

ShortCuts

FROM SKOGFORSK. NO 1 | 2015 | RESEARCH FOR TOMORROW'S FORESTRY

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SUPPORT

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WITHOUT TRUST"**

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HECTIC START FOR NEW CEO

Charlotte Bengtsson has now taken up her post as CEO of Skogforsk. Her start has been hectic to say the least – while touring the country as host of the Ukonf15 development conferences, she has also been fitting in as many visits to Skogforsk member companies as possible.

Charlotte Bengtsson has moved to Skogforsk from her position as head of department at SP Technical Research Institute of Sweden. She is a professor in wood building technology, and has a PhD in the same field from Chalmers. She sees many similarities between her posts at SP Wood Technology and Skogforsk.

“Both organisations have the same focus on research, innovation and transfer of knowledge. And we must be alert to win assignments and funding in competition with other research organisations. However, Skogforsk has a strength in its funding model – we can set up long-term research projects together with member companies and the Swedish Government in the form of a framework programme,” she says.

Charlotte Bengtsson is now quickly getting to know the organisation, her new colleagues

and the member companies, and she was frequently seen in the Skogforsk corridors already in the autumn.

“I’ve been made to feel very welcome, so it all feels very positive. We’re in the middle of a framework programme, so our activities are running with no big changes in direction planned – this gives me time to learn the job and get to know my colleagues. For a research institute, the knowledge and expertise of the staff is crucial for success,” she says.

Ukonf tour

Charlotte Bengtsson is visiting member companies and partners, mostly while taking part in the Ukonf tour. She sees it as a new start, where member companies can describe their expectations, and a dialogue is held about how Skogforsk can best meet these expectations.

She feels the theme of the con-



ferences, ‘Heroes of the Future’, matches her enthusiasm for the new job.

“I think it really hit the nail on the head. The conferences showed clearly the importance of the forest and the forestry sector

in building a sustainable future. Now it’s important to motivate everyone in the forestry sector, showing that we’re playing a hero’s role and that we have a responsibility,” she says.

SKOGFORSK COORDINATING ÄBIN

In 2015, the inventory of damage from moose browsing (ÄBIN) will be financed via a variable fee per delivered cubic metre. The inventory costs are then allocated according to the volume of timber handled by the forestry companies. The forest owners associations, forestry companies and Sveaskog are behind the funding.

The goal is to carry out an inventory in half of the countries’ moose administration areas each year, with the aim of collecting nationwide data in two years.

“We have just sent out invita-

tions to tender for this year’s inventories, which will begin in the beginning of April,” says Skogforsk’s Märtha Wallgren, who is leading the project. “Other important data in moose administration is the Swedish Forest Agency’s fodder prognoses, hunters’ moose observations (Älgobs), and inventory of moose droppings.”

All the large and most of the smaller Skogforsk member companies except sawmills, contribute SEK 0.13 per delivered m³ sub timber, pulpwood and forest fuel.

The total annual budget is

estimated at SEK 7–8 million, which will finance inventories of half of the moose administration areas this year.

Skogforsk is managing

The forestry sector’s National Wildlife Group (Swedish Forest Industries Federation, LRF, Bergvik and Sveaskog) is planning, organising and ensuring implementation in 2015.

The Wildlife Group will formulate proposals for implementation in 2016 and onwards, on the basis of the evaluation of the 2015 inventory results and data from the Swedish Forestry



Märtha Wallgren is leading the project.

Agency, which has been commissioned to develop ÄBIN.



An Elphinstone can pull up the rear trailer up onto the front one when driven unloaded.

INTERESTED IN THIS KIND OF PROJECT?

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NEW TRUCK PROJECT

Skogforsk wants to test a new type of truck in Sweden. It is a trailer-based truck where the rear of the rig can be lifted up onto the back of the front trailer when being driven unloaded, thereby shortening it by about 10 metres. This can help to reduce costs and emissions, and improve road safety.

Skogforsk has been studying the Easyloader concept from the Australian logging trailer builder, Elphinstone. The rig comprises a tractor and two linked trailers. When the truck is driven unloaded, the rear trailer is pulled up onto the front trailer. This shortens the length from 24-30 metres to about 16.5 metres, and only the tractor wheels and two of the trailer's 'triple wheels' are

in contact with the road surface.

"We hope to be able to test this type of truck under Nordic conditions," says Claes Löfroth, Skogforsk expert on heavy goods vehicles. "We're currently looking for a haulier interested in testing this new technology. Our calculations show that it could cut costs by around 16-17 per cent at vehicle weights of 74 tonnes, and up to 23 per cent at 90

tonnes, compared to today's regular timber trucks."

The concept also improves traction and reduces wear on the trailer, while fuel savings are estimated to be about five per cent. A shorter vehicle drastically improves manoeuvrability, also reducing costs.

"In the forest, the rig is much easier to reverse and turn around, and more urban roads are accessible, which can save a lot of time," Claes Löfroth says. "And other road users will probably appreciate that these rigs are easier to overtake."

SOLUTION TO SEED SHORTAGE?

There is currently a shortage of genetically improved spruce seeds in parts of southern Sweden. However, new findings show that genetically improved spruce can be transferred and used over wider areas than was previously thought.

"This can even out the supply of genetically improved seeds in Götaland and Svealand," says Mats Berlin at Skogforsk. "Our results also show the importance of using late-flushing plants in areas where there is a risk of frost in late spring or early summer."

"Our assessment is that crops from seed orchards in Götaland



can be used in much of Svealand and vice versa, with reduction, at most, only marginal variation in genetic gain. However, current regulations dictate that material from some seed orchards in cen-

tral Sweden may not be transferred too far south."

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Johnny Dahlqvist, Golden Logger 2013.

THE GOLDEN LOGGER 2015

Successful and enterprising forestry contractors drive the sector forwards. It is now time to nominate candidates for 'The Golden Logger', the award to a forestry contractor who has excelled in the sector in some way, and who is a positive example and an inspiration.

Qualities that the jury are looking for include leadership, concern for customer satisfaction, machine strategies, and ability to attract employees. Someone who can successfully combine running a business while being receptive to the needs of the customers.

"We want to draw attention to and demonstrate skilful contractors who have successfully developed their employees and their business in a positive way," says Birger Eriksson at Skogforsk, whose work includes developing contractor companies.

The 'Golden Logger' competition is organised by Elmia in collaboration with Skogforsk. The most recent winner was Johnny Dahlqvist, owner and founder of J. Dahlqvist Skog AB in Ånge in Western Medelpad, who was awarded the prize at Elmia Wood 2013. The prize also included a trip to a forestry fair anywhere in the world, and Johnny Dahlqvist chose to visit Euro-Forest in France, in June 2014.

"It felt really great to win this award – recognition of what I've been doing all these years," says Johnny Dahlqvist. Nominations for 'The Golden Logger 2015' must be submitted by 15 March.

The jury meets during spring to discuss the nominations, and the winner will be announced at Skogs Elmia at the start of June 2015.

Nominate your 'Golden Logger' here:
<http://www.elmia.se/skogselmia/for-utstallare/the-goldenlogger-2015>



Best about Best?
New, efficient field-based
decision support.

WHAT
THE
OPERATOR
THINKS:

With a new decision support tool from Skogforsk, the forestry sector can drastically improve the efficiency of planning and logging – while reducing ground damage.

Text & photo: SVERKER JOHANSSON | sverker@bitzer.se

NEXT GENERATION OF PRODUCTION PLANNING

“Both planner and operator often face dilemmas that require difficult assessments but quick decisions,” says Karin Westlund, who is leading the project. “Shall I take the wood via the road to the south or the west? Will the ground support the forwarder? Is it worth building a long log bridge? Is the side-ways slope too steep? Anything that can speed up reconnaissance in the field and lead to better decisions is welcome.”

First proposal positive

Skogforsk is using laser scanning and ground moisture analyses to test whether a proposal can be developed for logging directives, which planners and contractors can use as a first step in planning. The system is interactive. The planner can test various sites for landings and crossings over wet ground, and in the field see directly in the tablet how this affects the total forwarding distance.

The tool is called Best Way (Decision Support – Site Planning). The planner enters possible locations for landings and crossings on a logging site, and the model calculates how the base route should be drawn to minimise the total forwarding distance. The calculation takes into account, for example, wood stocks in different parts of the stand.

Considers various proposals

The model does not place base roads in sensitive wet areas, but the planner can indicate one or more suitable crossings. The model then calculates a new route for the base road – a route that minimises the forwarding distance on the basis of the new conditions.

“The model can also be used to weigh different proposals against each other,” explains Karin Westlund. “The planner can test alternative locations for landings and crossings by clicking on the map and immediately seeing how the forwarding distance is changed.”



“In use in 2016.” Karin Westlund is confident about rapid implementation.

The planning tool can be used on the office computer or on an ordinary tablet with a map tool out in the field, assuming there is a signal. Best Way has been put through its paces in a few tracts in Ångermanland, with SCA Skog (see next article).

When will we start seeing this implemented in practice?

“The aim is that the tool will be used by at least two forest companies in 2016,” says Karin Westlund. “And I certainly don’t think that’s impossible. Anything that improves efficiency and reduces ground damage is a great driver, which augurs well for rapid implementation.”

Optimal forwarding distance

“I also want to test the model as a basis for calculating forwarding distance,” says Karin. “This could be a tool to optimise forwarding distance and form an objective base for planning forwarding activities, which in turn could make it easier for clients and contractors to agree on correct payment.”



“More time over for other things” – Kenny Lundin is convinced by the new technology.

“Fantastic product”

SHORTCUTS has visited Kenny Lundin, who drives a JD1470 in the SCA team, Åkroken, outside Sollefteå. He has used Best Way on a few sites, and is very satisfied with what he has seen.

“Fantastic product! Nearly as good as multi-tree handling!”

After 30 years in the forest, Kenny Lundin has seen innovations come and go. Some good, others less successful. But the new maps, which are based on laser scanning and ground moisture analyses, are a hit.

“We worked on a few sections using these maps – you could see where the ground was wet, and get proposals for base roads – and I must say it was really, really good, 100 percent correct. One section in particular, outside Resele, Grönåsen ridge. It was... well, how could you describe it... not impossible but it was certainly a difficult area that had been thinned 15 years earlier. During the thinning, they had placed the roads in a completely different way, including through wet areas. But we stuck to the base roads the computer had proposed, with great results. There was an audit of the environmental aspects too, and there were no adverse comments. And all this was done in the autumn, when there was water everywhere.

“It can save a lot of time when you reach a section in the evening and get proposals about how to start with the base roads next morning. You get more time over for other things that must be done too. It’s a great help!”

"NO FEEDBACK NO DEVELOPMENT!"

The forestry sector has now started to work on strengthening relationships and encouraging structured feedback between client and contractor to improve efficiency, profitability – and job satisfaction – in the logging chain.

Text: SVERKER JOHANSSON | sverker@bitzer.se | Photo ERIK WIKLUND

Forestry work is becoming less attractive. The demands are high, the tempo tough, and the working days long and lonely. Many contractors are experiencing low profitability, forest education programmes have fewer and fewer applicants, and the sector – not least the contractors – is finding it difficult to recruit and retain skilled employees.

"To avoid mistakes and inefficiency, to retain society's confidence in the industry, and to remain competitive, we must try new methods for developing the logging chain," says Bodel Norrby who has been working together with the Norra Skogsägarna forest owners' association and Holmen Skog on a new working method for some time.

Strengthened relationships

The companies are working methodically on dialogue and interaction at the client/contractor interface. With the help of Skogforsk, they have held training programmes to raise awareness of the development potential in strengthening their mutual relationship.

Exercises in evaluation and feedback are an important component of the training programmes, along with the ability to empathise with each other's situations. Responsibility for evaluating forestry activities is taken by the contractor – rather than waiting for the client's assessment, the contractor takes the initiative and evaluates the work of the

machine team. The client presents an analysis of the conditions they provided for the contractor.

"The exercises are based on actual examples from the everyday work of the participants," explains Bodel Norrby. "The basic premise is that the contractor is the expert when it comes to evaluating results in relation to ambitions, goals and conditions."

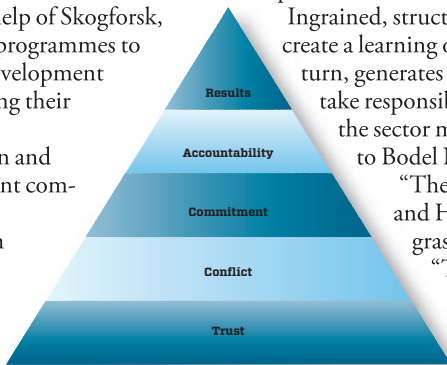
Effective method

Research shows that structured feedback is an effective way to improve leadership skills, improve employee efficiency and encourage them to take greater responsibility and, above all, improve the outcome. Here, feedback is not about praise or criticism, but rather a method for joint analysis of results and what has been learned about how quality can be improved in the activity.

Ingrained, structured feedback helps to create a learning organisation. This, in turn, generates pride and the ability to take responsibility, thereby making the sector more attractive, according to Bodel Norrby.

"The management of Norra and Holmen have quickly grasped this," she says.

"They've realised that they're not using their administrative organisation efficiently when taking responsibility mainly involves pointing, controlling and making demands. It needs someone in a management position



Trusting each other, the parties can tolerate arm wrestling about aspects – and this forms the basis of a business collaboration where both parties are committed, dare to hold each other accountable and thereby reach common results. Structured follow-up is a crucial component in holding each other accountable.

to understand that this new approach is valuable, and it is well worth practising."

Will we see more of this in the forestry sector?

"Oh definitely, it's a sector that needs to wake up," says Bodel Norrby. "When technological development can no longer generate the necessary productivity increase, the great power of people developing together comes into play. And feedback is the core in all development – without feedback and evaluation, nothing gets developed."

"It doesn't matter how many action plans we write, or how impressive the goals are that we set up, if we don't check how things are going. It is not until then that those plans and goals become meaningful.



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STEPS TO BETTER COLLABORATION

- 1 Greater knowledge**
Openness, curiosity, desire to learn about context, lead to development.
- 2 Clear assignment**
Everyone should be clear about the assignment and their part in it.
- 3 Systematic feedback**
Evaluation and feedback focus systematically on the completed activity.
- 4 The contractor is the expert**
The contractor is the expert who takes responsibility for evaluating performance in relation to goals/criteria. The district manager is the expert about the work done in the district.
- 5 Individual's development in focus**
Evaluation and feedback (from client/manager or colleagues) are given with consideration and respect, and with focus on development of the individual/group.

“Quite simply, energy levels drop if there is no feedback. And the feedback must be sincere, from both sides. You can control openness yourself, but mutual confidence and trust only comes as a consequence of how we behave towards one another. Opening up initiates a positive spiral that boosts confidence in each other.

And mutual confidence is fundamental, according to Bodel Norrby. It forms a foundation that everything else rests upon if there is to be mutual development. And if feedback is not given with honest intent, with consideration and respect for each other, mutual confidence, trust and sincerity suffer.

If two parties cannot say to each other what is good and what is less good – both in

terms of the activity itself and conditions applying to the activity – creativity is also lost. People are then frightened of making mistakes in their efforts to be more successful. And soon there will be no success to measure.

Are you saying that the sector is suffering from a lack of mutual confidence?

“Yes, but not everywhere, and not all the time. A sickness, and one that doesn't just apply to this sector, is the inclination to present ourselves as being stronger and more fault-free than we actually are. ‘Real men don't need help’ is not an ideal that leads to development. You can develop in your own bubble, but you are not lifting the operation

by working together. Feedback allows us to open up, and allows someone else to see and react to our own ambitions. We help each other to see the big picture.”

Is it only positive feedback that works?

“No, that doesn't apply for experts like experienced contractors and clients. Instead, it's what isn't working that must be discussed – if experts are to develop in their jobs, these are the points that have to be identified and dealt with. And it must be done with consideration and respect.”

“It doesn't matter how many action plans we write, or how impressive the goals are that we set up, if we don't check how things are going.”

B



"THE BEST DISCUSSION WE'VE EVER HAD"

"The best discussion we've ever had." So says contractor Leif Andersson about the dialogue he has just had with district manager Lars Johansson. The discussion about how to develop the business collaboration was held according to the new model that Skogforsk is helping Holmen Skog to introduce at Region Örnköldsvik.

Text: ANDERS THORÉN | Photo KIM SILFVING



"In our latest development discussions, we put negotiations to one side and, instead, focused solely on finding good ways to improve the operation as a whole. Both parties benefit from this," says Leif Andersson, who runs Kroksjö Skogsentreprenad, a contractor that has had Holmen as client for nearly fifteen years.

Exercises in evaluation and feedback have been an important component in Holmen's training programmes, and great emphasis is placed on developing the ability to empathise with the other person's reality. Responsibility for evaluating the forestry activities lies with the contractor – instead of simply receiving an assessment from the client, the contractor takes the initiative and evaluates the work of the machine team. The client presents their own analysis of the conditions they provided.

Objective is development

Leif and Lars are among the first who have held a development dia-

logue according to the new model.

"As Leif says, a good dialogue can be a way of improving efficiency. This is why we're now working together to improve our contractor dialogues. The objective is that the dialogues will be more open, more structured, and help improve efficiency for both the contractor and us. Not least, we want greater focus on developing the contractor's own operation," says Lars Johansson, head of the Umeå district.

Full-day workshop

Lars Johansson emphasises that, if these objectives are to be attained, practical training is needed. Consequently, the district is being offered help through a whole-day workshop involving the district's clients and contractors. After an introduction with theory and discussions, the participants use role play to practice the dialogues. Leif Andersson, who participated when the concept was tested the first time, is positive.

"Role play perhaps sounds a bit wishy-washy, but what we were training was very concrete. We discussed authentic logging situations and took examples from our own business activities as the basis for the dialogue," says Leif.

After the training programme, a week or so later Leif met district manager Lars Johansson, for a genuine business dialogue. Both agree that the discussion was better structured and more rewarding than those they had held previously.

"Small changes can really make a big difference. For example, the discussion started this time with me as contractor, uninterruptedly talking about the issues that were most important for my own activities. Lars then did the same thing from Holmen's perspective and we continued with a constructive discussion about what solutions could be of mutual benefit," says Leif.

Simple, but important matters, such as procedures for production planning, road maintenance, snow

clearance and reporting of ground damage, were discussed. The process is being monitored by holding follow-up meetings at intervals of a couple of months.

"One thing that we as clients can learn from this training is to first listen attentively, instead of immediately getting into a discussion and steering the conversation. It's important that development discussions are open, with both parties being active," says Lars Johansson.

All districts now involved

In the spring, the new initiative of the dialogue model will continue, with workshops being held in all districts in Region Örnköldsvik. Discussions about operational development will be held with all permanent logging contractors, according to the new model.

"My recommendation to all my contractor colleagues is to take the opportunity and join the workshops on offer. It's well worth the time investment," says Andersson.



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