

Innovation, community engagement, planning and operations in forestry were recognised at Forest Practices Awards on Wednesday 19 October 2022.

Presented by the Honourable Pam Allan, Chair of the Board of the Forest Practices Authority (FPA), the awards recognise outstanding achievements in forest practices.

As the independent forestry regulatory body for forestry, the FPA has an important role in acknowledging excellence amongst the Forest Practices Officers (FPOs), who are trained and authorised by the FPA and work within the forest industry.

Three of the awards are specifically for FPOs: two recognise the complex skills required for planning and supervising forest operations, and one is awarded to an outstanding new FPO. Other awards included innovation in forest practices, excellence in community engagement, and excellence in conducting forest operations, often awarded to a forestry contractor.

“It is important to recognise the achievements of people who work in the forest practices system. Today we have seen some outstanding work,” Ms Allan said.

“We are particularly pleased to present two awards to forest contracting company JCH Harvest Group who won the ‘Conduct of forest operations to high operational standards’ award and were joint winners in the ‘Innovation in forest practices’ award. Forest contractors are literally at the cutting edge of forestry and it so encouraging to see companies like this one innovating and taking their environmental and operational obligations really seriously.”

Three Forest Practices Officers, who are appointed by the FPA and employed in the forest industry, won the awards for:

- Preparation of forest practices plans – Dion Robertson, Sustainable Timber Tasmania
- Inspection and supervision of forest operations – Adam Crook, Forico
- New FPO excellence – Hafwen Pearce, Sustainable Timber Tasmania.

A forest scientist, Dr Dean Williams, and an IT specialist, Mike Ross, were joint winners in the ‘Innovation in forest practices’ award for introducing a network of sensors in forest managed by Sustainable Timber Tasmania to monitor values such as wedge-tailed eagle nests.

Mark Wapstra, a consultant ecologist, won the award for ‘Excellence in community engagement’. Mark has spent 30 years helping people understand and identify forest biodiversity and explaining the management requirements of the forest practices system.

“All the finalists were worthy of recognition – it was challenging deciding who to give the awards to,” Ms Allan said.

The categories and award recipients are as follows:

Award category	Award winner	Award finalist
Preparation of forest practices plans	Dion Robertson, Operational Planner, STT	Simon McNamara, Planning Forester, Forico  Dan Ryan, Regional Manager South, Reliance Forest Fibre
Inspection and supervision of forest operations	Adam Crook, Native Forest and Fire Management Coordinator, Forico	
Conduct of forest operations to high operational standards	JCH Harvest Group	
Innovation in forest practices	Dean Williams, Forest Management Services Manager, STT and Mike Ross, CEO, Indicium Dynamics  JCH Harvest Group	
Excellence in community engagement	Mark Wapstra, Manager and Senior Scientist, ECOTas	Workforce Development and Diversity Project, Tasmanian Forests and Forest Products Network (TFFPN)
New FPO excellence award	Hafwen Pearce, Coordinator Harvesting and Sales, STT  Michael Evans, North West Plantation Forester, Forico	



FPA Award recipients (from top left) Chair Pamela Allan, Mike Ross, Lauren Carter, JCH Staff, Michael Evans, Simon McNamara, Hafwen Pearce, CFPO Peter Volker, (from bottom left) Dean Williams, Dan Ryan, Mark Wapstra, Adam Crook, Tracey Taylor.