

April/May
2011
Update

Farmsafe WA Alliance

-Inspiring safe farming-

Inspiring Safe Farming

Farmsafe WA Injury Prevention Workshops



We hope
you all had
a relaxing
and
enjoyable
Easter
break.

Supported and funded by the Department of Health, Farmsafe WA has successfully completed all the injury prevention workshops scheduled last month in the Wheatbelt and South west regions
Noise Injury Prevention and Management and the OH&S New Audit tool project was the focus for the Wheatbelt region whilst Emergency Care & Injury Management and Your health, Your Future in Farming was piloted in the Southwest. Attendance numbers at each workshop proved positive and was mainly due to the support of local community businesses, project partners and supporters coupled with a strong media campaign undertaken through radio, TV and local press.
Show bags full of relevant resources from all partners were provided to all attendees including a complimentary 12 month membership to Farmsafe WA Alliance and free high visibility vests were made available at the OH&S workshops.

Special thanks must go to CBH Group, Main Roads, DrumMuster for supplying us with a selection of giveaways at each workshop.

All attendees were given the opportunity to complete a pre and post questionnaire. The comments and feedback is currently being assessed and collated to include in our final report and evaluation which will be submitted to the Department of Health in July.
Our charter was to treat each campaign as a pilot project and with the assistance and support from our workshop attendees, our partners who were directly involved in each workshop, and the community in general, it is our aim to seek further funding so we can further the reach of these workshops and ultimately take them to a statewide level.



Don McCarroll, Lions Bus Driver and Alisa Lim Project Officer, Farmsafe WA Alliance.

Visit www.farmsafewa.org for further details and project updates as they happen.

Appreciation to Local Businesses

Farmsafe WA would like to thank all the local businesses that supported our workshops and those that generously donated our door prize gifts.

Wheatbelt Workshops

- ◇ **Northam Mitre 10** - Jack and team
- ◇ **Northam Feed and Hire** - Sarah and team
- ◇ **Beverley Farm Direct Stock Feed Supplies** - Pat and team
- ◇ **Farm Shop in Quairading** - Lara and the team
- ◇ **AgTool Supplies in Quairading** - Garry and team
- ◇ **Corrigin Windmill Motel** - Tim and the team
- ◇ **Katem's Groceries, Corrigin** - Kate and team
- ◇ **Gloucester Park** - Sian and team

Southwest Workshops

- ◇ **Olio Bello**, Cowaramup - Brett and team
- ◇ **Nannup Hotel** - Lyn and team
- ◇ **Nannup Hardware** - Geoff and team
- ◇ **Gloucester Park** - Sian and team
- ◇ **Food Kulture, Manjimup** - Anne and team
- ◇ **Manjimup Florist** - Anne and team
- ◇ **Nelson's of Bridgetown** - Garry, Deb and team
- ◇ **Right Stuff for landholders, Bridgetown** - Peter and team
- ◇ **Oakfield Country House B&B, Balingup** - Ruth and team
- ◇ **Mumballup Organics** - Mark, Mel and team
- ◇ **Maclyn Grove Olives, Kirup** - Lyn and team
- ◇ **Fermoy Estate, Harvey** - Nicolette and team
- ◇ **Good Earth Hotel, Perth** - Lucy and team

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Farmsafe WA Alliance is Serious about Farm Safety

Farmsafe WA urges farmers to give thought to the safety of their families, workers, visitors and to themselves. Given the enormous human and economic costs when injuries and illness occur, Farmsafe WA aims to help farmers avoid these costs by adopting an injury risk management program. Statistics indicate that farmers are one of the highest risk groups for occupational illness and injury, with an annual national cost to the industry estimated to exceed \$500 million. Detailed safety checklists are available through Farmsafe WA's Managing Farm Safety Workshops. These one day workshops show farmers how to include injury risk management in their farm business plan.

On farms where such a program has not yet been developed, there are still a number of general practices which farmers can put into place to reduce the danger at seeding time:

- ◇ Plan your program to avoid excessive fatigue, take regular short breaks for refreshment
- ◇ Ensure all machinery, equipment and work areas are in safe working condition and that guards are in place
- ◇ Tractors should have an approved ROPS (Roll Over Protection Structure) and seatbelt fitted. Seatbelts should be used - tractor rollovers are a major cause of farm injury and death.

- ◇ Do not allow passengers on tractors and trailing implements
- ◇ Wear suitable clothing without loose attachments that can get caught up in machinery
- ◇ Many jobs will require earplugs, eye protection and /or dust masks
- ◇ Ensure appropriate supervision for all workers, family members and visitors – know everyone's whereabouts at all times
- ◇ Those operating equipment should be adequately informed and trained in its use
- ◇ Beware of overhead power lines when moving augers and ensure that intake points are effectively guarded
- ◇ Check that fire extinguishers and first aid kits are readily accessible, keeping emergency numbers on hand

Farmsafe WA is a not for profit organization, whose members are farmers themselves and so understand the pressures and difficulties of life on the land

Contact Farmsafe WA Alliance for further details on 9359 4118 or visit our website www.farmsafewa.org



FREE ON-FARM SAFETY ADVISORY SERVICE

An independent, qualified OH&S consultant is funded to visit your farm, advise you on how to avoid injuries and illnesses and provide you with a report tailored to improving safety factors in your workplace.

If you would like us to make you an appointment for a confidential visit please contact Farmsafe WA Alliance on 9359 4118.

Chemicals and Hearing Loss

Did you know that exposure to certain chemicals can cause hearing loss?

Ototoxins are chemicals that, through skin absorption, will move through the blood stream and enter the cochlea where damage can take place at the base of the sensory hairs. When the effects of these chemicals are combined with workplace noise (even moderate levels 85 to 90 dB (A)) then hearing loss is accelerated. Numerous legislative bodies have recognized and identified ototoxicity as a component of hearing loss.

There is limited awareness in the occupational health community of the chemical hazards to hearing. Standards hearing conservation practices focus on noise and do not take into account the potential risk to hearing posed by chemical exposures.

While for a given situation both noise levels and chemical exposure levels may be within the relevant exposure

standards, synergistically (when acting together) there may be risk of hearing damage. Exposure standards for chemicals and noise have not yet been altered to take account of increased risk to hearing so where a MSDS refers to those substances listed, you should carry out a risk assessment to ensure additional control measures are in place.

Activities where noise and ototoxins often combine include: painting, printing, boat building, construction, furniture making, manufacture of metal, leather and petroleum products, fuelling vehicles and aircraft, fire fighting, spraying and weapons firing.

Personal protective equipment may need to be supplied for the handling of ototoxins. In essence, wear suitable chemical barrier gloves or suffer hearing loss.

For local stockists of all your PPE requirements contact Farmsafe WA Alliance on 93594118.

Seeding and Fatigue

Farmsafe WA Alliance encourages farmers to be prepared for seeding and to consider safety precautions during this busy time.

Farm safety issues to consider during this time include:

- The condition and serviceability of equipment and plant (*particularly tractors*)
- Ensuring adequate lighting of sheds and workshops to allow work to be done safely
- Non-slip surfaces to prevent falls
- Keeping control of fatigue, due to the long hours likely to be worked during seeding
- Ensuring satisfactory levels of competence, adequate training & safety inductions of all workers hired
- Ensuring that the presence of children is reduced and/or strictly controlled, as often farms are homes & workplaces in one.

It is also vital to conduct a general safety check of the farm including a check of hazards such as rollover protection, steps and handrails, seatbelts, guarding of exposed and moving parts including power take-offs. Also check brakes, tyres, lighting etc. on a daily basis.

A work systems check is also important, including issues such as 'no passengers'; 'bystanders must be clear', safe work procedure in case of boggy or similar treacherous terrain; appropriate risk controls such as wide wheel tracks or traveling in low gear; and functioning communications gear.

EARLY DANGER SIGNS OF FATIGUE INCLUDE:

- **Wandering thoughts**
- **Missing a gear, road sign or exit**
- **Slowing unintentionally**
- **Braking too late**

Road safety is also another significant issue that Farmsafe WA Alliance are encouraging farmers to be mindful of. It is particularly important to be aware of fatigue issues related to working long hours during seeding and then getting behind the wheel of a car.

If you are driving, you should get off the road if you:

- ◇ are yawning;
- ◇ are blinking more than usual;
- ◇ are having trouble keeping your head up;
- ◇ notice your eyes closing for a moment or going out of focus; or
- ◇ forget driving the last few kilometres.

After driving for long periods, you should stop for a break or coffee, swap drivers where possible or stop to have a short sleep. Remember to get plenty of rest the night before a long trip.

Volunteers—The Heart of St John Ambulance

Many people don't realize that St John Ambulance in Western Australia covers the largest area of any single ambulance service in the world – 2,525,500 square kilometers or 33% of the total landmass of Australia.



St John Ambulance operates in numerous locations throughout country WA, stretching from Christmas Island to Albany, Esperance, Eucla and Wyndham.

The country area is serviced by over 2000 dedicated volunteer ambulance officers. This volunteer model ensures there is an ambulance service in most towns, with St John Ambulance assisting local communities with the provision of ambulances, equipment, sub centres, adequate training for volunteers and support by Regional Managers.

Unarguably one of our most precious community resources, St John Ambulance volunteers help ensure that country communities have access to high quality ambulance services and facilities. These dedicated volunteers regularly give up their own time to provide quality ambulance care and transport for the sick and injured, transferring patients

between hospitals, clinics, nursing homes and responding efficiently to emergency calls within the community. They can also be seen regularly attending sporting fixtures such as races or football matches providing first aid support.

One of the greatest challenges for St John Ambulance is the provision of appropriate training for volunteer officers in both a timely manner and in locations that are most convenient for volunteers. An important objective of St John Ambulance is to achieve the right balance between making sure volunteers are trained to the highest possible level, without putting an unreasonable burden on them. Volunteers undergo a variety of training to obtain the skills to be an Ambulance Driver, Grade 1 Ambulance Officer and Grade 2 Ambulance Officer.

Volunteering can be a very rewarding experience. You not only get the satisfaction of knowing you are helping others, but there can be personal benefits as well.

As a St John Ambulance volunteer you will:

- ◇ **Learn invaluable skills that remain with you for life.**
- ◇ **Join a team of dedicated, like-minded people.**
- ◇ **Be an integral part of an organization that safeguards the health of your community.**
- ◇ **Meet new friends and have fun.**
- ◇ **Open up new career opportunities.**

If you have some spare time, like a challenge and would like to give back to the community you live in, find out about becoming a country ambulance volunteer today by phoning 1800 069 393 or visiting the St John Ambulance website at: <http://www.ambulance.net.au/content.asp?id=172&service=country>

A FEW HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR RECENT SOUTHWEST WORKSHOPS...



Harry Marwick, Acting Regional Manager and Andrew Eyre, Paramedic from Harvey St John Ambulance.



Paul Ingram, Flight Nurse Educator and Kate Zanotti, Clinical Educator from the RFDS.



Kellie Taylor, Officer in Charge at Nannup Police Station.



Chris Kingsnorth, Senior Occupational Therapist Country Services from the Independent Living Centre.



Ben Olson, Primary Safety, Owen Catto, Regional Mens Health and Sheila Payne, Farmsafe WA enjoying a break.



Dale Reid, from St. John Ambulance enjoying some afternoon tea.

Accept the challenge... become a volunteer firefighter!

Volunteer firefighters are ordinary people who do extraordinary things for the community. There are positions in Bush Fire Service Brigades for people from all walks of life, with all types of talents.

Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades (BFB) are established, equipped and maintained by Local Government Authorities. There are approximately 16,000 Bush Fire Brigade Volunteer firefighters throughout Western Australia.

What do BFB Volunteer Firefighters do?

In areas outside the gazette districts of the Fire and Rescue Service and Regional and National Parks, Bush Firefighters:

- ◇ Attend bush and scrub fires as well as property and/or vehicle fires; and
- ◇ Undertake fire prevention and risk management work in their community.

What training is provided?

Training for BFB volunteers is the responsibility of the Local Government Authority of the brigade. FESA staff may provide training to BFB volunteers at the request of the Local Government Authority.

Are there different roles with in the service?

There are a number of different roles a volunteer can undertake, including:

- ◇ Frontline firefighting;
- ◇ Administration or radio communications;
- ◇ Equipment maintenance; and
- ◇ Public education programs

Are safety and protective clothing provided?

Appropriate protective clothing is issued to registered volunteer firefighters, with the cost covered by the relevant Local Government Authority.

What is the criteria for membership?

In general, volunteers are:

- ◇ In good health and sound body and mind.
- ◇ Of good moral character and habits
- ◇ A team oriented person and committed to serving their community.



Devastation caused by the Toodyay bushfires

For further details about volunteer fire fighting contact: FESA Headquarters by phone 08 9323 9300 or on the web www.fesa.wa.gov.au or contact your local fire station, FESA Regional or District Office.

LIONS WOMEN'S SAFARI - 100 KILOMETRES IN 4 DAYS

Recently the Upper Great Southern witnessed and took part in a unique event.

One hundred women set out and raised \$1,000 each for a total of \$100,000 and then walked 100km over 4 days to celebrate.

Where does this fit with Farmsafe WA Alliance. The Lions support crew and local volunteers were all decked out in CBH sponsored HI Vis vests. Including the three "Guardian Angels" as they were known (one of who was Chairman

John McDougall) who escorted, cajoled and supported the girls over the four days through some picturesque country and some rough terrain.

It was a great achievement highlighting determination, good planning and co-operation which delivered a memorable event.

There is \$100,000 in a trust account waiting to be expended on medical equipment for the greater Narrogin region.

The benefit from this walk will be evident for years to come.



FARMSAFE WA MEMBERSHIP

Become a member and strengthen the relationship between Farmsafe WA and your community.

For more information call us on 9359 4118 or email admin@farmsafewa.org



Quad Bikes - Time for action

Quad bikes are an extremely useful vehicle on Australian farms. However, over the past 10 years they have been responsible for an average of 14 deaths/year. For 2011 (to March 31), there have already been 9 deaths. Additionally, it's estimated that for each death there are 15 serious injuries (head, spinal, multiple fracture) that have lifelong consequences.



We know that 50% of deaths occur from the quad bike rolling over and trapping the victims - death results from crush and asphyxiation.

Manufacturer research that has historically indicated crush protection devices increase the risks of injury, has now been found by

several highly respected and independent forensic/mechanical engineers to be incorrect. As such, support for fitting a crush protection device is now common among independent scientists working in the field.

Despite this overwhelming evidence the manufacturers continue to use "scare" tactics that this device will increase injury and that fitting one will void owner warranties (they have also previously tried this tactic in NZ). Both points are incorrect, as Workhealth Authorities in some states are now advising farmers to consider fitting crush protection devices. Just why the manufacturers continue to hold this position is dumbfounding, however it clearly threatens the health and safety of farmers, their employees and family members that use these vehicles. Some key points on safety are listed in the box below and with the active support of CWA members across all states and territories, we can reduce the number of deaths and serious injuries from quad bikes.

Key steps to improve quad bike safety

- 1) Quad bikes are generally not the best or safest vehicle for most jobs on farms, so preferably choose other vehicles like farm utilities, side-by-side vehicles or two wheel motorcycles that are safer and have a lower risk of rollover. That is, choose the most suitable vehicle for the tasks you have to complete. If still choosing to use a quad bike following this assessment, ensure that you have fitted a tested crush protection device.
- 2) Keep all children (under 16) off quad bikes (as either riders or passengers).
- 3) Never carry passengers on quad bikes (this impairs stability significantly increasing the risk of rollover)
- 4) Seek relevant training and wear a helmet

The Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety is part of the Sydney Medical School within the University of Sydney. The charter of the Centre is to assist rural Australians to attain improved levels of health and well-being by reducing the incidence and severity of injury and illness associated with life and work in agriculture.

As a completely independent and scientific agency our Centre's stance to fit these protective devices to prevent the increasing number of deaths and serious injuries, has recently been made clear in our position paper. The position paper and resources for farmers to improve quad bike safety can be accessed at www.aghealth.org.au or call (02) 6752 8210.

Dr Tony Lower
ACAHS Director

WORKING ALONE

Working alone can lead to death and serious injury within the agricultural industry.

Employees are frequently working alone away from the main farm buildings on a daily basis. These employees will often not return to the main buildings of the farm until the job is complete. This means that if an accident happens it could be days before the person is found.

The employer must ensure that the employee has been provided with sufficient information about hazards to which he or she is likely to be exposed to. The employer must also ensure the employee has been adequately trained and equipped to carry out the work in a safe manner.

The employee must be given clear instructions as to where the work is to be carried out and a safe way to get to the site. The employee and employer should agree on a start and finish

time for the job and the time the employer should expect the employee to return to the main buildings.

A risk assessment will indicate if and how often there should be contact between the employee and employer between the start and finish of the job. The start and finish times and the location of the employee should be displayed in an accessible place in the main buildings of the farm where it can be easily viewed by other employees and other persons at the workplace.

All employers and self-employed people who work alone in the agricultural industry should have a nominated person who knows where they are and make contact with them during the day. This could be a family member or a neighbouring farmer.

What's Happening?



Students from Tincurrin Primary School
'Being seen, Being Safe'

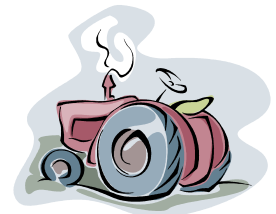


SMALL FARM FIELD DAY GIDGEGANNUP 28TH MAY



Why not visit us at the Gidgegannup Small Farm Field Day and collect your Farm Safety Checklist which will give you sound advice on a range of topics.

- ◇ Children in the workplace.
- ◇ Emergency procedures
- ◇ Remote or isolated work
- ◇ Workplace safety
- ◇ Tractors and machinery safety
- ◇ Quad bike safety
- ◇ Chemical and hazardous substances
- ◇ Working with animals
- ◇ Noise and injury prevention



We will be located in the bush verandah.

See you there.



Balingup Small Farm Field Day-16th April

Farmsafe WA Alliance recently attended the Balingup Small Farm field day. It was a full day of chatting with interested parties, providing safety and awareness resources covering all the hazards and risks associated with rural living and working on the property plus an opportunity to further lift the image and awareness of Farmsafe WA Alliance.

Many farmers and their families were interested in the Safe Play Area resources and

also keen to receive one of the child high visibility vests we had on display. Throughout the day, we handed out 100 of the kiddies Being Seen, Being Safe Visy vests and at no charge.

Farmsafe WA also treated interested attendees to a complimentary 12 months membership to strengthen our ties with the community.

Kelmscott Senior High School Farm Day Fundraiser 6th March

The March 6th Farmday Fundraiser, was to raise funds for the 12 families of Kelmscott Primary, Kelmscott SHS and Clifton Hills Primary, whose homes were totally devastated by the recent bushfires.

The volunteer staff on the Farmday Fundraiser consisted of staff, students and parents from the three schools, as well as community members and over \$3,000 was raised.

With activities ranging from camel rides, bouncy castle, shearing & milking demonstrations, scare-crow making, calf-naming, cattle weight competition and animal handling, it was a full-on day. Many thanks must go to our local business community who assisted with prizes and vouchers used throughout the day as

gate entry prizes and activity prizes.

A special presentation was made on the day by Andrew Gorton of the Armadale Freemason Lodges of a donation of \$1,000.



A Thought and Poem for the day...

WAKE UP TIME

When the shearing sheds are silent and the stock camps fallen quiet
 When the gidgee coals no longer glow across the outback night
 And the bush is forced to hang a sign, ' gone broke and won't be back'
 And spirits fear to find a way beyond the beaten track
 When harvesters stand derelict upon the wind swept plains
 And brave hearts pin their hopes no more on chance of loving rains
 When a hundred outback settlements are ghost towns overnight
 When we've lost the drive and heart we had to once more see us right
 When 'Pioneer' means a stereo and 'Digger' some backhoe
 And the 'Outback' is behind the house. there's nowhere else to go
 And 'Anzac' is a biscuit brand and probably foreign owned
 And education really means brainwashed and neatly cloned
 When you have to bake a loaf of bread to make a decent crust
 And our heritage once enshrined in gold is crumbling to dust
 And old folk pay their camping fees on land for which they fought
 And fishing is a great escape; this is until you're caught
 When you see our kids with yankee caps and resentment in their eyes
 And the soaring crime and hopeless hearts is no longer a surprise
 When the name of RM Williams is a yuppie clothing brand
 And not a product of our heritage that grew off the land
 When offering a hand makes people think you'll amputate
 And two dogs meeting in the street is what you call a 'Mate'
 When 'Political Correctness' has replaced all common sense
 When you're forced to see it their way, there's no sitting on the fence
 Yes one day you might find yourself an outcast in this land
 Perhaps your heart will tell you then, ' I should have made a stand'
 Just go and ask the farmers that should remove all doubt
 Then join the swelling ranks who say, ' don't sell Australia out'

Courtesy of Craig Leggett (Ex SAS & 1 RAR)

Farmsafe WA Alliance continues to receive support from



Government of Western Australia
Department of Health



Department of Agriculture and Food



St John

ear science institute australia



Independent Living Centre of WA (Inc)



Royal Flying Doctor Service
The furthest corner. The finest care.



ChemCert WA Incorporated
... training and accrediting farm chemical users

