17 October 2024

**Forestry earthworks training; Status report and Work plan**

**Background**

Wide interest from Forestry earthworks contractors and forest companies and managers, is driving our development work.

Development work costs are being supported by Manulife and Matariki Forests. Forest Management companies and contractors are contributing through working group meetings, feedback and in-kind contributions.

Turanga Ararau (TA) is our host training provider and has received NZQA consent to assess forestry earthworks, L3 to go along with existing accreditation for civil infrastructure works.

We have had communications with a range of interested parties and need to consolidate a communications plan and our action plan.

**Principles and assumptions for operating**

* Intent is to allow employers to ‘own’ the system because this is where training takes place now.
* Build and enhance in-crew capability and encourage assessors in-crew
* Essentially ‘user-pays’ and any TEC funding we gain sooner or later will be a bonus
* Support processes by external assessors where necessary
* Encourage levels of Trainer-Verifier and Assessor in the system
* Many of contractor employees are long-serving and skilled now so a process of ‘Recognising current competence’ (RCC) will be a good start point for activities.
* Appoint a small advisory group to work between stakeholders and Turanga Ararau

**Progress with development work**

**Qualifications;**

There is general agreement from group members that two Level 3 qualifications for ‘operators’ is feasible and workable. One qualification is smallish and introductory in nature and the other offers more specific task skills with a range of options.

TA is registered to deliver and assess the units required but also several relevant micro credentials.

**Assessments**

Preparation of assessments involves; both learner and assessor (answers) copies and a marking schedule for each unit. We currently have draft assessments and model answers for 11 units, for which there is still a small amount of work required on 3 of these. Following preparation, each one goes to our host provider, TA, for internal moderation and is then sent to (WDC) Waihanga Ara rau for external pre-mod. Errors in accuracy can be punished by the WDC bouncing those assessments requiring further work. Some of these issues appear petty and over technical and can be easy to fix, but the exchange of re-works is always time consuming.

There are three task related assessments still to draft and several other machine operator units to complete, to allow options for operators.

**Learner resources**

We have drafted Learner guides for 6 units packaged in three resource booklets. These are not yet complete and feature below the assessments in priority. There is good quality material available through several agencies but much of this is written for forest owners and managers. Our objective here is to write materials that align specifically to the units for operators. There is other good quality learner material around, some ex Connexis/Infratrain. Some of this is dated and has copyright that we don’t wish to breach. Much of this is generally relevant and contractor employees could certainly still use it, if applied to the same units. To date though there is nothing else prepared for the forestry earthworks domain.

**Trainers**

Building capability within crews allows us to offer training for trainers and recognition for this. Such training could be combined with assessor training where both skill sets are sought within a crew. The suggestion that many senior operators are already trained, may place trainer training behind assessor training in priority.

**Assessors**

Assessors will be registered under Turanga Ararau and subject to TA appointment criteria and quality management. The assessors are a key component in the quality system. The other factors are; quality of training, the quality of the assessment materials and the quality of the assessment process.

The criteria for assessor appointment is;

1. Hold the units sought for assessment (or have operated at a level equal to, or above)
2. Hold unit standards in assessing, unit 4098 minimum
3. Be available for continued professional development (CPD) on an annual basis
4. Have some recognisable experience in training others.
5. Be recommended and supported by their employer

Those seeking appointment as assessors will need to hold the units they are looking to assess. We will work with them to ensure this criteria is met. Arguably, the easiest way is by facilitating award of the NZQA units after doing the assessments themselves. We will start the process via a couple of existing assessors. This will have a progressive and evolving look about it.

In conjunction we will deliver 4098 assessor training for those nominated. We’ll start assembling nominations immediately. As part of the 4098 course ‘trainee’ assessors will be able to assess under supervision some of their peers for units within our programme.

**Communications**

We already have a database of interested and contributing organisations and individuals. This will form the base for evolving our processes. The preference is to have approved assessments and approved Assessors available to meet expectations before we expand too much wider.

There will be natural circulation via the ‘bush telegraph’ and we will welcome other interested parties without necessarily chasing work too early in the piece.

**Costs**

System costs will be incurred in several areas.

1. Governance and working group
2. Resources development
3. Trainer and assessor training and course costs
4. TA trainer and assessor administration and moderation
5. Access to learner and assessing resources
6. Printing costs
7. In house training and any course costs
8. Assessment time and admin
9. Reporting results to NZQA
10. JNCTN alignment (option to consider later)
11. CPD (later)

Some of the costs will likely be at a rate per head, eg course attendance and assessment resources, NZQA processing will be a rate per unit and per credit and most other costs will be variable based on time invested in training and assessing.

Coordinating the work and costs is currently a work-on.

**Actions-roll out**

October-November

1. Confirm email addresses for mail-outs
2. Nominations for assessor training
3. Schedule course(s) date(s)
4. Send completed assessments to TA and on to WDC for pre-moderation
5. Complete assessment development for balance of assessments
6. Interaction with TA re status and format for the full NZ Certificates
7. Continue development of learner resources
8. Receive and process any stakeholder feedback

Any feedback, requests and comments welcomed

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