

*Improving tree species (left) and siculture planning (right) are two important aspects of Commission business.*



## O u r P e o p l e

The Commission has 187 employees working from the corporate headquarters in metropolitan Rivervale and 12 regional offices around the State.

The Commission's employees are committed to working closely with industry in a dynamic environment that holds enormous potential for the entire Western Australian community.

The Commission has a total of 225 positions within its approved structure. However, a number of these are vacant as a result of restructuring and downsizing that has taken place as a consequence of the reduction in native forest harvesting. Following the inception of a new organisational structure

early in the new financial year, these positions will be abolished, as current industry projections indicate that there is no further need for these positions.

As at 30 June 2001, staff numbers and their locations were:



	Full-time salaried staff	Part-time salaried staff	Wages employees	Total	Men	Women
Albany	15	0	4	19	17	2
Bunbury	17	1	0	18	10	8
Collie	9	0	3	12	9	3
Esperance	2	1	0	3	1	2
Guildford	8	1	0	9	4	5
Harvey	21	4	0	25	18	7
Kalgoorlie	4	0	0	4	4	0
Katanning	2	0	0	2	2	0
Kensington	3	1	0	4	1	3
Kununurra	1	0	0	1	1	0
Manjimup	20	1	1	22	17	5
West Manjimup Nursery	9	0	13	22	13	9
Moora	1	0	0	1	1	0
Nannup	6	2	0	8	6	2
Rivervale	34	3	0	37	17	20
<b>Totals</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>66</b>

All employees are committed to the Commission's values and act with integrity, professionalism and understanding.

The Commission's management seeks to develop the skills of its employees and build on the personal commitment of each member of the team with a targeted program of professional development.

### Industry development training

During its first full year of operation, the Commission applied to become a Registered Training Organisation (RTO). The status as an RTO will confirm the organisation complies with nationally agreed standards for the quality of its training delivery, assessment and recognition, which contributes to community confidence in the products and services that it provides.

As an RTO, the Commission will provide accredited courses that will be available for all staff in their relevant areas as well as contractors and associated groups working in the forest industry. Training programs for the Commission are currently conducted under the auspices of the Department of Conservation and Land Management.

### Lending a helping hand

Six Commission staff travelled to New South Wales at a moment's notice in January 2002 to provide assistance during the devastating fires that swept the State. All six had experience in fire incident management and joined the Department of Conservation and Land Management and Fire and Emergency Services Authority personnel called upon to help out at forest fire control centres near Sydney.

The Commission officers spent 10 days helping to control the fires, and their assistance has been formally recognised by the New South Wales Government.

Many staff are regularly called upon to protect Western Australians against devastating fires, as was the case in January when a rash of lightning strikes resulted in 46 bushfires in the South-West.

### Communication

During the year the Corporate Executive endorsed the formation of a "People Reference Group" consisting of up to 10 people from the organisation. The group will address key issues affecting people working in the Commission, including the creation and maintenance of a communications network. The group has a direct link to the General Manager.



### Award winning performance

*Commission staff have achieved outstanding individual results which have significant benefits for the organisation and the industry.*

- *Owen Donovan, the Manager of Midwest Sharefarms, was awarded a Gottstein Skill Advancement Award and spent three months overseas where he studied the dry land pinus species in Turkey, Spain, Canary Islands and France. The Joseph William Gottstein Memorial Trust was established in 1971 as a national educational trust for the benefit of Australia's forest products industries. In addition to gaining a better appreciation of the adaptability of the pinus species, Owen identified opportunities for the use of genetic materials that could be used to advance the State's tree-breeding program, including the use of hybrid pines. The trip also confirmed Western Australia's status as a world leader in silviculture with a record for successfully establishing pines in some of the harshest country in the world.*
- *Another staff member, Senior Forester Neil Worrell, is the latest Commission recipient of a Gottstein award and will travel to the eastern states of Australia and New Zealand, in October 2002, to study softwood log segregation within integrated harvesting operations and the utilisation and marketing of products for export.*

## Forest Heritage Centre and School of Wood

In the past year, the Forest Products Commission contributed to the operation of the Forest Heritage Centre and the School of Wood and Gallery in Dwellingup - the site of a devastating bushfire in 1961.



*Half round drawer unit awarded the "Best of the Best".*

*The Forest Products Commission works vigorously with the timber industry to achieve its mission including development of the resource, promoting innovation and adding value. Our work with the industry over the past year has not only focused on achieving the best outcomes from the restructuring of the industry (following the State Government's "Protecting Our Old Growth Forests" policy) but developing new opportunities and marketing our skills and product overseas.*

Nine students graduated from the two-year diploma course in furniture design in December 2001. Of these, three have commenced their own fine wood designer/maker business, three are working with established makers and three are employed in an associated business.

In addition, 25 women participated in the 160-hour introductory woodcraft course with 14 extending their knowledge through a chair design course and one progressing to the diploma course.

The school also operated 42 weekend and corporate workshops during the year for 221 students to enjoy the country atmosphere and to make chairs, coffee tables, jewellery and trinket boxes, wood turning and other items using Western Australia's unique timbers.

The Interpretive Centre, which provides information and displays on forest management, was visited by 11,372 people during the year. There are walk trails with descriptions of forest management, identification of flora and Aboriginal heritage.

Established in 1996, the Centre has become recognised for its excellence in the education of fine woodworkers. At the end of each year, students stage an end-of-studies exhibition and display several items of their work for sale.

## Furniture awards

The Commission was again the principal sponsor of the "Furniture of the Year Awards" which recognises excellence in furniture making, furniture design, use of materials and marketability.

The awards, which are run by the WA branch of the Furnishing Industry Association of Australia, were held in Perth in November. In 2001 they attracted entries from around Australia and New Zealand and 500 guests attended the gala event.

The event provides the Commission with a high level of recognition for its involvement with industry, and showcases good use of timber resources in furniture including one-off pieces, household designs and commercial use. Some of the entries are also displayed internationally.

Tony Mercorella of the Benjamin Timber Studio in South Australia won the national "Best of the Best" award for his "Half Round Drawer Unit". The Western Australian "Best of the Best" award went to Stuart Gardiner of Stuart's House of Bedding in Welshpool for his "Manhattan" bed.

The awards are an important showcase for the furniture industry in WA, which has an important role to play in the successful restructuring of the timber industry. Exporters and their customers need security of supply to encourage investment in their manufacturing centres, improved design and international marketing.



*Commission Senior Forester, Chaz Newman with Led Hart (Anthropological Consultant) and Ken Colbung (Nyoongar Elder) in Barrabup State Forest.*

### Native forests consultation

The 2002 Harvest Plan for South-West Forests, which was prepared by the Department of Conservation and Land Management with input from the Commission, was promoted to the public through notices in the media and direct mail to organisations, shire councils and individuals with an interest in the plan.

Feedback and further enquiries about harvest proposals were encouraged and, in response, detailed coupe maps were provided to 15 voluntary conservation bodies and stakeholder agencies, as well as many individuals.

Commission staff conducted six forest coupe tours with members of local conservation groups between January and April. In several cases, input from this consultation resulted in minor coupe design modifications.

The Commission also participated in a number of forums, which focused on forest resource management and harvest and regeneration operations.

During the year, senior Commission managers and technical experts worked with officers from the Conservation Commission and the Department of Conservation and Land Management in progressing elements of the new Forest Management Plan, and with interstate and local researchers in forest silviculture and fire management.

Representatives of indigenous communities were closely involved in consultation in forest areas where indigenous heritage values were identified. Several joint field visits were conducted and discussions held with indigenous landowners and Commission staff. The Commission used detailed information provided by Aboriginal elders in its forest management, in consultation with the Aboriginal groups involved.

The Consultation Officer conducted five forest management educational tours with high school, TAFE and university student groups, and other awareness tours with groups including Members of Parliament and international forest and timber industry representatives.

Property owners whose land adjoins harvest coupes have routinely received early advice about adjacent operations and been invited to discuss any concerns with the Commission's planning officers.

### Plantations

The Commission participated actively in Regional Plantation Committees in the South-West (Trees South West) and Great Southern (Timber 2002) as well as the TIRES (transport planning) group. Senior staff also gave presentations at various strategic planning forums and are regular contributors to the local branch of Australian Forest Growers (the national private forestry body) and WA Agroforestry Working Group.

### International links

The Commission actively pursues international links to exchange knowledge and skills and promote our own products.

The Commission's Manager of South Coast Sharefarms, Barry Jordan, visited various forestry operations in Europe in April 2002. The tour, which was jointly funded by the Albany Plantation Forest Company of Australia Pty Ltd and the Forest Products Commission, provided the opportunity for him to develop links with foresters in other countries and study their methods in growing the same species of trees as those grown in Western Australia. Japanese investors involved in forestry projects in the Albany region joined him in Portugal where they were able to compare the management practices in the two countries.