

NZ Rural Fire Research Workshop

December 8-9, 2010



Outline

- Scion and the CRI reforms
- Fire research at Scion
- Programme Performance
- Priorities for 2011

Scion

- New Zealand Forest Research Institute Ltd, a Crown Research Institute (CRI)
- ~350 staff: **Rotorua**, Chch, Akl, Wellington
- Science reforms:
 - Re-definition of CRI purpose and scope
 - Success measured by benefit to NZ
 - Board is responsible for delivering benefit
 - Core purpose funding
 - Fire in contestable funding pool



Scion's Core Purpose

- SCP: drive innovation and growth from New Zealand's forestry, wood product and wood derived materials and other biomaterial sectors, to create economic value and contribute to beneficial environmental and social outcomes for New Zealand
- Outcomes:
 - forestry biosecurity and risk management and mitigation



Board review process

- Reviewing Scion's overall strategy
- Process of engagement with stakeholders
- Opportunity for fire stakeholders to engage with process
- Outcome will be Statement of Corporate intent i.e. definition of research priorities



Scion Rural Fire Research Group: Purpose

- Develop the science and technology needed to protect life and property and manage fire in the landscape
- Themes:
 - enhance firefighter safety
 - better understand fire behaviour
 - allow for safe & effective use of fire as a land management tool
 - deploy effective suppression resources
 - manage fire in different landscapes



History and capability

- Forest fire research undertaken by NZ Forest Service at FRI during 1970s
- Programme re-established in 1992, after 15 year lapse
- Based at Scion, Christchurch
- ~4.0 staff (FTE's), expertise in:
 - fire behaviour/science
 - fuel dynamics
 - climatology
 - ergonomics
 - social science
- Broader capabilities of Scion e.g. carbon, remote sensing, economics



SCION 
Next generation biomaterials

Research team

- Richard Parker – new Project Leader, firefighter health, fitness & productivity
- Grant Pearce – scientist, weather/climate, fire behaviour, fire danger rating
- Veronica Clifford – research officer, fuels & fire behaviour, tech transfer
- Lisa Langer – social science, community resilience & recovery
- Contract/seasonal staff as required
- Recruitment?

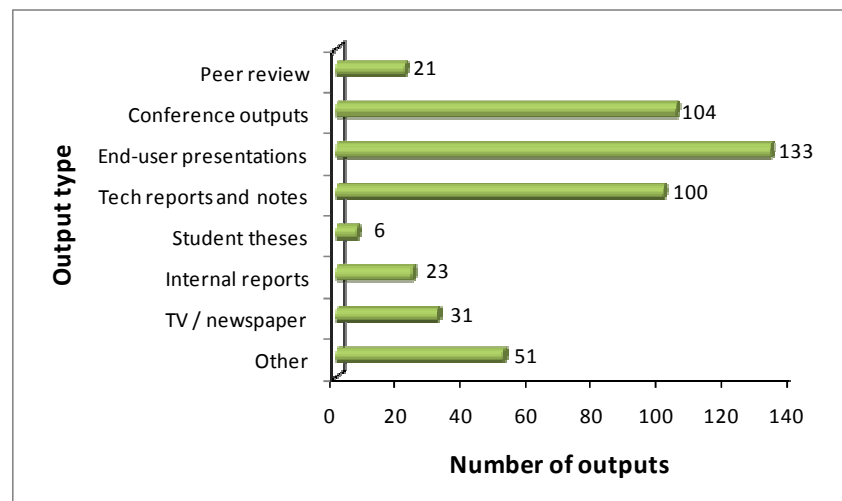
SCION 
Next generation biomaterials

FRST contract performance (2004 – 2010)

- External review of rural fire research programme, 2009
 - obtained overall “Excellent” rating
 - very strong end-user relationships
- But:
 - lack of science publications
 - need for links with CDEM sector
- Achievement recognised by Minister of Internal Affairs in speech to 2009 annual FRFANZ Conference
 - NZ fire science considered “world class”
- 2010 FRST contract classification
 - Scion’s top performing programme



FRST contract outputs (2004 – 2010)



Why is the programme highly rated?

- Strong constructive partnership with stakeholders (RFRAC)
- Effective governance by stakeholders
- Clear strategy focused on outcomes agreed by all parties
- Committed science team
- Excellent collaboration within Scion, NZ and internationally



Important research collaborations

- Whole of Scion participation
- NZ: University of Canterbury, Landcare Research, NIWA, MetService
- Australian Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre:
 - NZ is full member (M Dudfield on Board)
 - Critical that NZ researchers actively participate to ensure relevance of activities to NZ
- US Forest Service (social, fire simulation modelling, firefighter fitness/ ergonomics)
- Canadian Forest Service (fire danger rating, fire simulation modelling)



Priorities for 2010/11

- Although current funding rolled over for 2 years, agree new 6 year research strategy and research programme
- Continue to engage with FRST / MSI to be well positioned for new bid and increased funding
- Participate in development of Scion's Statement of Corporate Intent
- Keep up the good work!