

# NZ Institute of Forestry (Inc.) Code of Ethics

(Amended 2014)

The following is the Code of Ethics of the Institute, and every member of the Institute is bound by this Code. A breach of any of the provisions of this Code may render the person concerned liable to disciplinary action.

## 1. Professional Responsibility

- 1.1 The first duty of each and every member is to render service to the member's client or the member's employer with absolute fidelity, and to practise their profession with devotion to high ideals of integrity, honour and courtesy, loyalty to the Institute, and in the spirit of fairness and goodwill to fellow members, employees and subordinates.
- 1.2 A member's conduct shall at all times uphold the reputation of the Institute and the dignity of the profession and abide by all laws, statutes, regulations and rules relevant to their professional practice.
- 1.3 Each and every member shall maintain the high standards of their profession and should refer to the Institute, any act or omission of a fellow member they are aware of and which may appear to bring discredit on the Institute or its members.
- 1.4 Every member must take all reasonable steps to uphold and promote the health and safety of people in forests and to uphold and promote health and safety practices in work places associated with forests and forestry operations.
- 1.5 Every member shall recognise and respect the need for sustainable management of the environment and endeavour to minimise adverse environmental impacts from their forestry activities for both present and future generations.
- 1.6 No member shall prepare or certify any statement which is known to be or ought to be known to be false, incorrect, misleading, deceptive or open to misconstruction by reason of a misstatement, omission or suppression of a material fact, any deceptive act, or otherwise.
- 1.7 A member shall exercise the utmost care and good faith to ensure the maintenance of the highest standards in the preparation of statements, reports and certificates and other documents, as these constitute one of the most valuable assets of the profession, being relied upon by clients, employers, shareholders, investors, creditors and the public.
- 1.8 When asked for a valuation of a forest, or an opinion on a forestry matter, no member shall give an unconsidered answer. A member's counsel constitutes professional advice which must be prepared to the highest standards of competency and rendered only after having properly ascertained and weighed the facts.
- 1.9 A member must maintain the strictest integrity in the performance of the member's professional duties. To this end no member shall:
  - 1.9.1 Adopt the role of advocate to the exclusion of that integrity;
  - 1.9.2 Allow the performance of that member's professional duties to be improperly influenced by the preferences of clients or others as to the result of their professional work;
  - 1.9.3 Rely improperly upon information supplied by clients or others in the performance of their professional duties; or
  - 1.9.4 Act in any other way inconsistent with the duties of integrity.

## 2. Responsibility to Clients

- 2.1 Every member shall act towards that member's client in all professional matters strictly in a fiduciary manner. Any information of a confidential nature given to the member by a client shall be kept confidential and not disclosed to any other party without the consent of the client. A member shall not be deemed to commit a breach of this requirement by

reason of a member answering any question which the member is legally compellable to answer in any judicial proceedings in which the member is called as a witness.

- 2.2 A member must not accept or carry out any instruction where there is, or may reasonably be construed to be, a conflict of interest and must withdraw from any instruction if such a conflict of interest arises or becomes known after the instruction has been accepted, unless such conflict of interest is fully disclosed in writing to all relevant parties and all such parties agree that the instruction may be accepted or continued by the member.
- 2.3 A member must inform the member's client or clients of the nature of any business connections, interests or other affiliations the member may have in connection with the service to the client or clients.
- 2.4 A member should not undertake any work for which the member is not qualified or where the member is in any doubt or ought to be in any doubt as to the adequacy of the member's professional competency and or experience to undertake the work unless such work is completed under the supervision of a person of adequate competence.

### **3. Professional Fees**

- 3.1 No member shall in respect of the member's professional work levy a fee to the member's client that is other than reasonable in all the circumstances.
- 3.2 A member shall make known the basis of the member's fee if requested by the client.
- 3.3 Fees may be negotiated on any mutually agreeable basis. While no fee shall be contingent upon the reporting of a predetermined result or value or direction of a result or value that favours either the cause of the client, the amount of result or value estimate, a fee (or a portion of a fee) may be contingent on the attainment of a stipulated result, or the occurrence of a subsequent event, provided the member's decision or advice is not improperly influenced by the fee.
- 3.4 No member shall pay a commission, allowance or other benefit any person who may introduce clients to that member and no member shall accept a commission, allowance or other benefit for such introduction without, in both cases, written disclosure to the client(s) concerned.
- 3.5 A member's charge to the member's client or clients shall constitute their only remuneration in connection with their professional advice.

### **4. Professional Work by Members in Employment**

- 4.1 A member in employment shall not accept professional work on the member's own account unless with the knowledge and consent of the member's employer or unless the member's employment contract expressly provides such authority.

### **5. Professional Competency**

- 5.1 As part of maintaining the standards of professional competency referred to under the New Zealand Institute of Forestry Rules 127.3, 147.5 and 156 every registered member shall, unless exempted by Council, participate in an ongoing annual programme of Continuing Professional Development in accordance with guidelines published to members from time-to-time by the Institute.

### **6. Use of Member's Name and Designation**

- 6.1 A member should avoid the use of the member's name by, or personal association with, any enterprise or activity which may bring the member, the Institute, or the profession into disrepute.
- 6.2 The initials FNZIF, MNZIF and RMNZIF, denoting members' status, as appropriate, are personal to individual members and shall be used only following or immediately in connection with the member's name.
- 6.3 A member's name and signature must appear on every report or valuation undertaken, together with the approved initials as described in 6.2 above or such other designation as the Institute may from time to time approve.

- 6.4 A member acknowledges that when signing reports as the primary professional the member accepts full responsibility for the content of those reports and other documents including content that may be the result of inquiries or development by others.

## **7. Advertising and Promotion**

- 7.1 A member may advertise or promote the member's professional services, either individually or collectively, provided that such advertising or promotion complies with the following:
- 7.1.1 It must not contravene, or be inconsistent with, the other provisions of the Code of Ethics;
  - 7.1.2 It must not contain any reference to a client without that client's consent having first been obtained;
  - 7.1.3 The content does not carry the implication of an ability to influence any court, tribunal, regulatory agency, or similar body or official.
- 7.2 A member when advertising or presenting practice stationery shall not do so in a manner that may be construed as misleading.
- 7.3 A member is responsible for any advertising or promotion which the member has expressly or by implication authorised or which is for the member's benefit.
- 7.4 Neither the Institute's crest nor logo may be used without first obtaining the approval of the Council.