

A Focus on People: Striving for Excellence

Prepared by

FREP Quality Management Team, Ministry of Forests and Range

Welcome to the new Quality Management Series of the Forest and Range Evaluation Program (FREP) Newsletter. This newsletter series is intended to raise staff awareness about progress in achieving the six strategic themes introduced in FREP's 5-Year Strategic Plan. These themes (see page 2) were identified to achieve the program's overall priorities and to guide how FREP activities are conducted. Each newsletter in this series will:

- present up-to-date news and interesting facts about one of the six themes,
- feature a unique "your story" section that highlights the experiences of our dynamic team, and
- provide opportunities for readers to win prized "swag" by responding to quiz questions.

Because people are so crucial to FREP's success, we explore the "people focus" strategic theme in this first edition: How do our quality management and quality assurance activities tie in with our focus on people? What progress have we made on our journey to embed a culture of quality and continuous improvement within FREP?

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People—the key to FREP's success! A cheerful resource stewardship monitoring field crew in the Headwaters Forest District. Photo Credit: Norma Stromberg-Jones.



Quality Assurance...

...is the consciousness and the discipline to meet the highest standard through systematic processes and continuous improvement.

The FREP Mission:

To be a world leader in Resource Stewardship Monitoring and effectiveness evaluations; providing the science-based information needed for decision-making and continuous improvement of British Columbia's forest and range practices, policies and legislation.

<http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/frep/index.htm>

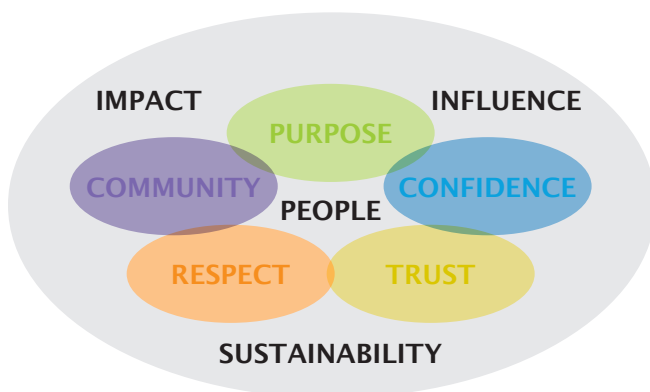
FREP'S STRATEGIC THEMES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES*

STRATEGIC THEMES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES & DELIVERABLES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarity of Priorities • Leadership • People Focus • Program Development & Implementation • Continuous Improvement & Critical Reflection • Communication, or Influencing Change through Collaboration & Information Sharing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand Partnerships • Close the Loop to Management • Communicate • Continuous Improvement • New Technology • Information Management • Develop a Holistic Approach • Scientific Credibility • Implement Resources Stewardship & Intensive Evaluations • Innovation

* For more information, see *Forest and Range Evaluation Program 5-Year Strategic Plan, 2007–2011* (http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/frep/site_files/library/FREP_5yr_Strategic_Plan_Sept2007.pdf)

OUR JOURNEY TOWARD QUALITY AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

FREP is successful because of its people. FREP's vision, mission, objectives, and priorities create a common sense of purpose and a clear direction. By identifying what people need and by recognizing people for their contributions to the program, FREP is building a dynamic, people-focussed team that works with a strong sense of community. The cycle of continuous improvement is driven by a team that strives for excellence in all aspects of the program's management and delivery. Because of this attention to quality, we continue to improve, innovate, and grow.



So what does “quality” mean for us? How do our quality management and quality assurance activities integrate with a focus on people? As you may be aware, National Quality Institute certification presents FREP with a unique opportunity to benchmark our progress against public and private organizations in Canada. The recognition and sharing of best practices alone is very encouraging. However, our

goal to be the best environmental monitoring program in the world goes well beyond these levels of certification or award.

We started our quality journey in 2005 and achieved Level 2 certification under the NQI Progressive Excellence Program in 2007. This year we are applying for Level 3. We will strive to meet the following NQI people-focus criteria for Levels 3 and 4 over the next 2 years. The level 3 and 4 “People” focus” criteria are listed below:

LEVEL 3 CRITERIA FOR “PEOPLE FOCUS”

The organization has established and implemented:

1. a method to involve people, across the organization, in addressing issues related to well-being for example, health, safety and environmental concerns;
2. a method to determine training and developmental needs, (notably to meet goals in the improvement plan);
3. a method to evaluate the effectiveness of training and developmental programs;
4. a method to measure people satisfaction at all levels, and link feedback to improvement opportunities;
5. an approach and method to identify the contribution of people across the organization, and link recognition to improvement objectives; and
6. an approach and method to evaluate the effectiveness of the overall approach to People Focus and use of this information to make further improvements.

LEVEL 4 CRITERIA FOR “PEOPLE FOCUS”

1. Indicators of the effectiveness of training and education, in particular in the area of quality improvement principles and methods.

2. Levels of involvement in improvement activities that link directly to the goals and objectives of the organization.
3. Levels of awareness and involvement in addressing issues related to well-being, for example, health, safety and environmental concerns.
4. Levels and trends in employee satisfaction and morale.
5. Levels and trends of employee suggestions and ideas submitted, and implemented.
6. Levels and trends in measures of employee dissatisfaction, for example, employee turnover rates, absenteeism and grievances.

With each quality assessment, we learn a great deal about our progress. We summarize these comments, suggestions, and identified challenges into an improvement plan. Our "People Focus Improvement Plan" for 2008 has the following three priorities:

1. Continue to improve wide-scale communication of all aspects of the program—communicate successes of staff to date and build future engagement.
2. Communicate with individual district managers concerning district staff importance, successes, accomplishments, and the value of their FREP-related work.
3. Continue, expand, and improve individual and district-level recognition (e.g., Chief Forester–Assistant Deputy Minister, Operations Award, and Chief Forester Award of Recognition).

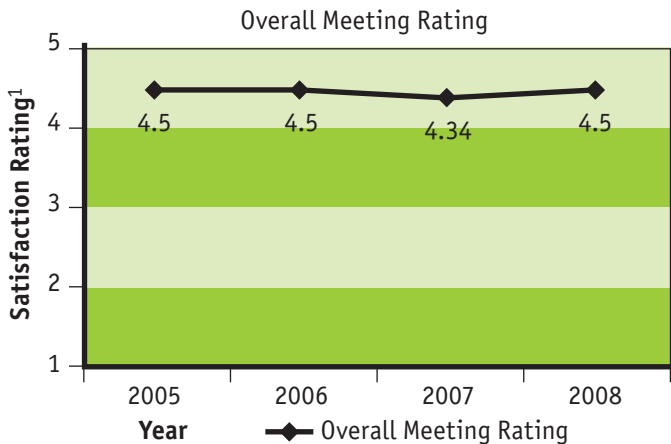
Our commitment to continuous improvement occurs at both the quality assessment and improvement plan levels, as well as in our daily communications. Staff members are encouraged to informally participate at every level by sharing their suggestions and innovative ideas. FREP also has many formal channels of communication, including a monthly resource stewardship monitoring (RSM) conference call, the Q&A website, various team and working group meetings, and the annual Continuous Improvement (CI) Workshop held in Victoria. (For details on the FREP Improvement Plan, go to <http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/frep/pmgmt/index.htm>).

PEOPLE-FOCUSED QUALITY INDICATORS

What progress have we made on our journey to embed a culture of quality and continuous improvement within FREP? The following charts highlight some of FREP's people-focussed performance trends over the last 4 years.

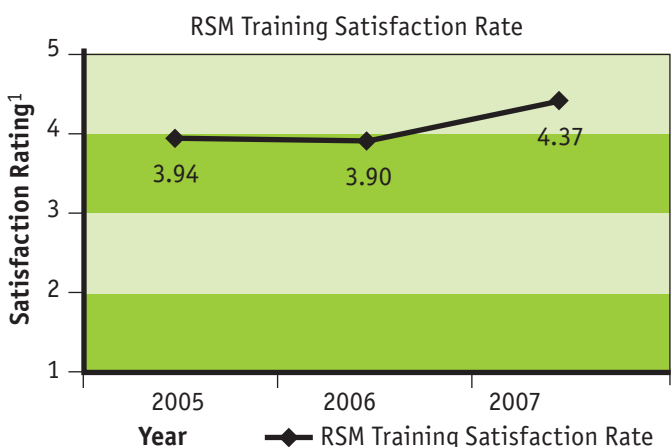
PARTICIPANT SATISFACTION WITH FREP'S CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT WORKSHOP

FREP's annual CI Workshop brings together participants from the regions, districts, and other ministries to share their experiences and best practices. At the end of the workshop, we evaluate how the session went. As the chart below shows, the satisfaction rate with the CI workshop has remained consistently high.



PARTICIPANT SATISFACTION WITH FREP'S RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP MONITORING TRAINING.

Every year FREP makes an effort to ensure that staff involved in RSM are trained to collect high quality data. At the end of each training session, we ask participants to rate their learning experience and satisfaction rate. Using the participants' feedback, we adapt and improve our training approach; these improvements are reflected in the slightly higher satisfaction rating for 2007 (see chart below). In addition, a report from the trainer's perspective is available that summarizes better facilitation and teaching skills for future training (for more information, see http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/frep/site_files/qmgmt/QM_QA_Site_Visit_Report2007.pdf). Evaluation and feedback for this year's training session will be available in the winter of 2008.

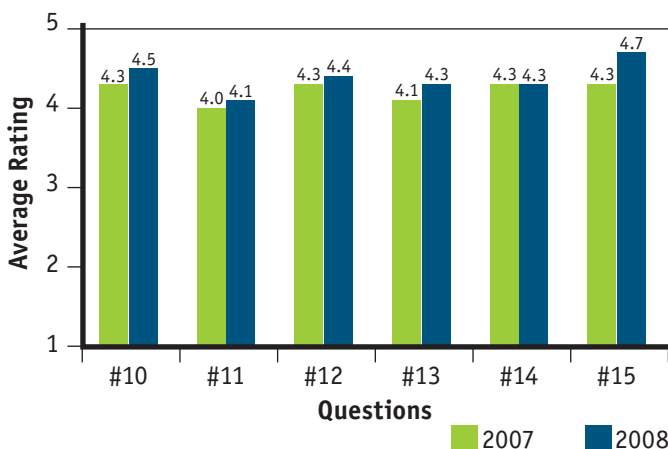


1 Rating scale 1 to 5; 1 - strongly disagree, 2 - disagree, 3 - neutral, 4 - agree, 5 - strongly agree.

FREP PROGRAM SURVEY FEEDBACK

Once a year we also conduct a quality assessment survey that asks staff and senior managers questions related to the strategic themes. The chart below shows the consistently high 2007/2008 ratings for the following people-focus questions:

- Question 10. For those involved in FREP activities, there is a sense of teamwork, purpose, and pride.
- Question 11. The training under FREP is sufficient for me to implement my responsibilities.
- Question 12. I am encouraged to express my opinions about any aspect of FREP and my opinions are listened to.
- Question 13. Innovation is encouraged in FREP.
- Question 14. My FREP responsibilities are in my EPDP.
- Question 15. Excellence, quality, and continuous improvement are encouraged in FREP.



The FREP Quality Management Series Newsletter is a regular publication of the Forest and Range Evaluation Program designed to inform stakeholders on program development and implementation, and report on the results of evaluation projects.



YOUR STORY

For this "people-focus" edition, we feature Peter Bradford's "A Night to Remember" story on winning the Premier's Award.



Some of the team behind FREP, recognized program for Excellence in Leadership – 2007/2008. Inset Photo: Peter Bradford, MFR, Forest Practices Branch, recognized for Excellence in Leadership, receives Premier's Award for Leadership – 2007/2008.

From Executive Blog: https://sharepoint.forests.gov.bc.ca/exec_forum/Lists/Posts/Post.aspx?ID=36 (accessible by internal staff only).

"On March 10, I had the honour of receiving the Premier's Award for leadership for the work done under the Forest and Range Evaluation Program (FREP). I've been asked by many people how I felt about receiving the award. Thank you to Jim and Doug for providing an opportunity for me to express my thoughts here in the Executive Blog. The Awards evening was an incredible event. More than 700 people were there. For each of the three finalists in seven categories, there was a short video of their program accomplishments and highlights. Seeing the amazing variety, quality and innovation of our fellow public servants was incredibly inspiring.

When it came time for the leadership award, and my name was called, it was a great surprise. On stage the Premier had some very kind words and expressed his thanks, and in a few sentences, his understanding of the importance of our program. When I sat back down, my eight-year-old daughter sat on my lap and told me how proud she was of me. That was a great personal moment. Once the glass trophy had gone around the table, it came back to my daughter and she looked at it closely. After a minute she asked me "Dad, why is your name the only one on there, why not the whole team?" Her question really

captured how I feel about receiving the award. FREP has, and continues to be, an opportunity for shared leadership. Staff from across the province in the districts, regions, branches, and executive, as well as staff from MOE, ILMB and MTSA have taken the initiative to lead individual teams, promote FREP, provide input, suggest and develop better ways of doing all aspects of the program. Over the last few years we have all learned a great deal from each other, and certainly I've learned a great deal from everyone being a part of such a wonderful team. So much of the leadership for FREP comes from the resource value team leaders, the district staff and the regional leads. When I was on the stage with Premier Campbell, I felt and knew that I was accepting the award on behalf on the whole team. Thank you to everyone."

"AND THE WINNER IS ..."

And now for your "inner competitor"... Each newsletter in the Quality Management Series will provide you with opportunities to test your FREP knowledge and receive coveted prizes! Lucky quiz winners will be announced in the next edition of this newsletter. Quality-minded IMS users are also automatically eligible for our "Best FREP IMS User of the Year" Contest.

QUIZ

Name the six strategic themes in FREP's 5-year strategic plan.

Email your answer to Thomas.Chen@gov.bc.ca. The first three correct respondents will receive valued 'swag'.

CONTEST

Using our data quality software, we will be able to pinpoint a person who entered the best-quality data. The winner ("Best FREP IMS User of the Year") will be announced at the 2009 Continuous Improvement Workshop and receive a very nice prize!

FASCINATING FREP FACTS



Did You Know—our FREP logo is inspired by the pristine natural beauty of British Columbia's landscape, as captured in Joe Alcock's photograph of Goodfellow Creek in the Columbia Forest District.

FREP
Forest & Range
Evaluation Program

MORE INFORMATION

For additional information on RSM or FREP, please visit our website: <http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/frep>.

Branch, region, and district staff, as well as contractors, are encouraged to submit personal stories on the theme of "Communication, or Influencing Change through Collaboration & Information Sharing" for the next edition of the Quality Management Series newsletter. Please send submissions for "Your Story" to:

Thomas.Chen@gov.bc.ca.

A big "thank you" to all FREP staff for your hard work and continued contributions to the program. You are the reason for FREP's success!