

Process for supplying forest practices plans and related documents to the FPA

BACKGROUND

Forest practices plans (FPPs) are key legal instruments in planning and implementing a high standard of forest practices and are critical to the FPA's monitoring and regulation of those practices. There are compelling reasons of FPA and stakeholder business efficiency, security, and transparency for the FPA to independently maintain a centralised database of all FPPs, accessible to the users and companies who created them.

Once an application to consider a FPP or a s.23 variation for certification has been made, it becomes an official document. The application and the decision must be held in a secure location as such documents may be needed many years down the track for legal or historic reasons.

Until Cover Page introduced a facility to load scanned documents in January 2011, FPOs (Planning) were required to securely store these records for a minimum of seven years. At that time the FPA was informed that such documents are subject to the Archives Act and need to be permanently stored. The FPA has requested these official documents either be scanned and loaded onto Cover Page or sent to the FPA for secure long-term storage.

This document describes how Forest Practices Officers (FPOs) should supply certified FPPs and related documents to the FPA.

FPP DOCUMENTS REQUIRED BY FPA

The FPA requires documents forming the certified FPP, any variations to that FPP and certain documents related to that FPP to be made available to the FPA – preferably as electronic files that have been uploaded by the user to the online Cover Page database system. These documents include:

- a) completed and fully signed documents based on the standard FPA Microsoft Word template forms (some optional) available in the FPO section of the FPA website
- b) landowner memorandum
- c) map(s) forming part of the FPP or variation, including georeferenced maps (*not all variations require a map, but the map of the plan at time of Certification must be loaded*)
- d) finalised natural and cultural evaluation sheets
- e) copies of fully signed and certified s.22 or s.23 variations to an FPP
- f) shapefiles (zipped) of maps
- g) 'Change of Responsible Person Agreement' in writing under seal (if responsibilities of FPP applicant is assigned to another person under s.25D of the *Forest Practices Act 1985*)
- h) finalised compliance reports (DOP(s) and Final).

Please note:

1. All required information including personal details need to be supplied to the FPA.
2. The documents need to include pages with initials and signatures, including the printed FPP coversheet from the Cover Page system, such that they represent true copies of the originals signed

by the parties. Acceptable file types are JPEG and/or PDF – but PDFs are preferred. The pages may be scanned in monotone at a minimum resolution of 150 dpi for textual pages.

3. Maps need to be provided in colour at a minimum resolution of 300 dpi. (A4 PDF file size per page is ~ 1 Mb). A4 or A3 format is acceptable.

The documents for 2. and 3. can be supplied separately as two electronic files, or one complete hard copy.

The FPA does not require copies of other documents associated with the FPP that are not on this list to be supplied as part of the process referred to in this document, e.g. notifications, correspondence with local councils or other parties etc.

NOTE: FPPs certified prior to 1 January 2011 (and any variations of those FPPs certified prior to or after that date) will not be required to be lodged centrally with the FPA. FPOs are responsible for the safe and secure storage of these documents. FPOs must transfer copies to the FPA if they are moving or retiring and the documents are not otherwise being held in a secure storage system that is known and accessible to the FPA. If requested for monitoring or assessment purposes, FPOs must provide the FPA with any specific FPP that is not held in the FPA's central database.

OTHER OPTIONS FOR DELIVERY OF FPPS AND VARIATION INFORMATION

The FPA can accept FPPs and variations and related documents as photocopies sent to FPA, 30 Patrick Street, Hobart, TAS 7000. Note that maps need to be provided in colour. FPA staff will then scan and upload them to the relevant FPP in Cover Page.

TIMING OF DELIVERY AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROVIDING DOCUMENTS

FPPs and related documents need to be supplied electronically or by photocopy to the FPA within five working days of certification or assignment of responsibility under seal.

The certifying FPO is responsible for ensuring the documents are made available to the FPA.

ACCESSIBILITY OF FPPs UPLOADED TO COVERPAGE DATABASE

The user (and their user group) who uploaded the FPPs will be able to download documents from their particular FPP Cover Page, but will not be able to delete files from the Cover Page system. If an error was made in an uploaded file the user will need to contact the FPA to have the file declared as invalid in the system.

For details on accessibility of FPPs and related information under the *Right to Information Act 2009*, please see the FPA's information sheet on 'Communication of information in relation to forest practices plans' on the FPA's website.

Peter Volker
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For further information or advice please contact the FPA on (03) 6165 4090 or info@fpa.tas.gov.au