



24. Pruned Stand Certification

Pruned Stand Certification (PSC) provides independent quality assurance of a potentially very valuable product – pruned logs. It provides the basis for future sale of pruned logs and ensures buyers and sellers can negotiate with confidence. As Australia lifts the controls on export of logs and allows free markets to determine prices, growers will need to be able to guarantee their logs meet international standards. (As of April 1997 the Federal government removed the need for export permits for export of plantation grown wood).

PSC was developed in New Zealand and has now been introduced into Australia and is administered by Australian Forest Growers, AFG, (a non profit organisation representing private forest growers throughout Australia). PSC is specifically designed to be applied to stands of trees that will be pruned over a period of time.

Wood quality

Knots seen in sawn timber are sections of branches. If the branches had been pruned off when the tree was small, the wood laid down after pruning, called "clearwood", would be free of knots. Clearwood is more valuable than knotty wood especially for higher grade wood products such as appearance grade timbers and veneers.

Information for buyers

Buyers of logs can not always determine the log quality unless logs are sawn or peeled to reveal the wood quality and amount of product that can be recovered. In other words they need to look inside the log. Buyers will ask:

1. What are the size and quality of logs?
2. To what standard were the trees pruned?
3. How many trees in a stand (or what area) have been treated in the same way?

Information for growers

The owner needs to show potential buyers that:

1. All pruning operations were done on time and to prescribed standards.

2. Stands of trees have been managed in particular ways.

The following tasks can be easily done by the grower, forester or an auditor:

- Measuring a small sample of pruned trees to determine the smallest and largest diameter and also the average diameter at time of pruning.
- Assessing the straightness of the pruned section of the trees
- Mapping the area of trees pruned.

Auditing process

The measurements and records can then be verified by an independent and accredited auditor who checks about 25% of the sample and the boundaries of the pruned area. The auditor then processes the data and prepares a standardised map using a geographic information system, GIS.

When the auditor is satisfied the audit is correct, a certificate is issued to the grower. Certificates are issued for each pruning operation. The results of the auditor's reports are known only to the auditor and grower and are confidential unless the grower decides otherwise. A copy of the auditors findings are held in a secure place by AFG

When to audit

Audits are best done immediately after pruning but can be done up to 12 – 18 months later. Alternatively sample trees can be felled and cut open to determine tree size at pruning.

Auditors

Auditors are often members of AFG and are trained and accredited by AFG.

The first auditors in Australia were trained by Andy Warner, Chairman, Australian Forest Growers Tasmanian Chapter, in Tasmania, early in 1997. These auditors are available to measure stands and to audit measurements done by others. A manual of procedures and a list of auditors is available from Australian Forest Growers (Tasmania).

Pruned Stand Certification is endorsed in principle by the Association of Consulting Foresters of Australia, AFG, Private Forests Tasmania and major New Zealand forestry companies and corporations.

More information

- [Private Forests Tasmania](#)
- [Australian Forest Growers](#) (Tasmania), phone 03 6327 3051 or the national office of AFG, phone 06 285 3833.





Buyer

I'm not paying you that much! I'll have to put the tree through my sawmill first.

Farmer

Don't worry about that – my trees have been AFG certified – 100% clearwood!

Author, Arthur Lyons, March 1997

 	<p>Private Forests Tasmania, the government authority specifically established to foster and assist private landholders manage their forests in a sustainable manner and to encourage the expansion of plantations.</p>
<p>This information has been prepared as an introduction to Farm Forestry. More comprehensive information on a range of topics is available Private Forests Tasmania.</p>	
<p>Burnie</p>	<p>6434 6285</p>
<p>Hobart</p>	<p>6233 7445</p>
<p>Launceston</p>	<p>6336 5300</p>