

## Focus on farm safety

Figures released today by the Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety emphasize the importance of having a focus on safety within agriculture. An analysis of Australian media reports in the first nine months of 2016 indicates that 47 people have tragically lost their lives in on-farm incidents and a further 61 have been involved in non-fatal incidents that were serious enough to make the media.

“These figures are considerably higher than the same time last year” said Centre Director Dr Tony Lower.

“These figures once again demonstrate the importance of pausing and considering the safety aspects that need attention. Behind every one of these cases there is an individual, a family and a community that has to manage the unnecessary loss of a loved one or friend in the case of a death. Or for many of those that are injured and survive, they need to learn to manage with lifelong disabling injuries.”

“History tells us that the injury consequences are far reaching and yet we know that the vast majority of cases can be prevented” stated Lower.

Among the deaths, farm machinery (n=8), tractors (n=7) and quads (n=4) were the leading causes. Adding to these disturbing findings is the fact that almost 20% of cases have involved children 15 years and under.

“We know that there are highly effective ways to control the risks when using vehicles such as machinery, tractors and quads. Hindsight is a wonderful thing, but we need to take these steps before issues arise. In this way we will not only save lives and serious injuries, but the industry will also be more productive. For all farms but particularly those involved in grain production with busy harvest periods ahead, we urge the utmost attention to detail to ensure safety.”

A copy of the report and a wide range of materials that can assist those that work and live on farms to reduce the risks to themselves, farm workers, family members and visitors, is available from the Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety web site [www.aghealth.org.au](http://www.aghealth.org.au) on 02 6752 8210 for further information.

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