Chapter 7.0: Component Groups

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7.1 What is a Component Group?

Component Groups (CGs) are used to group unmappable spatial combinations of individual components within the section.

Like a section, CG's are areas of relatively homogeneous land use or stand characteristics which are often too small or difficult to map yet are still important enough to identify separately.

In effect they can sometimes be viewed as 'sub-sections', in that they often have similar characteristics to sections, but they are just not mapped.

All Sections must have *at least* one CG and can have up to five.

If the section is relatively homogenous, and there are no small areas within it that are discrete in their nature or land use, then the section will have one component group which will occupy the entire section. In this case all components in the section will be held within this single CG.

This single CG may have one or more components (one or more tree species, storeys or land use types).

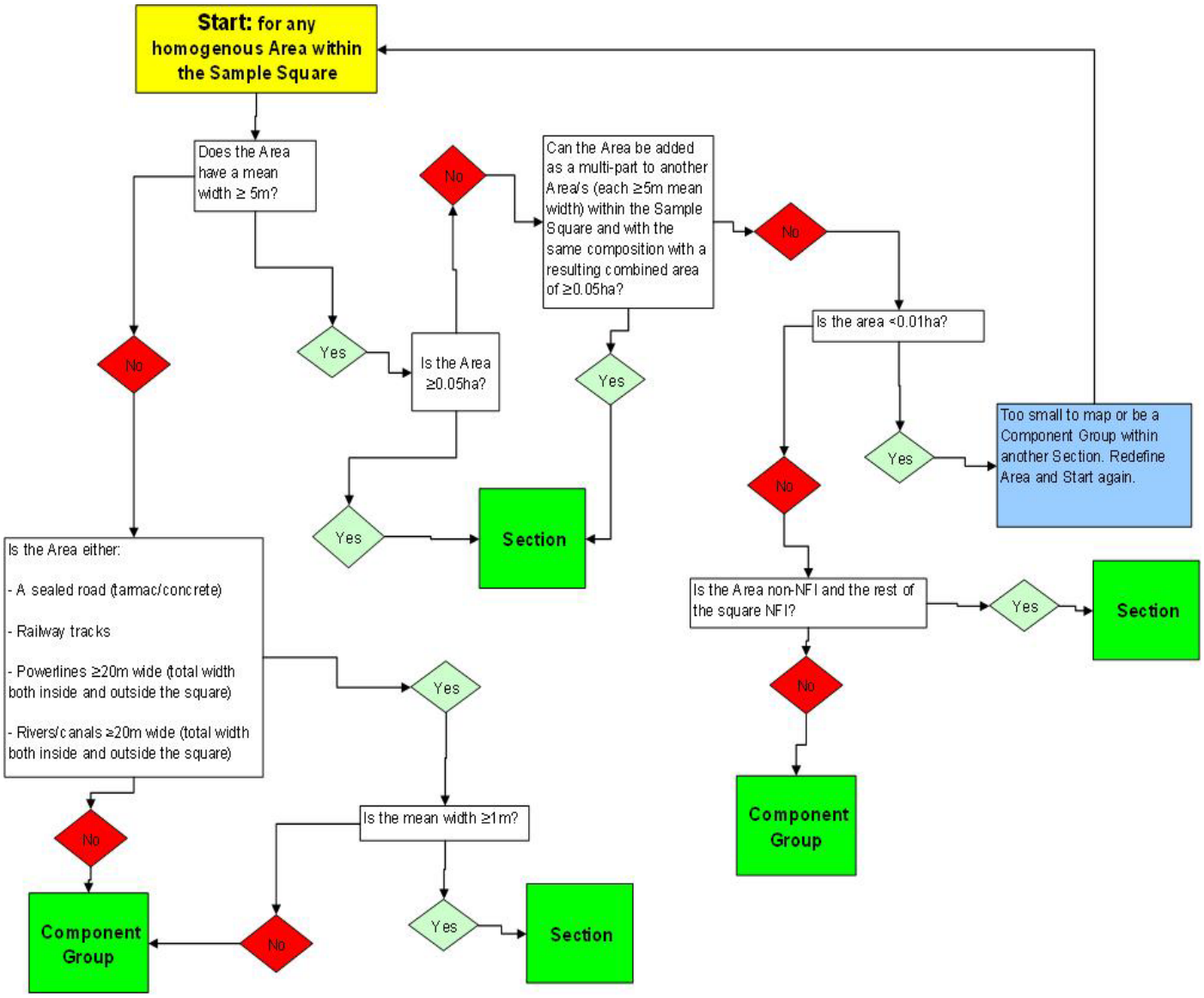
Two separate CG's would be established in a section if the components in it fell into two identifiable spatial groupings.

For example, a section may contain: Japanese larch, Sitka spruce, Norway spruce and sessile oak. They could be recorded as one section and one CG, with four components, implying an intimate mixture of all species.

If, on closer observation, it was noticed that the larch and Sitka spruce were spatially grouped, forming one type of crop, and the oak and Norway spruce were separately spatially grouped, forming another type of crop, they should be treated as separate entities (Component Groups). In this case the Section would have two CGs. One CG would record the Norway spruce and Oak, the other would record the Sitka spruce and larch.

Component groups can also be used to 'attach' small areas of other stands or other land uses to/within a treed section. This is used when the feature itself, as it exists within the

square, does not have a sufficient minimum mappable area (0.05ha) to form a Section in its own right. See below:



Flowchart 7 - 1: Section vs. Component Group

Example 1: a NFI-Treed Section (0.7ha) contains a Scout camp with a number of small buildings scattered throughout it resulting in an intimate mixture of trees and buildings. It is not possible to map out each of the small buildings individually even though the total area covered by the buildings is greater than the minimum section size (0.05ha). In this case it is permissible to create a single Section with two Component Groups – one of

trees and one of buildings. Thus if the Section was composed of 50% treed and 50% buildings each Component Group would be 0.35ha in extent.

Where an area has been incorrectly sectioned, and mensuration assessments completed, in *exceptional* circumstances it may be allowable to accommodate these as a CG within another Section.

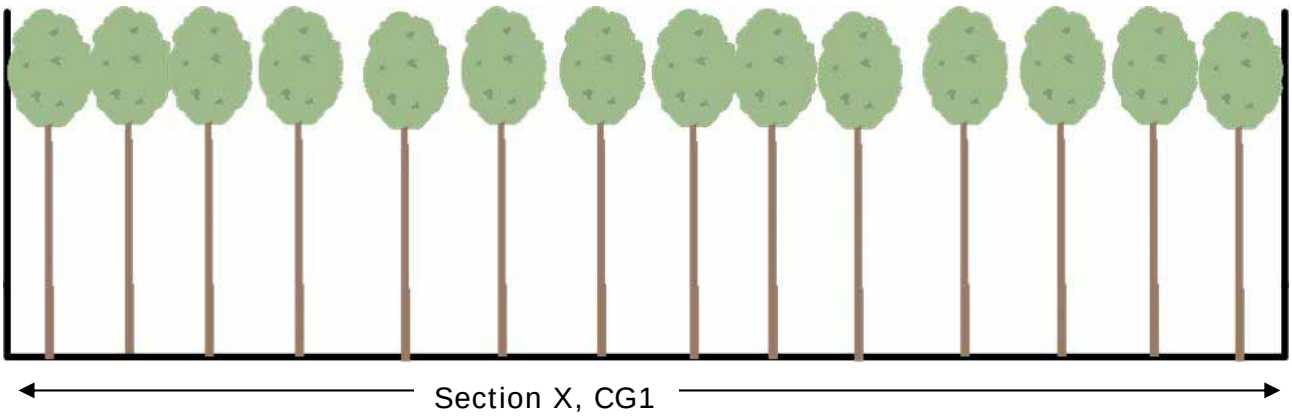
Example 2: a section has been incorrectly created by the surveyor and the mensuration plots/points generated and assessed - then the surveyor notes an area within the section that should actually be a separate section. The surveyor is now in a quandary, ideally the square should be re-sectioned, with all the associated problems such as losing the mensuration data associated with the plots/points already assessed. In such circumstances it is allowable to define such an area as a CG of the previously defined section. However, QA will only pass a maximum CG size of 0.2ha in wooded areas and 0.15ha in non-wooded areas.

7.1.1 Examples of Component Groups within a Section

Example 7 - 1: A single storey (e.g. Upper), single species (e.g. Scots pine) section.

One Component Group –

1. Upper Storey, Scots pine.

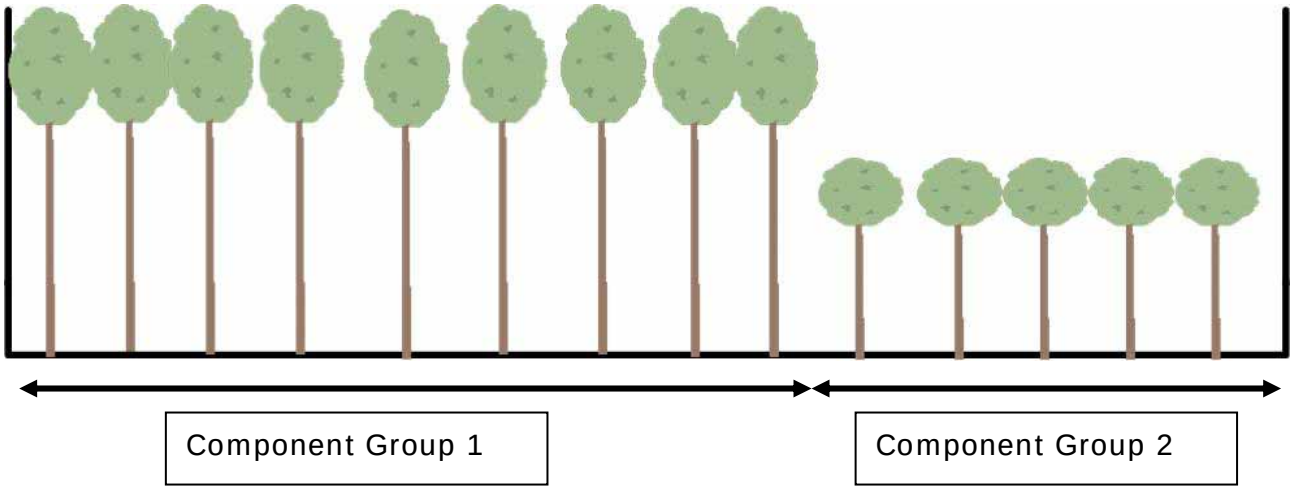


Example 7 - 2: A single species within the Section but two distinct storey heights separated spatially.

Two Component Groups –

1. Upper storey, Scots pine.

2. Lower storey, Scots pine.



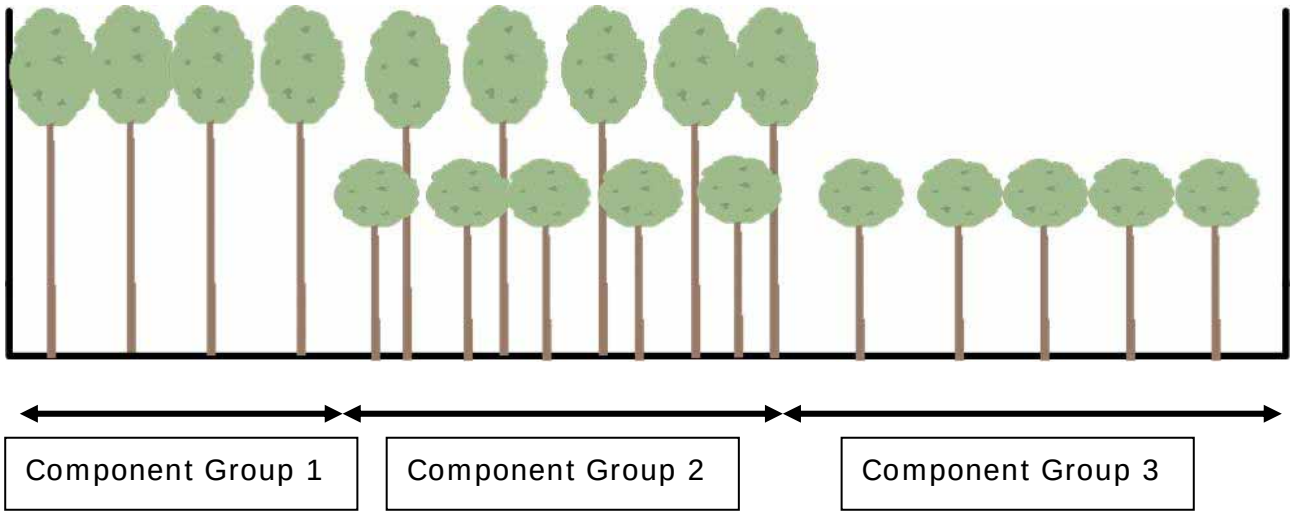
Example 7 - 3: A single species within the Section but two distinct storey heights, partially separated spatially but also merging spatially.

Three Component Groups –

1. Upper storey, Scots pine.

2. Upper storey, Scots pine and Lower storey, Scots pine.

3. Lower storey, Scots pine



Example 7 - 4: a two species, 3 storey, Section.

Five Component Groups –

1. Upper storey, Scots pine.

2. Upper storey, Scots pine and Lower storey, Western hemlock.

3. Upper storey, Scots pine and Middle storey, Scots pine and Lower storey, Western hemlock.

4. Upper storey, Scots pine and Middle storey, Scots pine.

5. Middle storey Scots pine