



HITMAN INNOVATOR ACHIEVES RECOGNITION FOR RADICALISING THE WOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRY

Media release, 8 August 2008, Fibre-gen Ltd, Christchurch, New Zealand: Peter Carter, the innovator of the Hitman technology that is creating sonic waves throughout the global sawmilling and veneer manufacturing industry, has been recognised at the Bayer Innovator Awards.

Mr Carter, Chief Executive of Fibre-gen, was named finalist in the Manufacturing category for developing automated tools that use sonic technology to measure wood stiffness and improve the efficiency of wood processing.

In just eight years since the first prototype was developed, Fibre-gen's patented Hitman brand has become the internationally recognised standard within the wood processing industry today.

The results of this innovative technology include reduced log wastage, reduced transport cost, and increased returns by providing an efficient and non-destructive means of measuring wood quality throughout the log supply chain.

These cost advantages can make a significant difference in an industry where there is increased competition from a more aggressive global economy, shrinking margins and demand for high quality structural timber that meet new building code standards.

Hitman tools and equipment can be used at all stages in the wood processing industry from tree-breeding programmes, through to mid-rotation and pre-harvest assessment in production forests, harvesting and delivery operations, and log sort-yards to wood processing facilities.

"Three of our products are in the market already, and one is on the way. The first to launch was the Hitman (Director) HM200 - a world-first tool that tests stiffness in logs and has so far sold into eight countries. The ST300 launched in 2004 has been sold in 5 countries and is used to evaluate stiffness of standing trees. The new LG640 and the PH300 are automated versions of the HM200 and ST300 respectively and are currently being actively introduced to the market," says Carter.

September last year saw the first installation of the LG640 acoustic log grading unit at Waimea Sawmillers in Nelson New Zealand. Since then Waimea has seen an increase in returns, reduced costs and wastage and produced additional out-turn of structural quality timber.

Positioned on the debarker outfeed, the LG640 automatically sonic grades every log into the green mill on a daily basis. As each log exits the debarker, the length is measured, the LG640 strikes the log while it is still moving, then automatically sends the results through to the operators and allows them to adjust the cut pattern to maximize MSG output.

With the guesswork removed from the grading and milling process Waimea have made a 3% gain in MSG lumber recovery and a significant improvement to their bottom line since the LG640 was installed in September last year.

“Our next product on the development line is the PH300 which is already creating quite a stir in the market. The prototype of the new unit is presently designed to fit into a Waratah ‘Big Wood’ processor head and has produced some excellent results. Initial feedback from within our largest markets suggest there will likely be strong interest from wood processing entities with mechanized harvesting and log making systems,” says Carter.

“We are working with InFact to commercialise our technology and it is exciting to see the difference that these innovations are providing for customers.”

The Bayer Innovators Awards acknowledge New Zealand's leading innovators – those who use their knowledge and commitment to improve the lives of New Zealanders and the wider world.

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About Fibre-Gen:

Fibre-gen is a business that provides specialised sonic technology applications and solutions for wood quality measurement and enhancing process efficiencies in the forest growing, harvesting and wood processing industries. Visit website www.Fibre-gen.com. The company is a jointly owned venture between In-Fact and Peter Carter, and was formerly owned by Carter Holt Harvey.

Bayer Innovators Awards: visit www.bayerinnovators.co.nz

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