs). Fortunately, only one of our accidents resulted in serious injury, but like all forestry accidents, most of them (including most of the near misses) could have been much more serious.

I still hear people saying that forestry is a dangerous industry and there will always be accidents, but that type of thinking is out-dated. Yes we're in a high-hazard industry but we can reduce the level of risk with:

- careful planning
- thorough hazard identification
- paying attention on the job
- following safety rules and procedures
- looking out for our workmates
- correcting dangerous work practices, and
- accident reporting (including near misses) because these are important learning opportunities.

Wenita introduced random drug and alcohol testing four years ago, and I must admit I've been disappointed with our results ever since.

Last year we conducted 83 random tests, which yielded five non-negatives. That's more than a 6% failure rate, which is above the national average! So, this tells me we still have plenty of work to do in this area.

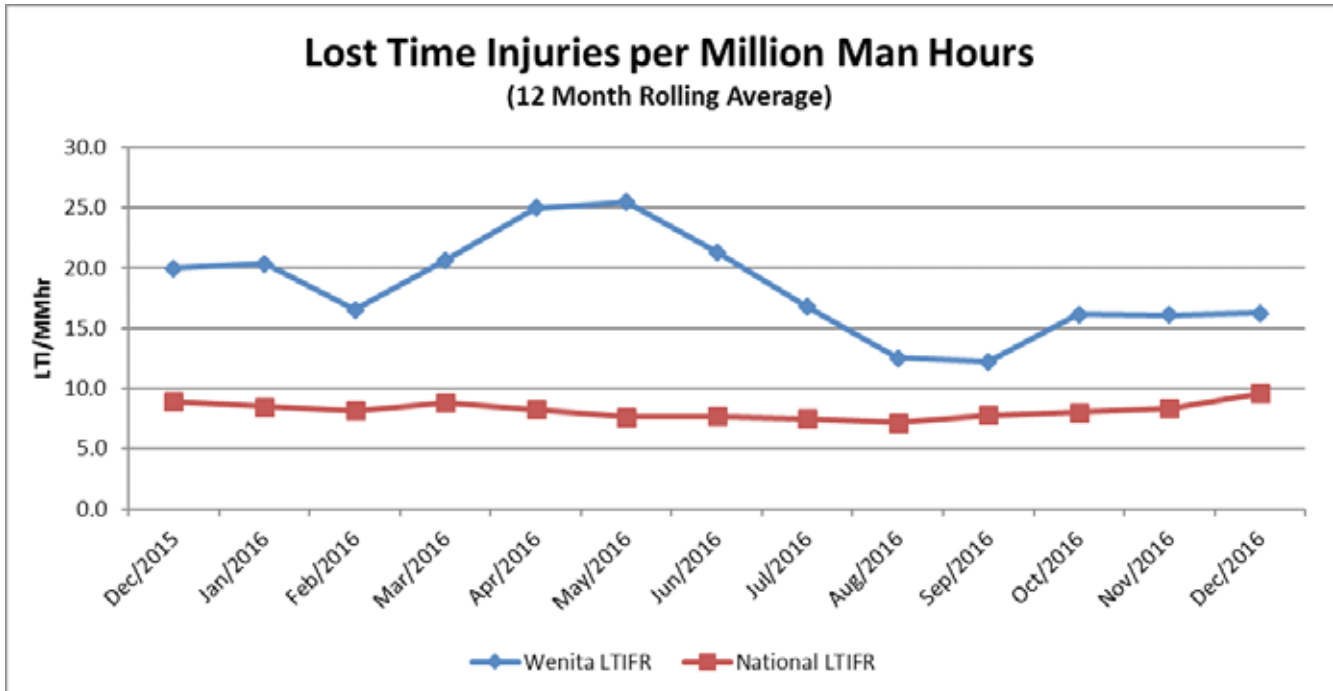
We intend to continue random drug and alcohol testing this year, not because we want to catch people out, but because we want to make your workplace safer. Drugs and alcohol have no place in our forests and won't be tolerated.

### Training

On a more positive note, the commitment to training and level of achievement by Wenita contractors is impressive and I expect we'll have some excellent candidates for the Southern Wood Council training awards this year, which are being held on Friday, May 12 at Forsyth Barr Stadium in Dunedin.

Please mark that date in your diaries, get the nomination forms from Phil Williams or one of your supervisors and start thinking about suitable nominees.

# Lost-time injuries and near misses



Since the end of September, there have been two lost time injuries (LTIs), no medical treatment or minor injuries and 27 near hits.

Having two LTIs in the last three months of the year was disappointing, given there had only been the two in the previous nine months. Fortunately, despite being LTIs, neither incident was serious or notifiable.

Although having four LTIs in total for the year was a good result historically, it was still well short of our goal of zero lost-time or notifiable injuries. All four LTIs were avoidable, so we know this goal is realistic and achievable. We just need to maintain a strong health and safety focus at all times.

There have been a couple of near misses in the last three months that we'd like to bring to people's attention:

## Slippery logs

In the last newsletter, we were reminded about the slippery log season (October to December) and how important it was to be particularly careful with how logs are handled and loaded during this period. Despite our heightened awareness of the risk, there were still a number of slippery log incidents during that time. As it is less than a month since the end of the season, it is most important that everyone involved in the handling and cartage of logs continues to be aware of the risk slippery logs pose and to continue to adhere to the Slippery Log Management protocol. If you don't have a copy of this document, ask your manager.

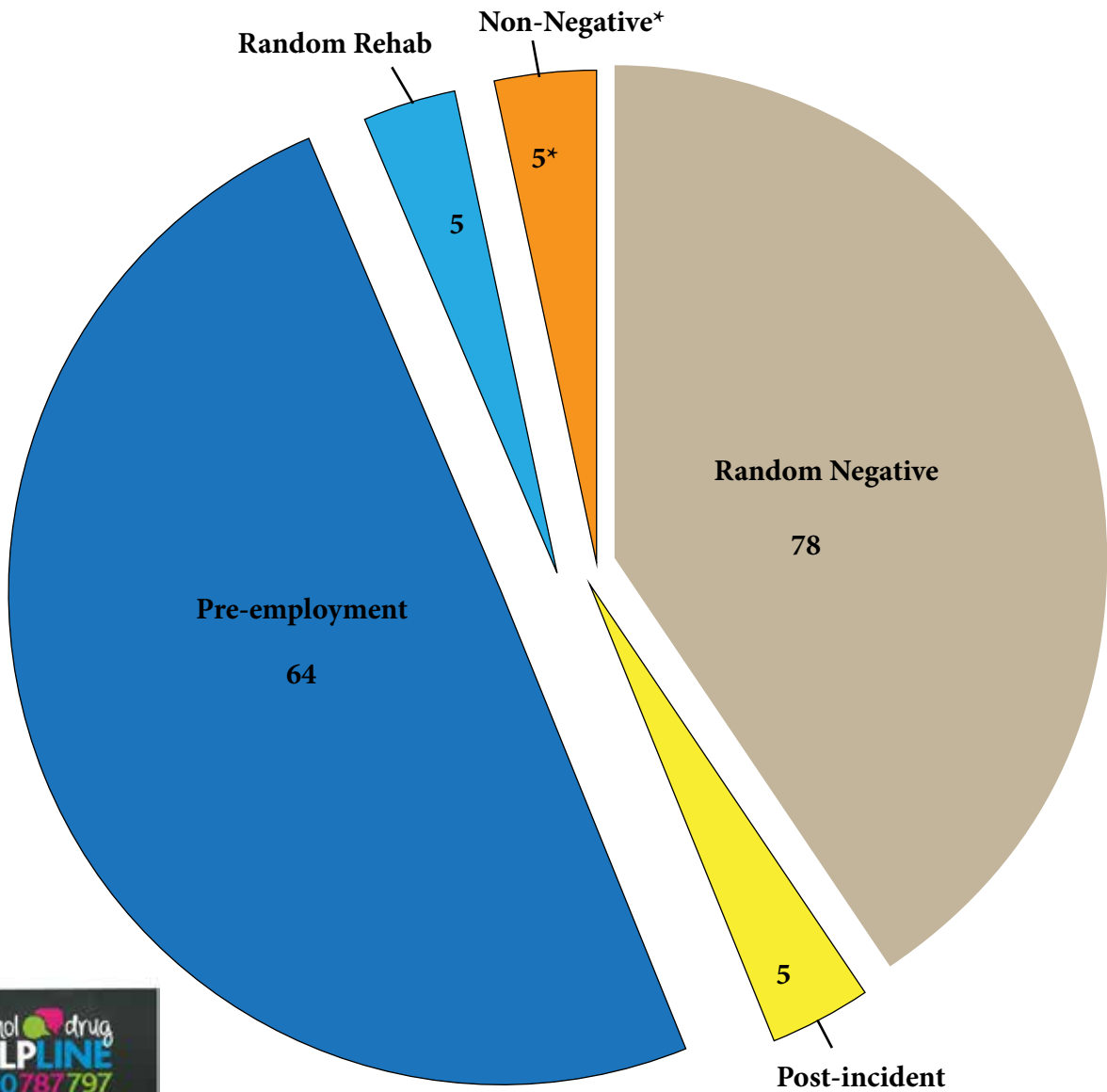
## Tree fell on digger

While digging a track on a steep section of a block, a large tree was uprooted and fell across the upper ram of the excavator that was doing the digging, almost leading to a roll-over of the machine. This incident reinforced the importance of carrying out a thorough hazard identification and risk assessment before undertaking tracking, or any operation, in difficult conditions. Where a risk can't be eliminated or minimised to an acceptable level, that concern should be brought to the attention of the Wenita manager responsible for the operation, so alternatives can be considered and a combined decision on how best to proceed can be made.

# Drug and alcohol testing

	Total	Negative	Non-Negative	Positive	Drug Positive
Pre-employment	64	64			
Post-incident	5	5			
Reasonable cause	0	0			
Random	83	78	5*	3	2 THC/1 alcohol
Random Rehab	5	5			
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>5*</b>	<b>3</b>	

Remember that if someone has an accident, or a dangerous near miss, please contact the office immediately and we will arrange for a drug and alcohol test.



\* Only three of the five non-negative tests were subsequently confirmed positive by the lab.

## SafeStart breakfast

Once again, the year kicked off with the SafeStart Breakfast and Awards in the Taieri Rugby Clubrooms.

Hats off to BBQ Bill whose crew managed to feed 160 contractors and staff smoothly.

Wenita chief executive David Cormack spoke first and his points about health and safety can be seen in the CEO's message on page one. David also recognised seven crews who were accident and drug free in 2016:

- |                      |                                 |                            |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Roxburgh 1 Logging | • Griffin 2 Logging             | • Kealey Contracting       |
| • Roxburgh 2 Logging | • Johnson Forestry Services Ltd | • Forestry Roding Services |
| • Griffin 1 Logging  |                                 |                            |

Each crew member received a t-shirt with their crew name and the logo "Accident and Drug Free 2016".

David also recognised the four loggers who gained Professional Faller Certification in 2016, each of whom will shortly receive a new Protos helmet:

- |                 |                |
|-----------------|----------------|
| • Wayde Lindsay | • Mark Graham  |
| • Callum McLeod | • Jeremy Hills |

Health and safety manager Alec Cassie said the nature of the four lost-time incidents (LTIs) Wenita had last year meant our goal of zero lost-time or notifiable injuries is achievable. To make it happen, Alec asked everyone to maintain a strong health and safety focus, be aware of complacency, look out for your mates, manage fatigue responsibly, stick to the rules and always work sensibly and safely.

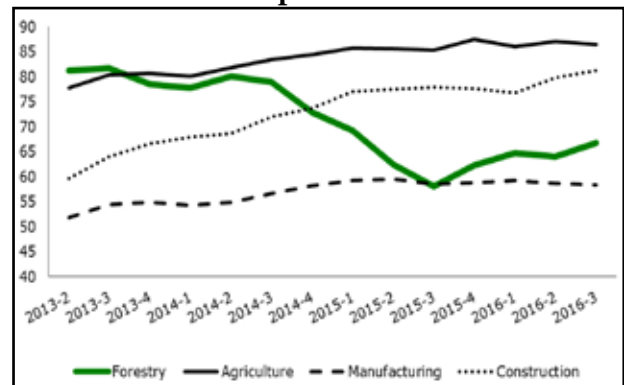
The National Forestry Health and Safety database has highlighted how driving is the next most hazardous activity after felling and breaking out. Alec said Wenita will focus on driving this year; we have engaged heavy and light vehicle driving instructor (and guest speaker at the breakfast) Brian Bagley. Brian will assess the driving technique of contractors and staff who drive in the forest or in town as part of their job. Alec said people should

keep an open mind and learn from what Brian can show them.

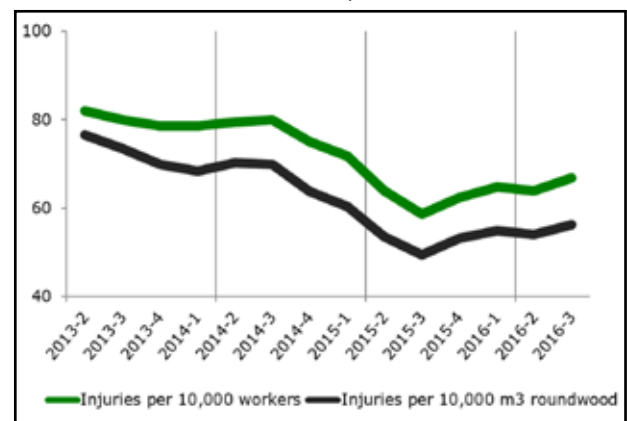
Brian talked about the areas where even experienced drivers tend to come up short in their knowledge or technique. He especially focused on how, at times, we incorrectly approach and negotiate intersections and what to look out for when driving on gravel roads.

Brian's presentation was followed by Paul Solomon of WorkSafe who intends to get around all the crews in Otago, both corporate and in the woodlot arena. Paul presented graphs showing the positive strides the forest industry had made in improving health and safety performance, particularly when compared with other industries.

**Overall improvement ... but**



**Serious injuries**



**Per 10,000 workers**  
**Per 10,000 m<sup>3</sup> roundwood**

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## SafeStart breakfast *continued*

*From previous page*

However, he also pointed out that a recent jump in serious injuries (shown in the graphs on the previous page) meant there was no room for complacency. Alec said it was particularly important to “walk the talk” and reinforced Paul’s message that “if you don’t think it is safe, then don’t do it!”

Wenita’s health and safety training contractor Willie Sinclair emphasised the importance of sticking to the rules. He said breaking critical rules would not be tolerated (a person was dismissed last year after leaving a standing scarfed tree for several days without letting anyone know). Willie also noted that signage management was much improved in 2016. He will continue to work on this in 2017 with a plan to provide a revision of the basic traffic management rules, for both staff and contractors.

The speeches were followed by award presentations. The following individuals gained awards:

### Health and Safety Person of the Year in Logging

- Mark Ludeman (Roxburgh 1 Logging) – 1st
- Martin Glassford (Griffin 2 Contracting) – Runner Up

### Health and Safety Person of the Year in Roothing & Trucking

- Chris Wylie (Dunedin Carrying Company Ltd) – 1st
- Bruce Peterson (Dunedin Carrying Company Ltd) – Runner Up

### Health and Safety Person of the Year in Forestry

- Nathan Fraser (McHoull Contracting) – 1st
- Tamati Moana-Orupe (Johnson Forestry Services Ltd) – Runner Up

### Top Spot Yarder Operation

- Blair McColl (Roxburgh 2 Logging) – Fourth Quarter Assessment – 2nd
- Blair McColl (Roxburgh 2 Logging) – Full Year – 3rd

### Top Spot Ground Base Extraction

- Glen Cochrane (Griffin 2 Contracting) – Fourth Quarter Assessment – 2nd

- Glen Cochrane (Griffin 2 Contracting – Full Year – 2nd

Alec also noted that although there was no prize, Roxburgh 2 did exceptionally well, being placed third in the Top Spot competition.

In the final wrap-up message, health and safety coordinator Grant Kenneally reminded logging contractors and log truck drivers of the need to look out for slovens and slabwood on the end of the logs, as these continued to be a hazard in 2016, particularly for scalers measuring loads at the port. He emphasised that this was both a truck driver and logging contractor responsibility to ensure no loads leave a skid site with slovens or slabwood still attached to the end of logs.

The SafeStart Breakfast and Awards were generously supported by the following sponsors:



Stihlshop Milton



# Fire training

After the SafeStart Breakfast and Awards, Ken McHoull of McHoull Contracting and Mike Mullan of Wenita held a fire training day in the Mt Allan Forest.

They set up six training stations – tandem pumping using both fire engines; filling a portable dam; and making a fire line.

They split the guys into groups of six and rotated them around so they had a go at everything. It was a good day everyone got in and gave it a go.



*Above: Gathering for Mt Allan fire training.  
Right: Setting up for tandem pumping*



*Above: Working with the portable dam.  
Right: Pump training*



## Wind throw salvage

Last year was quite a year for wind throw but, fortunately for Wenita, we were able to react quickly and move harvesting crews in to salvage the affected areas before the trees spoiled.

Wind throw is often associated with logging activity, which exposes previously sheltered forest areas to the winds.

In 2016 Popham's and Akatore South both suffered wind throw twice.

We were able to salvage most of the damaged forest in Popham's on both occasions, except for one area where the salvage was delayed due to nesting native falcons. We will clean up that area when the falcon chicks leave the nest in five to six weeks.

We're also back in Akatore South, on Ridley Road for a second-time salvage operation. Griffin Logging salvaged this same area earlier in the year, but it got wind thrown again so this time we are harvesting back to a more sheltered new boundary.

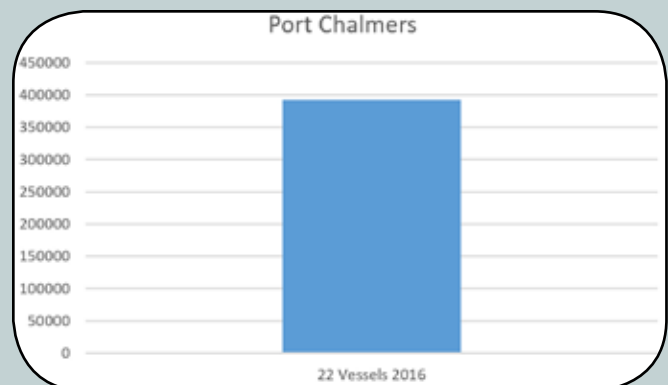
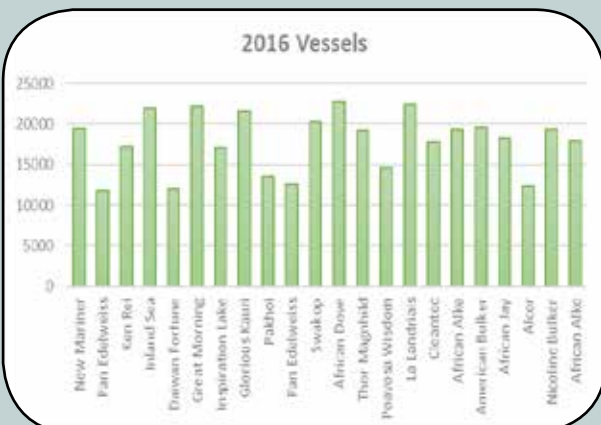


Wind throw at Popham's Block, where Roxburgh 2 carried out the salvage.

## Log vessel numbers

There was a record number of log vessels for Wenita in 2016.

The total exported volume was 392,603 Jas (combined Wenita estate and purchase wood). We had 22 log vessels visit, with an average uplift of 18,000 Jas each.



## Mt Allan tidy up

As we all know, Mt Allan has been completed for logging and later this month Darren Kealey will have finished the last of the land preparation for the 2017 planting season.

It is worth noting that the first pruning of the second rotation is being undertaken in the



*Above and left: The Mt Allan old superskid site.*

Boggyburn and Airstrip areas. The completion of the tidy up on the old super skid site has also brought changes. The sheds and equipment are now reassembled on a new site near Gisborne, leaving behind abandoned concrete pads and access roads. FRS was engaged to spread and pull in the dirt bunding and surrounds, spreading out bark and sawdust piles on site, and the soil piles on the top

skid. Since then, we have oversown with mixed grasses to further encourage the nearby beehives, and this winter we will replant some areas in radiata (where they will not impede the overhead power lines). The super skid is just a memory, and it will be interesting to see how this site looks in a few years' time.

## Kārearea research update

New Zealand Falcon (Kārearea) breeding patterns are being studied in local forests, with the research being jointly funded by Wenita, City Forests and the Otago Regional Council.

Lead researcher Chifuyu Hawkesby has had extensive experience working with Kārearea in the central North Island, especially in the Kaingaroa Timberlands estate. So far, the work has involved identifying nesting sites, capturing breeding pairs and chicks and attaching leg-band identifiers. Questions the ongoing research will hopefully answer include:

- How successful has the current breeding season been?
- Where will the chicks form their own territories?
- Will the adult pairs stay together for later breeding seasons?
- Where will they choose to nest in subsequent years?



*Chifuyu attaches a band to the leg of a hooded Kārearea at Mt Allan.*



# Focus on water quality



*Above: Repatriating skidder tracks at Berwick.  
Below left: Sump hole with silt cloth at Popham's.  
Below right: Sump hole with hay bale at McLaren Gully.*

The introduction of Plan Change 6A (Water Quality) by the Otago Regional Council (ORC), has made all of us more aware of water quality issues and more focused on how to minimise sediment discharge from our forest operations.

As they have always done, the ORC will respond to concerns that are raised about discharge into streams, but they are also now actively undertaking annual site audits, and Plan Change 6A has raised the bar so that what might have been acceptable in the past may not be acceptable now.

Staff and contractors alike will have noticed the additional work that has been carried out at lower Popham's. Where the new road leaves the Taieri Ferry Road, silt cloth has been placed across water channels and silt traps/sumps are

also being used to trap as much of the large sediment particles as practicable. Roding operations now excavate sumps at both ends of our road



culverts to encourage settling of sediment during rain events. Our logging contractors have also taken up the challenge, with regular placement of cutouts on tracks to reduce runoff and repatriating tracks once they are no longer required, and the results of this work have been excellent.

The skids servicing Cuttance Forest on McLaren Gully Road have also been a bit of an issue for us, as this area is in the upper catchment of Otokia Creek, a waterway that eventually makes its way to Brighton. With roadside skids shedding water during October and November last year, our sumps took plenty of silt to the point where we had to regularly return with an excavator to keep the sumps clear. Hay bales were also strategically placed to reduce silt movement, and in addition, knowing we had an issue, we completely repatriated three skids as soon as they were no longer required.

Ultimately we all have a responsibility, and if you see an issue, or a potential issue, let your Wenita manager know as soon as possible.