



## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT BRANCH

Level 1, 117 Great Eastern Highway  
RIVERVALE 6103

Phone: (08) 9475 8882

Fax: (08) 9475 8899

Email: [jonathan.smith@fpc.wa.gov.au](mailto:jonathan.smith@fpc.wa.gov.au)

# Media Release

## **Forest Products Commission: Training for new recruits will showcase e-learning to forestry industry**

Wednesday, 20 June 2007

The Forest Products Commission is bringing e-learning to the Western Australian forestry industry with the development of a CD-ROM designed to help new forestry recruits learn at their own pace.

New trainees will be able to learn using on-demand interaction and assessment materials, supported by regular access to a virtual classroom. The program will be developed by the Forest Products Commission and long-term training partner Great Southern TAFE in Albany.

The new course will address a unit of competency focusing on environmental health and safety as part of the Certificate III in Forest and Forest Products training package, currently presented as a one day seminar.

The project has been realised with the help of a \$25,000 grant through the national training system's e-learning strategy, the Australian Flexible Learning Framework, which is collaboratively funded by the Australian and State and Territory Governments.

Every year, the Forest Products Commission recruits between six and 12 trainees to work in its 12 operational areas around WA, including Kununurra, Esperance, Kalgoorlie and Katanning. The new recruits currently spend up to 10 weeks away from their operational centres to complete face-to-face and practical training, which is up to 70% of the course load.

The e-learning unit will be piloted by this year's intake of new operational trainees who are required to complete Certificate III in the first year on the job. The intention is to make the training available to all new Forest Products Commission recruits.

Bill Towie, Forest Products Commission Training Consultant, said the introduction of e-learning to deliver the more theory-based competencies was better for the students and also better for the organisation. "The trainees can learn at their own pace, at a time and place that fits in with their other commitments," Bill said. "At the same time, this is an obvious way to tackle some of the training costs associated with travel, accommodation and venue hire within the industry."

But another big advantage the Forest Products Commission saw in offering mandatory e-learning was its flexibility.

“When we offer the environmental health and safety training as a one day course to a group of inductees and one person is sick or can’t make it on the day, it’s a nightmare to reschedule their training so they can meet requirements of the Certificate III qualification,” Bill said.

“Even by offering this one competency through e-learning, we will be able to save a lot of time, money and effort by allowing new recruits to complete the course at a time convenient to them.”

The FPC plans to trial the delivery of the environmental health and safety competency this year before examining ways to extend e-learning to other appropriate competencies in the future.

“Because this competency has to be completed by all field workers, we are hoping that offering it on CD-ROM will give other areas a taste of what e-learning can offer,” Bill said.

The e-learning materials will also be made available to the general forestry industry in WA which includes a substantial private plantation industry.

For more information contact:  
JONATHAN SMITH  
CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS  
Phone: 9475 8882 or 0408 944 760