

NSW Records the Highest Deaths On-Farm

Figures released today by the Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety are a chilling reminder of the importance of safety within agriculture. An analysis of media reports in the first six months of 2017 indicates that 32 people have tragically lost their lives in on-farm incidents and a further 101 have been involved in non-fatal incidents that were serious enough to make the media.

“Figures show more than 50% (seventeen) of the fatal incidents occurred on a farm in New South Wales, two of which involved children. New South Wales also recorded the second highest number of non-fatal incidents” said Centre Director Dr Tony Lower.

“Disturbingly more than double the amount of non-fatal incidents were reported than last year’s period. We know that there are highly effective ways to control risks and prevent needless deaths and injuries.”

“Farm owners/managers need to visibly demonstrate good work health and safety practices which will set a precedence and influence their employees to follow suit.”

“Consistent with previous years, quads remain the leading cause of fatal injury accounting for 9 cases (28%), with two of these involving children. Quads have also dominated the non-fatal injuries reported, many of which have lifelong consequences.”

“Rebates to assist farmers to improve quad safety are currently available in Victoria and New South Wales. The programs assist farmers to move to other safer and more fit-for purpose vehicles such as side by sides and if that’s not possible, to fit crush protection devices. Safety is also supported by the use of helmets on quads. Overtime the financial assistance and range of strategies advocated, will undoubtedly reduce the number of fatal quad-related deaths” stated Lower.

“Prevention is the key in reducing the statistics, action is vital now! In this way we will not only save lives and serious injuries, as an industry we will be more productive.”

A copy of the report and a wide range of materials that can assist those that work and live on farms to prevent harm to themselves, farm workers, family members and visitors, is available from the Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety web site www.sydney.edu.au/medicine/aghealth or phone 02 6882 1486 for further information.

Release Date: July 10, 2017

Contact:
Dr Tony Lower
Director
Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety
Ph: (02) 6882 1486