

SOUTHERN WOOD COUNCIL SUPPORTS TRAINING AWARDS IN OTAGO-SOUTHLAND

Media Release

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The Southern Wood Council has endorsed its commitment to training within the forest industries in the Otago-Southland region with the sponsorship of the Otago-Southland Regional Training Awards ceremony held in Gore on Friday, 6 May.

The Awards acknowledged 84 trainees from 29 companies in the region who achieved recognized national qualifications in their chosen forestry career in the 2004-year.

In his address to the function, Southern Wood Council representative, Phil de la Mare says the regional awards were a great way to celebrate the achievements of the trainees.

“It also acknowledges the value the industry places on its workforce.”

“Each of the trainees who received recognition has completed many hours of on-job-training and assessment. This requires effort and commitment outside work hours. It is this level of commitment and achievement that provides strength to our industry.

“The fact that we can celebrate these achievements at a regional level with families and friends presents makes them all the more special.”

“The Southern Wood Council is proud to be part of recognizing the achievements of each individual trainee.” Mr. de la Mare said.

This support is strategically linked to the launch of the pilot Accelerated Careers Programme in December 2004. The Southern Wood Council developed the programme in conjunction with forestry industry training organisation, FITEC.

The southern solid wood industry has committed \$750,000 over the next three years, to the programme. It has been developed to recognize the career opportunities in the timber-processing sector and to give career-focused individuals a pathway to attain the necessary skills and knowledge to reach their potential.

“The Southern Wood Council believes that making an investment in the workforce now will be pivotal in developing an industry that will meet the challenges of the future. ” says Mr. de la Mare.

Key facts:

- Until 2004 one national awards function held in Rotorua.
- National Awards continue in Rotorua but regional awards functions provide an opportunity for recognition closer to home.
- 2004 an exceptional year for FITEC with more than 12,000 trainees working towards higher accreditation while employed in the forestry industry.
- There are approx 493 trainees in Otago and Southland forestry industries working towards their national certificates.
- The Southern Wood Council members include all major forestry companies, saw mills and wood processors and local body council representatives and port authorities.
- The industry employs 2443 people in the southern region (Southland, Otago and South Canterbury).

For further information contact:

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