



# SHEEPO

Journal of The Shearing Contractors' Association of Australia

## News in Brief

### ANZ Wool harvesting Safety Summit III

The third installment of the Australia - New Zealand Shearing Safety Summit was held on the Gold Coast in conjunction with the ShearHarvest Conference.

The ANZ Shearing Summit meeting is an important gathering of the major stake holders in shearing safety, in Australia and New Zealand. The summit has been a very successful forum in terms of sharing Safety solutions and resources across the Tasman. Amongst many import outcomes, it was the original meeting of this group that has paved the way for this year's Trans-Tasman ShearHarvest conference.

The meeting was a great success in that it continued the exchange of ideas, information and processes. The attendees included the SCAA, AWU, AWI, Workcover NSW, Workcover Vic, TETRA (NZ), ACCC (NZ) and WoolProducers Australia.

### New Publication: Ringer Magazine

The first edition of "Ringer" is out. This new 'magazine' style publication is dedicated to keeping the shearing industry informed – Congratulations to Donna Gurney, the editor and publisher. Her entrepreneurial spirit should be commended. I have sent Donna your addresses so hopefully you have received a copy. If not, register to be on the mailing list by calling 0404 594 274 or ringermag@bigpond.com.

### New funds for safety resource project

The SCAA has been granted an additional \$92,300 by Workcover NSW under the Education & Training Grants Programme. The funds will be used to continue the SCAA's Shearing Safety Resource Centre and Shearing Safety Website Projects.

### New workers compensation rate

NSW Workers Compensation Industry "base Tariff Rate" for Shearing will change to 8.74% when policies are renewed after 1 July.

## Shearharvest Conference 2008

On Queensland's Gold Coast in May, the SCAA hosted the inaugural Trans-Tasman Shearing Contractors Conference - SHEARHARVEST 2008

The two day event was a fantastic success being attended by more than 150 delegates from the SCAA, the New Zealand Shearing Contractors' Association (NZSCA), the Western Australian Shearing Contractors Association (WASCA), and representatives from many other areas of the wool harvesting industry.

The conference was the first time that shearing contractors, from all over Australia and across the Tasman have come together to exchange ideas and learn from each other. The conference was run in two parts...

### Day 1 – Wool harvesting Today

Delegates attended their respective AGM's, and then received updates on Industrial Relations post WorkChoices, drugs in the workplace, shearing technology, industry training and traineeships as well as clip preparation. Delegates also learned about Shearing Health and Safety initiatives being run in Australia and New Zealand. The session culminated in the launch of the new dedicated Shearing Health and Safety website (see over), The presenters included Industry Consultants, Australian Workers Union, NZ and Australian Registered Training Organisations (RTO) and the Queensland Police.

### Day 2 – Future Trends

The goal of the second day of the conference was to review where "where is the industry today" and determine what actions are required from the industry's leaders to shape the future of the wool harvesting

industry. Delegates heard five contractors representing five different regions of the Australian and NZ wool growing areas, along with two contractors reviewing the differences between running a contracting business in Australia and NZ. The presentations were followed by an industry review run in a 'workshop' format. The objective of the workshops was to determine the future of the industry by defining the problems, prioritising them and creating action plans to assist in their resolution. The 'outcomes' of the day are summarised on the attached page.

A highlight of the conference was an industry dinner on the Thursday evening which included guest speakers Dwayne Black (7 World Records) and Mark Rodda (Elders).

ShearHarvest's success was only possible due to the support from organisations such as Australian Wool Innovation (AWI), Heiniger, Primesuper and Michael Lawrance & Associates. Other organisations that made a major contribution include: Qld Police, Tetra (NZ), ACCC(NZ), Miles Heffernan from The Employment Advisor, AWU, AWEX, Western Institute of TAFE, SCAA SWTI, TAFE SA, Elders, Worksafe Vic and various DETNAC. The SCAA would also like to make special thanks to Joe Sullivan (AWI), David Crean (TAFE – West Institute), Jeff Connell, NZSCA (Cheryl Christie, Motu Tua, Barry & Patricia Pullin, Marie Mallon), Vikki Gates and Graham Stevens from WASCA.

It was declared that the next Trans Tasman SHEARING Contractors Conference would be held in 2010 in New Zealand.

## Training update from TAFE NSW Western Institute

Many SCAA members are using traineeships as a way to help shearers and woolhandlers improve their skills. The programme has been running for more than 4 years and has been hugely successful with hundreds of shearers and wool handlers participating in the programme.

There are numerous benefits for employees to become a "trainee"; not only will your staff be able to earn more and increase productivity for contractors, they are more likely to be retained as part of your team for longer. The current Commonwealth incentives for traineeships are:

- Employers - up to \$5000.
- Trainees - \$800 toolbox allowance.

### The traineeship program is:

- Available for novice and experienced woolhandlers and shearers.
- Training is delivered in the shed and in dedicated training schools.

Training	Location	Details	When
Novice Shearer and Wool Handler Schools	Dubbo Rural Skills Centre	10 days Learner shearing Woolhandling skills	15 September & 1st December. Extra Schools and AWI funded 1 & 2 day workshops on demand
Novice / Improver Schools	Working sheds, where required	10 day novice 5 day improver	As demanded
Traineeships – shearing and wool handling	Working sheds	Trainees receive training over a 12 month period as they work. Incentives for trainees and employer.	As demanded
Australian Wool Innovation Regional Shearing and wool handling coaching	Working sheds across NSW	Improver and professional coaching for shearers and wool handlers	As demanded
NSW Stud Merino Breeders	Working sheds across NSW	Professional and improver coaching for wool handling teams	As demanded

For information and assistance, please call the team at TAFE NSW Western Institute on (02) 6840 2122, Jim Murray (0427 460 007), David Crean (0419 422 340) or Ian Chapman (0427 468 255).

## Victorian High Country – Shearing Safety Day

Congratulations go to Omeo based SCAA member, Trevor King who recently organized and ran a very successful shearing industry safety day. Modelled on the ShearHarvest 2008 conference, Trevor invited a line up of speakers that that would allow local wool growers and shearing industry workers, the opportunity to learn about OH&S and how to apply it to the shearing industry.

Speakers included the major wool brokers, Heiniger, Victorian Police, Worksafe Victoria, AWU and the SCAA's Shearing Safety Resource Centre.

The half day session was well attended by the majority of local woolgrowers who in turn were offered the opportunity of a follow up free shearing shed safety consultations. The success of the day could be measured by the high number of woolgrowers who chose to utilise the free onsite OH&S consultations.

The consultations are designed to show the woolgrower how to improve the safety of their workplace and implement the OH&S measures they had listened to and discussed at the presentations.

The SCAA encourages members to follow this excellent initiative under taken by Trevor. Not only do you end up with safer workplaces for your staff but it is a great marketing exercise for you to differentiate your business from the competition.

If you are interested in running a similar programme in your area or just taking advantage of the FREE shearing shed consultations (your clients need to be based in Victoria) or the \$500 safety rebate available from Workcover NSW (your clients need to be based in NSW), please contact the SCAA's Shearing Safety Resource Centre on 03 5332 2400.

### Post Script:

Trevor reports that since the Omeo shearing industry safety workshop, he has accompanied the Lyco wool press service man to service 16 on-site wool presses. Fifteen of these presses have now been fitted with safety trip bars and one still to be fitted. These are all presses in addition to the properties/presses Michael Lawrance and Trevor visited on the day after the workshop. This means that the interest and action on improving shed safety spread beyond those immediately attending the workshop! This goes to show that Trevor's and many other contractors like Trevor, doing their bit in their district does make a huge difference. It also proves that Farmers do listen and do appreciate your efforts! Once again, well done Trevor and all of you who are quietly getting on with it.

# Industrial Relations Update

## The 2008 minimum wage decision: Wage rise set for 1 October.

The Australian Fair Pay Commission has decided to increase the standard Federal Minimum Wage and all Australian Pay Scales from first pay period on or after 1 October 2008. The decision to increase the Federal Minimum wage by 4.1% will result in the changes to the Pastoral Industry Pay Scale detailed in the adjacent table.

Please note;

- **Pay Scale:** These changes are in relation to the "Pay Scale" that applies to employers trading as "Pty Ltd" companies, "Trusts" and all Victorian based "Sole Traders" and "Partnerships". Non-Victorian based "Sole Traders" and "Partnerships" will still be required to pay their workers under the (Federal) Pastoral Industry Transitional Award.
- **Award Changes** The new rates for (Federal) Pastoral Industry Transitional Award are yet to be announced by the Australian Industrial Relations Commission. It is more than likely that the new rates for the "Award" will come into effect on 1 October and will be in line with the 4.1% increase that applied to the "Pay Scale", as set out above.
- **Full Listing:** The new rates for the (Federal) Pastoral Industry Transitional Award and a full listing of rates for the "Pay Scale" will be sent to members as soon as they become available.

Pastoral Industry Payscale	OLD rate from 1 Oct 07	NEW rate from 1 Oct 08
Flock sheep (per hundred)	\$226.21	\$235.59
Crutching at sheds (per hundred)	\$65.60	\$68.32
Shed Hands (per run)	\$41.48	\$42.81
Wool pressers (per run)	\$43.54	\$44.87
Cooks (per hour)	\$24.02	\$24.54

## Workchoices Reform

The Rudd Government has introduced the first stage of its 'Forward with Fairness' reform legislation with the main emphasis being on collective bargaining at an enterprise level (between a business and its employees).

The key features include:

- The Bill replaces the 'fairness test' with a new 'no disadvantage test'.
- It abolishes AWAs, introduces new Individual Transitional Employment Agreements (ITEAs).
- It empowers the Australian Industrial Relations Commission (Commission) to commence award modernisation.
- It removes the requirements for employers to provide new employees with a Fact Sheet.
- National Employment Standards will replace the Australian Fair Pay and Conditions Standard from 1 January 2010.
- It does not make any changes to the unfair dismissal system.

- It winds back a number of the WorkChoices reforms. Perhaps most significantly, it re-establishes a safety net based on Awards and the Fair Pay and Conditions Standard.

However since the election, the business community is yet to feel any major changes in the industrial relations arena under the new Rudd government. So what does the shearing industry have facing it?

## Implications for Shearing Contractors.

As the effects of WorkChoices on the shearing industry were in reality minimal, the new legislation will also have negligible immediate effects. In simple terms we are likely to see more of the 'old days' of "safety net" style of wage changes based on changes to the minimum wage as set by the Fair Pay Commission (see above). Other than this, we may see bargaining via union applications to the Industrial Commission. That said, with the Fair Pay Commission ensuring worker's pay rates are not eroded by inflation, it will be a difficult for unions to argue for additional wage increases.

## Election Update

In early July, nominations for the 12 "Committee of Management" positions for the SCAA were called for by the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC). The AEC rec'd 11 nominations for the 12 positions. As there were only 11 nominations for the 12 positions, no ballot was required for the 11 nominations and those 11 nominees were declared elected.

Under the SCAA Constitution, if less than 12 nominations are received for the 12 positions, a second 'nomination' round is required. At the time of printing, the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) had received 3 nominations for the one remaining position. Therefore a ballot will take place in the coming weeks to elect one of the nominees to the final position on the "committee of Management".

The 11 nominees who have been declared elected to the 2008 Committee of Management are:

Noel CANTY	Ivan LETCHFORD
Jeff CONNELL	Damian RAUDINO
John EVANS	Michael SCHOFIELD
Austin GRIGG	Stephen STACEY
David KEMP	Frank SUTHERLAND
Warren KIMBER	



## Comings & Goings

- Jim Dickie from Griffith has retired from the industry.
- Gary Goldman of Bundarra NSW resigned after many years of membership.
- Kevin Connor from Taralga past over the reigns to his son Steven.
- Chris & Mandy Buckley have handed over to Shane Evans. (Chris has taken over the management of several properties).
- Other Resigned Members: Terry Daly, Rob & Judith Burgun, Lindsay Ellison (due to ill health – SCAA wishes him all the best), Neil & Katrina Morris.
- Frank Sutherland has moved. His new phone number is (03) 9763-8458.

## Shearing Safety website – launched

A highlight of the ShearHarvest conference was the launch of the Shearing Safety Website by the respective Presidents of the SCAA and the NZSCA, Ivan Letchford and Muto Tau. The website is an exciting step into the 21st century for OH&S in the wool harvesting industry.

The site is the result of more than 12 months of work by the team from Michael Lawrance & Associates and the SCAA membership. The project was made possible by funding provided through Workcover NSW's "WorkCover Assist" Program. Although the launch is the culmination of much hard work, it is certainly not the 'end point' in the journey. The website is more like a continuous 'work in progress' as it will be updated regularly with new information, when it comes to hand.

The website is designed to provide comprehensive occupational health and safety resources that are focused on the shearing industry. You will find images, documents and links to external websites on a wide variety of aspects related to shearing. To visit the website, go to [www.shearingsafety.com.au](http://www.shearingsafety.com.au)

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## LIFE MEMBERSHIPS

SCAA Life Memberships were award to two of the associations long serving committee members; Frank Sutherland and John McRae.

Both Frank and John have been long serving members of the Association, contributing countless years of service to the committee. Frank has held the position of Vice-President for many of those years. Since the "Wide-comb" dispute in the early 'Eighties', Frank has spent many weeks in front of the Industrial Relations Commission arguing on behalf of shearing contractors and the shearing industry's best interests. Frank's tenacity and expertise have certainly influenced the "shape" of the current Pastoral Industry Award. Franks has travelled thousands of kilometres to meetings and court cases on behalf of the Association and is more than deserving of this award.

John McRae has spent many of his years of service as a committee member in the role of Trustee to the Association. In July, John celebrated 58 Years in the Wool industry. To mark the occasion, John's daughter Cindy organised a gala lunch that was attended by SCAA members and many of the hundreds of wool growers and staff that John worked with over the years. Congratulations John.