

Good Luck to Exam Candidates!

The ABCFP council and staff wish all exam candidates good luck as they get set to write the registration exams on October 1st.

Nominate a Colleague for an ABCFP Award

Each year at the annual conference, the ABCFP is pleased to present several awards to both members and non-members. You can nominate a worthy individual by visiting our website (www.abcfp.ca.) Click on the About Us tab and then select Our Awards from the drop-down menu. The deadline for award nominations is November 12, 2010.

Mark Your Calendars for the Wood is Good Conference

The ABCFP's annual conference and AGM is taking place in Vancouver February 24-25, 2011. We're dropping the ExpoFor moniker and creating a new conference name each year. The 2011 conference is called Wood is Good and will feature top-shelf speakers, an exciting pre-conference tour and lots of time to network with your colleagues. The conference will be held at the beautiful Fairmont Hotel Vancouver. Watch the next issue of BCFP for the registration brochure.

Discipline Case Studies



This case study is a result of the final step to the alternate dispute resolution of a formal complaint made against a forest professional. The publication of this case study is the last step before the complaint against the forest professional will be withdrawn and the grievances will be considered resolved. Fictitious names have been used in this case study.

Discussion of Issues

1. Evolution of reappraisal requirements

In December 2003 when Alan, an RPF, submitted an appraisal to the ministry for adjudication, he was not aware that requirements for annual reappraisals had been changed and that changed circumstance reappraisals were required instead. The person who prepared the appraisal on Alan's behalf may not have been aware of this change either. The district staff person with whom Alan was relying on for advice regarding appraisal requirements was also not aware of the change at the time. The district staff person felt that an agreement with Alan to revisit the specific tenure provisions, in this case, a year from the effective dates, was sufficient to deal with any adjustments or changes that needed to be made. Neither Alan nor the district staff person attempted to follow up with a review of the status of the tenure and how it was working, annually or otherwise. No attempt was made to review the appraisal with respect to changes that had happened during the year since the cutting authority was issued, nor was it made during any subsequent period of time. Had this review occurred, it is very likely that the changed circumstance reappraisal that was required on the first of the month following the changed circumstance would have been requested.

2. Professional reliance in appraisals

In this case, Alan's failure to correct the error in the appraisal by submitting a changed circumstance appraisal further supports the government's position that a level of review on appraisals is required.

3. Standards of professional practice

The forest professionals (Jane, Sean and Bob) who submitted the formal complaint in this case felt that Alan's behaviour was inconsistent with the standards of professional practice set out in the ABCFP Bylaws to an acceptable level and that he had acted in a manner that served to seriously erode the trust that should exist between forest professionals. Alan did not seek out advice on appraisals even though:

- His knowledge regarding appraisals was insufficient
- The person who prepared the appraisal was not a forest professional
- The district staff person Alan consulted was not able to properly advise him

Due diligence was further compromised when:

- Electronic records were lost when a computer ceased to function and no back-up existed
- Electronic documents were erroneously purged

4. Responsibility to the profession

In this case, Alan was unaware that a district investigation had been launched and that an ABCFP complaint was being contemplated. Increased communication among all the parties earlier on may have resulted in a resolution of the issue without the need to file a complaint.

Resolution of the Complaint

After the ABCFP sent a letter to Alan advising him of the complaint, the following events occurred:

- Meetings were held with Jane, Bob, Sean and Alan to discuss the issues.
- The parties wrote a joint letter to the ABCFP outlining the actions that had to be completed (including publishing this case study) before the complaint was withdrawn and the grievances resolved.

Key messages

Careful consideration and due diligence is required before making assumptions and arriving at conclusions in any work that a forest professional undertakes. Forest professionals need to ensure that they are competent in the areas of professional forestry they are practising in. Respectful dialogue and thorough communication between forest professionals is critical and integral to maintaining or promoting a system of professional reliance.

The full case study can be read on the Compliant Records page of the website under case 2009-10.