

PASS it on

Newsletter of Proactive Agricultural Safety & Support Inc



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**REMEMBER
BEING SAFE IS
NO ACCIDENT**

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Help PASS to save lives – become a member

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 for a membership form and more details

Check out the website www.pass.org.au

Making Farm Work Easier and Safer as We Get Older

PASS Inc and CWA have joined forces to organise a series of workshops aimed at the older farmer.

The 3 hour workshops have been developed by the Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety after farmers in NSW made a request for information on ways of making farm work easier and safer as they get older.

These workshops are free and will be available in Tasmania in July, August and September. All farmers are invited to attend, regardless of age and gender, and their spouses, partners and family members.

This workshop is a "Self Help" format and the idea is for farmers to devise their own questions and find their own solutions – it is NOT about being told what to do by experts. A facilitator will guide farmers through the day, with help from "The Great Idea Bank", a booklet provided by Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety.

The workshops are targeted at farmers over 55 years but are open to all. It is recognised that the effects of ageing vary between people and the impacts of efficient and safe work are similarly very different between farmers of similar age.

If you would like more information please contact Anne Taylor on 6398 6212 or email info@pass.org.au



Older Farmers and Falls

The risk of falling and being injured from a fall increases as people age. Falls often result in serious injury, including admission to hospital. This causes time off work and often long term debilitating recovery time. There are many simple ways to help prevent falling as you age:

- Put grab rails on walkways, steps and even on machinery
- Put lower steps on trucks, machines and buildings
- Steps can be installed in steep areas (use non-slip tape or matting to make surface less slippery)
- Apply marking tape or paint to highlight fall risk areas such as platforms, steps etc
- Always use a safety harness if working at heights

- Improve lighting around poorly lit areas
- Wear footwear with non-slip soles
- Don't be too proud to use walking sticks etc on uneven or slippery ground
- Keep work areas free of clutter, including extension cords

All these are simple ways of markedly reducing the chance of falling as you get older. Most of these changes are simple and cheap to install and may prevent valuable time recuperating after an accident. Don't put it off – your health and well being is too important. The sooner the job is made easier, the better the quality of life.

This information and more can be found at The Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety's website www.aghealth.org.au

DON'T TAKE CHANCES

Think About The Consequences NOT The Probabilities

Have you ever wondered why someone would run across a busy street to buy a lottery ticket?

On the one hand that person gambles that they won't get hit by a car, while on the other hand they believe there is a chance that they will win a lot of money. This is in spite of the fact that the odds favour being hit by a car much more than winning the lottery.

Many times people are even aware of the safe way to do things, such as keeping to the speed limit when they drive, but don't do it because they are in a hurry. They are not mad, bad or stupid people. Far from it. They are rational and optimistic. They don't think too much about the negative consequences of their actions, but focus on positive outcomes.

People quite often believe that the bad things won't happen, particularly when they have got away with it many times in the past.

The problem is that with all these bad things we focus too much on probabilities and we say things like "I've done this job for 25 years and have never been hurt doing it this way", or "It's a one in a million chance."

Unfortunately, probabilities like one in a million are only meaningful for a large population of people. For an individual it's zero-one game i.e. you either get away with it (zero harm) or you get injured (one). There is no such thing as a millionth of an injury.

For the combined farming group (including contractors) in Tasmania, people work nearly many millions of man hours every year. That's enough to make sure that one in a million chance turns into injuries on a frequent basis. Far too many families suffer as a result. A sad loss of a family member causing pain and suffering can also mean financial hardship with no wage earner putting food on the table, funerals and medical bills and so on. The consequences are severe.

In recent time, far too many people have lost their lives in accidents on farms. This fatality rate is far higher than in industries such as chemical, mining, metallurgical and oil and gas.

So what can individuals do to keep safe? It's easy to say "don't take chances", or "follow the

safety procedures", but it's more than that.

Firstly we don't need our entire workforce to be statisticians and work out the probability of injuries doing certain work. We want people to use their expertise and to take a minute to think about three key questions before starting any job i.e.

1. How can I/we get hurt doing this task?
2. How bad can it be?
3. What can I do to prevent that from happening?

These questions are all around consequences. They do not consider probabilities and if these questions are asked and acted on before the task, the farming community will be much safer.

Remember, in order that you keep safe; take a minute to think about the consequences, not probabilities.

By David Sadler



Storms and Lightning

Working outdoors during thunder and electrical storms increases the risk of electrocution from lightning.

Work should not be conducted in an open field or under trees during storms or if there is any risk of a lightning strike. When electrical storms approach:

- All outdoor activity should cease and shelter taken when a "lightning flash to thunder count is 30 seconds or less"
- Shelter in large buildings or a fully enclosed vehicle, never shelter out in the open, near trees or power poles
- Outdoor activity should not resume until 30 minutes after the last lightning strike.



AgHat®



This versatile, lightweight helmet has been designed to meet the needs of the working professional. It is lightweight, and fully ventilated. And it's "multi-fit", so no hassles trying to find the right size – just adjust it to your own head and away you go! The optional neck curtain also provides protection from harmful UV rays.

This helmet is an essential piece of equipment for anyone using an ATV for work purposes. Its usefulness is further enhanced by the ability to add optional, industry standard fittings such as earmuffs, face shields, neck curtains and sun brims.

It is distributed exclusively by Fire & Safety Solutions (Int) P/L and retails for under \$100.

Ph: 03 5967 3152 Fax: 03 5967 3164

Email: info@firesafetysolutions.com.au or go to the website www.firesafetysolutions.com.au

EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS

Dial Triple Zero (000) for police, fire or ambulance in a life or property threatening time critical emergency situation from all telephones (landline, mobile phones and payphones) in Australia. For more information about triple zero (000) go to <http://www.triplezero.gov.au>

112 is the GSM international standard emergency number which can only be dialled on digital mobile phones. 112 can be dialled anywhere in the world with GSM coverage and is automatically translated to that country's emergency number.

REMEMBER A SAFE BUSINESS IS A GOOD BUSINESS

Lockout Tags And Devices

Lockout tags are to protect people from potential injury when machinery or equipment is being maintained or repaired.

Lockout devices and tags should be used when performing maintenance or service to any plant, equipment or system where unexpected or unintentional use could cause harm. Lockout tags should also be used when guards or other safety devices must be removed during service or when moving parts put any part of an employee's body at risk of injury.

Lockout tags are only intended to act as a warning device, and are used to prevent the unintentional activation of equipment. Lockout and tagging procedures include:

- Removal of keys from tractors and vehicles during repairs and maintenance
- Only authorised personnel to affix a lockout tag
- The tag should contain the name and date of the person affixing it, and should read 'DO NOT OPERATE'
- Lockout tags/devices should only be removed by the person who affixed the lock, once the repairs are complete.

Lockout tags are readily available from suppliers of safety equipment.



A Word From The Chairman

by Anne Taylor

Managing safety is not expensive - Not managing safety can be costly

Managing safety is not just about paper work. Having a safe attitude and developing automatic safe behaviours are vital components of ensuring a safe farm, 100% of the time.

Managing Contractors & Visitors

To assist farmers and contractors to answer the questions "Who's on the farm; where are they, what are they doing and why" PASS Inc held a workshop in May 09 with stakeholders, with the aim of developing a simple system as well as a one page document with the relevant information required and could be exchanged by both parties.

Safe Futures

This event aims to promote rural career pathways and associated safety in agriculture. A committee representing a partnership between Tasmanian Central North Local Community Partnership (TCNLCP), PASS Inc and Tasmanian Skills Institute is organising the day.

All students between the ages of 15 & 19 years who are interested in a career in rural Tasmanian industries are welcome to attend, as well as parents and careers staff and significant others.

Date:

6th August 2009

Venue:

**Riverlands,
159 Wellington Street,
Longford**

Industry and Training Organisations will be present on the day to provide the necessary information required to help attendees map their pathway into their chosen career.

Quad Bikes

The report by Victorian Coroner investigating 8 fatalities in Tasmania & Victoria was released in April 09. His report highlights the fact that rollovers occurred when ridden by safety conscious operators who were not being stupid and had occurred to safety conscious individuals whilst performing innocuous farming tasks on familiar terrain.

Please take extreme care when using these machines, and ensure everyone wears a well fitting helmet at all times.

Farmer fined \$250,000 over ATV Crash Death

A Victorian farmer was fined in the Victorian County Court over the death of a worker in an ATV incident. The worker was riding the vehicle across a lane that ran through the property while carrying a pillion passenger. The ATV collided with a truck that was travelling along the lane, killing the rider and seriously injuring the passenger. Judge Joe Gullaci heard that the ATVs were regularly used on the property, and that there was a cattle underpass underneath the lane that could be used by all ATVs.

He found the employer had failed to:

- Eliminate risks to workers crossing the lane while riding ATVs
- Provide appropriate PPE
- Have policies regarding safe operations of ATVs
- Ensure that workers were competent to operate ATVs

Judge Gullaci fined the employer \$250,000 for breaching ss21(1), (2)(a) and (2)(e) of the OHS act.

Farm Quadbike (ATV) Safety

Being safety conscious is paramount when riding Quadbikes. It has been shown that:

- Quadbikes are prone to rollover - and do not have ROPS
- Are unsuitable for many farming practices
- Are unable to safely negotiate a wide range of terrain
- Quadbikes should only be ridden by trained operators

These quadbikes are becoming a leading cause of death and serious injury on Australian farms. There has been a 10 fold increase in farm related quadbike fatalities on Australian farms over the last 10 years.

There are on average 12 farm related fatalities per year on Australian farms.

Whilst there has been significant farm safety success with the reduction of death and injury associated with tractor use on farms, and a reduction in the child related injury, quadbike and vehicle related injury is a major concern.

Farmsafe Australia have developed a Safety Guide for farmers, that can help farmers reduce the risk of serious injury associated with quadbikes.

Is the quadbike the most appropriate vehicle to do the job?

A farm ute or small utility is best to carry passengers and heavy loads safely.

When farmers are considering using quadbikes for work on farms, Farmsafe encourage the following safety principles:

- ALWAYS wear a helmet
- ALWAYS keep the quadbike properly maintained and tyres correctly inflated according to manufacturer's instructions
- DO NOT allow riders under 16 years old to operate a quadbike
- DO NOT carry passengers
- DO NOT carry heavy loads or overload a quadbike. They become more unstable and may roll over causing fatal crushing injuries

This information can be found at www.farmsafe.org.au and more details can be found by downloading and reading the report: ATV Safety on Australian Farms



ATV'S – Attachments, Loads and Towing

What is the problem?

ATV's become unstable and roll over due to incorrect loading.

What are the risks?

ATV drivers can be killed or suffer injuries, including traumatic joint or muscle injuries.

Carrying loads on the front and/or rear of an ATV can be dangerous because the extra weight can affect braking, alter the centre of gravity and make the ATV difficult to control.

The contents of liquids – either carried on the ATV or towed by it- can also shift when cornering or traversing slopes, increasing the likelihood of rollover.

What is the Solution?

Follow the manufacturer's load limitations and recommendations in the operator's manual. The brakes on ATV's are designed to operate effectively within the limits specified over relatively smooth and level terrain.

Load and towing limits include

1. weight of the load
2. location of the load
3. attachment weight
4. operator weight

The combined total weight should not exceed the manufacturer's weight or towing specifications. Operate with safe and stable loads that are secured to racks with straps or if towing the load, connect only to the towing point of the vehicle.

Keep the load low. High loads (such as grain hoppers) raise the centre of gravity and should be avoided.

Do not travel faster than the speed recommended in the operator's manual. Reduce speed and allow longer braking distance when carrying a load and use low

gear. The more weight carried, the slower you should go.

Avoid hills and rough terrain. The weight of the cargo should be reduced in rough terrain or as the slope increases. If operating on steep slopes, little or no load should be carried. Speed of operation should also be modified.

Tanks for liquids should:

1. have internal baffles to restrict the movement of the liquid when the tank is low
2. have smooth external surfaces with no sharp edges and be as low as possible to keep the centre of gravity low
3. allow the operator to move freely during the operation of the ATV
4. not obscure the operator's vision or interfere with operator controls
5. not touch the operator or restrict their ability to separate from the machine in the event of a rollover
6. be properly sealed to avoid splashing of chemicals onto the machine, the operator or surroundings
7. not exceed the ATV manufacturer's load limitations

Before using an ATV for towing, consider whether there is a safer alternative.

For further information contact Worksafe Advisory Service on Toll free: 1800 136 089 or email: info@worksafe.vic.gov.au or the website www.worksafe.vic.gov.au



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