



PASS it on

Newsletter of Proactive Agricultural Safety & Support Inc

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REMEMBER ACCIDENTS HURT SAFETY DOESN'T

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Management Committee:

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| Vice-Chair: | Kathy Henry |
| Treasurer: | Mark Hogarth |
| Members: | Anne Hammersley |
| | Jane Bond |
| | Andrew Measham |
| | Don Smith |
| | Charles Mackinnon |

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**Tasmanian
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Making a difference

If you would like to help PASS to save lives – become a member

Contact:

For a membership form and more details contact Anne Taylor (Chairman) 6398 6212
Anne Hammersley (Admin Assistant) 6391 8496

Check out the website www.pass.org.au

A NEAR MISS – IT ONLY TAKES ONE SHOT

It would have been easy to put the gun away first and then shut the gate – but I took the shortcut.

I had despatched the rabbit with the first cartridge of the double-barrelled 12-gauge shotgun and the dog was off with the carcass in an instant. As I turned away from the task at hand something caught my eye – an open gate. The paddock was stock-free and the gate wasn't a priority. I was near the house and should have unloaded the remaining cartridge from the gun, locked it in the safe, then returned to shut the gate – but I was impatient.

The safety catch was on and I had taken no more than 10 steps towards the gate across the rocky ground before my left ankle gave way, and I fell. The gun was in my left hand and conscious that it was still loaded, I raised it above my head and fell, unable to protect myself.

The left side of my ribcage crashed into a large rock as I fell, but I was too concerned about the gun to notice any damage. I looked up and was staring straight along the barrel, which was aimed at the water tank beside the house – mere metres away. At the very least, if it had fired, it would have put a fair hole in the tank and cost a fortune. However, that is nothing compared with the fact that my wife and two-year-old child were in the house.

I had no control as I fell and if the gun had discharged the resulting shot could have gone anywhere. I had been very stupid, yet got away with it. Determined I had learned my lesson, I unsuccessfully tried to put it to the back of my mind. The next morning the damage to my ribcage became increasingly apparent as the pain set in. A few days later some bruising emerged and pain in my left shoulder and back stopped me in my tracks. I had done some serious damage.

During the next few days bruising on my chest worsened, the tightness in my back increased and the soreness in my shoulder became crippling. There were three visits to the doctor, two to the hospital and ongoing visits to a physiotherapist.

I had damaged my shoulder and my back and suffered from whiplash. The physiotherapist is excellent but the pain is a constant reminder that it would have made so much more sense to unload the gun and put it away before wandering off over uneven ground.

However I am constantly aware that it could have been much worse.

Story and photo supplied by a PASS member



Gun safety

MAKE NO MISTAKES - Firearm safety depends on you

From the time you pick up a firearm, YOU are the only person that makes that gun safe.

There are many guidelines but the cardinal rule is - **Treat every gun with respect, as though it were loaded.**

- **Always keep the gun pointed in a safe direction.** It is such a simple rule but would eliminate almost all accidents if strictly adhered to. It is up to you. This is particularly important when loading or unloading a firearm – if the firearm is pointing in a safe direction no injury can occur.
- **Only load the firearm when you are ready to shoot.** Unload your gun as soon as you are finished shooting and never assume the gun is unloaded. Always carry the gun pointed down with action open, especially when entering your car, camp or home.
- **Make sure the gun barrel and action are clear of obstruction.** Even a small bit of mud, snow, excess lubricating oil, or grease in the bore can cause dangerously increased pressures, causing the barrel to bulge or even burst on firing, which can cause injury to the shooter and bystanders.

Continued next page

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- Always be sure of your target and what's beyond it before you pull the trigger. **No one can call a shot back.** Once you have fired you have given up all control over where the shot will go or what it will strike. Never shoot at a hard flat surface or the surface of water as the bullet could ricochet.
- Carry the gun in a way that ensures you control the direction of the barrel even if you stumble.
- Never cross a fence, climb a tree or perform any awkward actions with a loaded gun. There are many times during nearly all hunting trips when common sense and the basic rules of firearms will require you to unload your gun for maximum safety. **Never** ignore this basic rule – someone's life may be at risk.
- The only safe gun is one where the action is open and which is completely empty. Regardless of the position of the safety catch, any blow or jar which is sufficient to activate the firing mechanism of a gun can cause it to fire. This can happen even if the trigger is not touched, such as when the gun is dropped. Do not rest a loaded gun against any object because it may jar or slide from its position with enough force to discharge.
- Never leave your gun unattended.
- Make sure you use the correct ammunition.
- **Always wear eye and ear protection when shooting** – all shooters should wear shooting glasses and some form of hearing protectors when shooting. Exposure to shooting noise can damage hearing and adequate vision protection is essential.
- **Alcohol, drugs and guns do NOT mix - NEVER EVER.**
- **All firearms must, by law, be kept in a locked regulation gun safe at all times. This is enforceable by law.**

This and more information can be found at www.wst.tas.gov.au or www.owenguns.com

QUAD BIKES

A LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH ON AUSTRALIAN FARMS

Quad bikes are a useful tool for farmers and a very common sight on Australian farms. However the figures are alarming – details from the National Coroner's Information System compiled by the University of Sydney's Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety (ACAHS) indicate that **quad bikes are now a leading cause of deaths on farms, second only to tractors.** Almost half these deaths are the result of the machines rolling over and crushing the victim. Farmers are urged to think carefully about the use of quad bikes and the safety risks involved. The quad bike may not be the best and safest vehicle for the job. **A small ute or side by side vehicle may be better suited to the job.**

Farmers who are employers or in control of the farm workplace have responsibility under occupational health and safety law to provide safe systems of work for workers and visitors to the workplace, including operation of quad bikes.

When using quad bikes on farms Farmsafe encourage the following safety principles:

- ALWAYS** wear a helmet
 - ALWAYS** keep the quad bike properly maintained and tyres correctly inflated according to manufacturer's instructions
 - DO NOT** allow riders under 16 years old to operate a quad bike
 - DO NOT** carry passengers
 - DO NOT** carry heavy loads or overload a quad bike. They become more unstable and may roll over causing fatal crushing injuries
- There is ongoing research in to the value of having a device fitted to protect the rider in the event of a rollover.

Further information on quad bike safety including a new policy, tested rollover protective devices and rider guide can be obtained from the Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety (02 6752 8210) or by visiting the website www.aghealth.org.au or www.farmsafe.org.au

DO NOT ALLOW YOURSELF OR YOUR EMPLOYEES TO BE A SAD STATISTIC.



Side by side vehicles (shown above left) have a longer and wider wheel base and are more stable than a quad bike. They also have a roll over protection device and most are fitted with seat belts. Side by side vehicles may be a safer option for many jobs around the farm

Looking for a light weight quad bike helmet?

Shorty helmet is one suggested by Farmsafe Australia as a new and Australian Standards AS1698 approved helmet that may be suitable for farmers check out http://www.mcas.com.au/_product.php?section=1&prodid=8073
Compare with Aghat information at <http://www.firesafetydirect.com.au/shop/fire-rescue-equipment/fire-fighting-equipment/atv-helmets/aghat-atv-quad-bike-helmet.html>

If you want to be sure you are being safe - check out the link below for a simple ATV checklist.
http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au/formspublications/publications/Documents/atv_safety_checklist_1370.pdf

WELDING SAFETY IN THE WORKSHOP

There are two types of welding often carried out in the farm workplace – electrical arc welding and oxyacetylene welding and cutting. Both are potentially dangerous and should only be carried out by a skilled operator trained in the process.

Electric arc welding

Electric arc welding dangers are associated with electricity, emission of harmful fumes, sparks, the generation of heat and radiation to not only the operator, but also to bystanders. There are many measures that will control the risk.

Electric shock or electrocution can result from contact with live components of a welding circuit.

- Do not touch the electrode or metal parts of the electrode holder with skin or wet clothing
- Keep welding cables and electrode holders in good condition



Where are this man's apron and gloves?
Is he taking all safety precautions?

- Keep welder cables off the floor
 - Supply and ensure the use of dry leather gauntlet gloves
- Inhalation of fumes from the welding rod or the surface being welded can result in respiratory problems.
- Ensure adequate cross ventilation
 - Use welding rods that produce a low fume
 - Supply and ensure the use of face masks or respirators where necessary

Sparks generated during the welding process may result in fire and/or explosion.

- Do not weld near flammable or combustible items (petrol, paints, thinners, cardboard, paper, acetylene, charging batteries)
- Take care when welding in dusty conditions as dust particles may oxidise and result in a flash fire or explosion
- Ensure material being welded does not have a flammable coating, or contain flammable materials
- Never fuel portable welders when turned on
- Ensure appropriate emergency equipment is available e.g. First Aid kit, fire extinguisher

Flash burns to the eyes and burns to the skin may result from exposure to radiation from the welding arc, and heat generated during the welding process may result in burns to the skin.

- Weld in a screened area to protect other workers from radiation
- Ensure clothing, gloves and hands are free from grease and oil
- Do not weld with cigarette lighter in pockets

REMEMBER A SAFE BUSINESS IS A GOOD BUSINESS

- Take care when quenching hot items in water
- Mark hot items with a soapstone
- Supply and ensure the use of appropriate eye protection including welding helmet or hand held face shield and a retardant apron, also ensure the wearing of tight fitting leather boots to prevent sparks falling inside the boots
- Display signs which highlight the hazards associated with using the welder

When using portable welders there is a risk of noise induced hearing loss and entanglement in moving parts.

- Ensure all guards are in place and functional on portable welders
- Supply and use ear muffs or ear plugs where necessary

Oxyacetylene welding and cutting

There are some very high risks to the person doing the work and also to others in the workshop. Measures which can be used to minimise the risk are:

To prevent burns to the skin from flame, or hot metal or steam when quenching hot objects:

- Ensure clothing, gloves and hands are free from grease and oil
- Handle hot metal with pliers or tongs
- Light flame with a flint lighter or pilot light only, not matches or cigarette lighters
- Take care when quenching hot items in water
- Mark hot items with a soapstone
- Provide, and ensure the use of, appropriate eye protection, fire retardant apron, heat resistant gloves, close fitting clothing and enclosed leather footwear

The flammability of oxygen and acetylene increases the risk of fire and explosion.

- Maintain a safe distance from flammable material or use a fire resistant screen
- Do not undertake oxyacetylene work near flammable or combustible items (petrol, paints, thinners, cardboard, paper, charging batteries)
- Shut off blow pipe when not in use
- Check connections for leaks with soapy water
- Ensure cylinders are chained upright in well ventilated area – do not secure around valve
- Fit flash arresters to oxygen and acetylene lines near the bottle and non return valves near the hand piece
- Leave cylinder key in position when fuel gas cylinder valves are open
- Keep hoses away from the working area to prevent contact with flame, heat sparks or hot spatter
- Ensure appropriate emergency equipment is available eg first aid kit, dry powder fire extinguisher and fire blanket

To prevent the risk of back and other musculoskeletal injuries mount cylinders that are in use on a trolley.

This information and more can be found at www.farmsafe.org.au and follow the links to farm workshop safety

SHE'LL BE RIGHT? NEVER ALL RIGHT!

Of course we all want our family and employees to arrive home safely at the end of the day. It goes without saying, or does it? How many times have you had a near miss on your farm and realised that it was an *accident waiting to happen*. Be thankful it was just that - a near miss, and that this time disaster was averted. Or sadly there may have been tragic consequences from which those involved will never truly recover.

Safety is everyone's concern – particularly the employer or person in charge.

Be vigilant and find the hazards before an accident happens. There are four simple steps –

SPOT THE HAZARD

ASSESS THE RISK

FIX THE PROBLEM

EVALUATE THE RESULTS

Prevention is better than cure. When did you or anyone on your farm perform a safety audit? Think:

- Before you buy any new equipment or chemicals
- Before you reorder presently used equipment or chemicals
- When you are about to introduce a new task or procedure
- When you get new information about your work tasks, procedures, equipment or chemicals

SPOT THE HAZARD - Anything that has the potential to cause injury, illness or damage to your health is considered a hazard. Some hazards, such as an oil spill or exposed electrical wire, are obvious. Others require more careful observation and sometimes some lateral thinking. Include your employees and encourage their participation in spotting and reporting workplace hazards.

ASSESS THE RISK - Hazards need to be documented and listed in order of priority from highest risk to lowest, and then dealt with in that order.

Look at the potential impact of the hazard and the likelihood of the hazard causing harm to someone – this will assist in assessing the risk level of the hazard.

FIX THE PROBLEM – Control the risk by immediately fixing the high risk hazards, and work through the list systematically by developing action plans for each recognised hazard. Aim to remove the hazard completely if at all possible. This is called the Hierarchy of Control.

- 1. Eliminate the hazard** – remove it completely from your farm e.g. stop using a dangerous chemical
- 2. Substitute the hazard** – with a safer alternative e.g. replace the dangerous chemical with a less harmful one
- 3. Isolate the hazard** – as much as possible away from your workers e.g. use the chemical in a safe designated work area
- 4. Use engineering controls** – adapt tools or equipment to reduce the risk e.g. explore spray application methods to see if there is more appropriate equipment
- 5. Use administrative controls** – change work practices and organisation e.g. make sure everyone is trained in the safe way to handle the chemical
- 6. Use personal protective equipment (PPE)** – e.g. use gloves, masks and eye protection

EVALUATE THE RESULTS – Evaluation is an important step in the risk management process to find out whether the changes have been effective and no more risks have arisen. Talk to your workers

- Are the changes making a difference?
- What do employees think?
- Will the solutions reduce risks and prevent injury or illness on your farm?
- Do they create new hazards or increase the risk of existing ones?

FINDING SAFETY SOLUTIONS

There are many ways to find safety solutions.

- Ask your workers for their ideas. They may already see safer ways to do things
- Look at information available from designers or manufacturers, including material safety data sheets (MSDS) and product labels
- Consider codes of practice or Australian Standards relevant to the farming industry. Go to www.standards.com.au where you can either purchase a standard, or subscribe to read one. Some libraries (including the Workplace Standards library) may carry a selection of Australian standards
- Talk to other farmers or get involved in farming discussion groups. Talk to Primary Employers Tasmania, or the TFGA or its commodity groups
- Consult a professional OHS specialist or ask a WorkCover Advisor to visit for free, no obligation advice
- Ask your industry association or specialist what training is available for you and your workers
- Talk to a Workplace Standards inspector by calling the Workplace Standards Helpline on 1300 366 322
- Read any relevant Workplace Standards guides
- Subscribe to *Workplace Issues* magazine

For the above information which comes from the booklet *Take Control of Safety on Your Farm* contact Workplace Standards Tasmania on 1300 366 322 or fax (03) 6233 8338 or email wstinfo@dier.tas.gov.au or check out the website www.workplacesafe.tas.gov.au The above booklet contains many useful forms including an extensive Hazard Checklist form, chemical register, incident reporting form, training and competency register, induction checklist and lots more vital information for safety conscious farmers.

CHAIRMAN'S WORD

Change is constant. We are all slowly becoming older!! Some changes are hardly noticeable, some we choose and some are exerted from outside our control. Where ever their source we need to manage their impact on us, our families and our businesses. An injury or fatality imposes changes not only on the victim, but also their immediate family and work mates. Do take care and keep up with the changes which strengthen our ability to stay safe at all times.

What's New?

1. Industry guidelines / code of practices: for Slashers and Front End Loaders attachments to tractors. Released February 2011 by WorkCover NSW & only available as a download:

Slashers, Catalogue Number: WC 02797
from: http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au/formspublications/publications/Documents/slashers_guide_health_safety_standards_2797.pdf

Front End Loaders and their attachment on tractors, Catalogue Number: WC 02800
from: http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au/formspublications/publications/Documents/front_end_loaders_attachments_tractors_guide_2800.pdf

2. Safety Awards at Dairy Business of the Year 2011 and Agfest 2011. *Congratulations to:*

- the Frampton family of Gawler, winner of the PASS 2011 DBoY Safety Award. This award is presented to a finalist of the DBoY Awards who demonstrates good safety management practices and recording. PASS Inc very much appreciate Clipsal's donation of a portable RCD, for the prize presented to the winner.
- Red River Rural for their "G-Force" gate, a non-returnable ratchet system on a forcing gate, as winner of the PASS Inc "Best Safety Product or Innovation" (or a product with a new feature/initiative which improves safety) at Agfest 2011. Runner-up was Tasmanian Farm Equipment for the Bare-Co "Patent Lever Release PTO Shaft Guard".



The G-Force gate – more info at www.redrivrural.com.au

- Webster Bearing and Engineering Supplies were winners for the second successive year of the Best Safety Display – Safety Feature / Focus.
- 3. Updated Website for WorkCover Tasmania:**
It is colourful and easy to navigate and provides information of their free, confidential and no obligation Advisory service. Click on the portrait of Advisory Service manager Phillip John. <http://www.workcover.tas.gov.au/>

Also check out the 2010 WorkCover report, which states that since 2005, the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing industry sector in Tasmania has the most work related fatalities with 18. In 2010, three work related fatalities were reported for the AF&F industry sector of the total of 7 work related fatalities in Tasmania. For more information visit: http://www.workcover.tas.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0018/170505/Fatality_Report_2010.pdf

4. "IF Only....." a DVD produced by the Tasmanian Polytechnic Screen Studies students for PASS Inc, which features 6 stories of avoidable tragedies. This will soon to be available for distribution. For a copy contact info@pass.org.au

5. National Data of Non-Intentional Farm Injury Deaths provided by the Australian Centre for Agricultural Health & Safety (ACAH&S) indicates there is a decrease in the annual total. In the period 1989-1992 the annual fatality rate was 142 whilst in 2003-2006 period it was 89. However there is still room for improvement as indicated by item 6.

6. RIRDC Report released March 2011, *Health and Safety on Australian Farms* written by Tony Lower, Lyn Fragar and John Temperley of Australian Centre for Agricultural Health & Safety. The report provides national baseline data to determine the proportion of farming enterprises that have systems and processes in place that meet current regulatory and industry standards for protection of the health and safety of persons who live, work and/or visit farm workplaces.

Establishments from all states with an estimated value of agricultural operations of \$40, 000 or more, were surveyed. Farm enterprises were from the beef, cotton, dairy, grains, horticulture (fruit, vegetable and nuts), sheep and sugar sectors. Findings show that:

- 24% of farm enterprises did have a farm health and safety plan ✓
- 44% indicated they had provided a safety induction for their current workers ✓
- 38% of enterprises reported the provision of safety inductions with contractors ✓
- 84% of enterprises reported undertaking regular hazard inspections ✓
- 10% of tractors are **without** a ROPS ✗
- 15% of tractors **without** a PTO master guard ✗
- 10% of PTO driven implements have **unguarded shafts** ✗
- 15% of grain augers are **unguarded** ✗
- 60% **do not** use seat belts in vehicles when driving on the farm ✗
- 50% or more **do not** use helmets when riding quad bikes, motorcycles or horses ✗
- 50% of farmhouses **do not** have a secure safe play area for young children ✗
- At least 20% of farm enterprises **did not** have a Residual Current Device on the electrical circuit board of the workshop ✗

For more information email tony.lower@sydney.edu.au or read the publication No. 11/001 by downloading from www.rirdc.gov.au or purchase by phoning RIRDC on 1300 634 313

7. Quad Bikes: The historical national 10 year annual average of fatalities on farms involving Quad bikes has been 13 per year. This year by 30th May there had been 12. Twelve too many!! The ages of the victims ranged from 11 years to 94 years, mostly due to roll-overs. For more information: http://www.aghealth.org.au/tinymce_fm/uploaded/safe_use_of_quad_bikes_and_side_by_side_vehicles_on_australian_farms.pdf

Future PASS Activities

Safe Injecting Workshops for farmers, on farms with trainers who have attended training in safe and effective injecting delivered by Dr David Rendell, Livestock Consultant Veterinarian from Hamilton, Victoria. David delivered information on various animal health products potentially harmful to humans. David has published papers in refereed international journals on Needle Stick Injuries and a safe injection technique.

Safe Futures 2011, for the first time will be conducted in both the North and the South of the state during August. Safe Futures is a rural careers expo for 15 – 19 year olds, with a safety focus. For more information contact info@pass.org.au

Farm Safety Week 2011 will be conducted from 18th – 23rd July 2011. Activities include a 2 day program organised by the Bruny Island Community Health Centre. The theme is "Quad Bike Safety".

Near Miss stories are great to read, besides are often experiences many of which are familiar to us all. Please keep sending your "near miss story" to info@pass.org.au
They are a very valuable communication tool.

What is a RCD?

A safety device designed to prevent a fatal electric shock if a vault occurs, in either the tool or electric circuit. It can be fitted to a Switchboard or a Power Point.

Portable RCDs are invaluable when using power tools outdoors. RCDs on power boards and extension leads protect the circuits of appliances connected to the power board.

With thanks to PASS Inc sponsors:

GOLD



SILVER



BRONZE



SAFETY RULES ARE YOUR BEST TOOLS