



# FORESTRY TRAINEES RECOGNISED AT REGIONAL TRAINING PRESENTATION

## Media Release

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The forest industries showed their ongoing commitment to training, when around 135 people attended the Annual Regional Training Presentations, at the Dunedin Convention Centre last Friday afternoon.

Dunedin City Mayor, Peter Chin welcomed guests and acknowledged the achievements of 91 forestry and wood processing workers from across the Otago, Southland and South Canterbury regions.

The trainees and Modern Apprentices acknowledged had completed a total of 138 recognized national certificates (industry qualifications) in their chosen fields in the 2005 year.

Dunedin employer, Alistair McKenzie, of Alistair McKenzie Contracting said, "It's great that training is available within the industry and that young people get recognition for the skills they develop. There is a lot of hard work and dedication that goes into completing training. Being recognized in this way is a good thing."

In his address, Southern Wood Council chairman, Matthew Hitchings told trainees, "Each of you has completed many hours of on-job-training and assessment, requiring tremendous effort and commitment both on the job and outside of work hours. It is this level of commitment and achievement that provides strength to our industry."

"Our industry has been through a difficult time recently, but your achievements that are being recognized this evening demonstrate the importance that the industry places on training.

"You and your companies can be extremely proud of these achievements. We are honoured to be supporting these awards," said Mr Hitchings.

The certificates were presented by FITEC chief executive officer, John Blakey who said "Getting your industry qualification is equivalent to finishing a university degree. It doesn't matter whether you are a university student or an industry trainee; you have the same commitment to learning and becoming a qualified professional.

We are delighted so many trainees in this region have achieved their goals."

End

**Key facts:**

- There are approx 490 trainees in Otago and Southland forestry industries working towards their national certificates.
- The industry employs close on 2500 people in the southern region (Southland, Otago and South Canterbury) and support a further 5,500 indirectly. This accounts for around 2.1% of total employment in the southern region.
- Function sponsored by FITEC and the Southern Wood Council.
- FITEC is the industry training organization that supports training and assessment within the forestry and wood manufacturing industry.
- The Southern Wood Council was established in 2001 to promote, encourage and co-ordinate the sustainable economic development of the forestry products industry in Otago and Southland.
- The Southern Wood Council members include all major forestry companies, saw mills and wood processors and local body council representatives and port authorities.
- Simon Carey received his National Certificate in Foundation Skills at Level 2.

For further information contact:

[www.southernwoodcouncil.co.nz](http://www.southernwoodcouncil.co.nz)

Southern Wood Council

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