

Bleby, Michael (from Natural Resources South East website)



BSc Forestry ANU 1970.

Michael Bleby is a Registered Professional Forester who graduated in Forest Science from the Australian National University and has worked in South Australia's Radiata Pine industry for the past 40 years, mainly in the South East, but also in the mid North of South Australia and the Mt Lofty Ranges. Employed by ForestrySA, as a District Forester at Mt Crawford, and at Mt Burr during the 10 years of the Ash Wednesday fire replant. Chairman of the Forest Industries Training Network, and a member of the SA Forestry Industry Training Advisory Board during the introduction of the Nationally accredited Forest Growing and Management Training Package. Currently lectures in Forest Operations for the Southern Cross University undergraduate Forest Science degree course, and for various other Forestry technical training courses. He is a Fellow of the Institute of Foresters of Australia, and the Regional Coordinator for the SE Asia / Pacific Region of the Commonwealth Forestry Association. His community involvement includes Musical Director of Millicent Choral Society, Lions Club member, volunteer work as a JP, Chairman of the Board of ac.care (Anglican Community Care Inc), and the Anglican Church. He was presented with a local Australia Day Citizen of the Year Award in 2007.

Mike Bleby has been a member of the Institute of Foresters of Australia for 38 years (to 2008). Mike completed his Bachelor of Science (Forestry) degree at the Australian National University in 1970. He commenced work as a forester with the SA Woods and Forests Department the following year and remains employed by the current SA Government forest authority, ForestrySA. Mike initially worked at Wirrabara, Penola and Mt Crawford Forest Reserves, being involved with "hands-on" forest management. In 1979 he was appointed to the position of District Forester and filled this role at Mt Crawford, and Mt Burr Forests until 1996. This period included the massive Ash Wednesday fires of 1983 during which Mike watched as a good part of Mt Crawford burnt around him. In the massive salvage and replanting operation which followed Mike was primarily responsible for the rebuilding of the Mt Burr Forest, one of the most historic plantation forests in SA. During these years Mike demonstrated his hands-on forest management skills and his ability to create world-class plantation forest. In 1996 he moved into an Operational Development role which involved developing and implementing policies for all of ForestrySA's plantations in the areas of nurseries, forest establishment, silviculture and nutrition. This included implementation of recommendations coming from the Research areas into practice. Therefore he was responsible for implementing best practice at all stages of the establishment of the plantations. In 2004 he had a major career shift to Sales, which involved management of all harvesting and sales operations in the Green Triangle Region which covered about 1.8 M m³ of product per year. This involved logging many plantations which he had established, which allowed him to appreciate the effectiveness of his early work. As with most foresters, over all his time with ForestrySA Mike has had an active role in fire management and has been involved at an Incident Management level with many major fires and many more fire events that avoided major status due to good management. As an active long serving member of the IFA Mike has always been ready to take up a role in the IFA and at various times he has served in the committee of both the Green Triangle and Adelaide Branches.