



SHEEPO

Journal of The Shearing Contractors' Association of Australia

News in brief

AGM & Regional Meeting

The SCAA AGM and Regional meetings were held over the past 6 weeks in Sydney, Adelaide and Ballarat. While attendance numbers varied considerably, the meetings were well received and productive sessions for members and the SCAA committee members who attended.

The SCAA would like to sincerely thank our guest speakers for their time and effort in attending the meetings (on their weekends in most cases) and for the insightful information they presented at the meetings.

Guest speakers at the meeting include:

- Rod Stewart – Prime Super
- Michael Lawrance – JointAction (See other article)
- Steve Cowley – Health & Safety Consultant
- Alix Turner – NSW wool grower
- Mark Truman – Heiniger
- Wim from FMP-Bendix

Minutes from AGM are available on the website in the Member's area and Regional meeting presentations are available from the Secretary upon request.

2011 Woolpack Standard review

AWEX (Australian Wool Exchange), through its Industry Services Advisory Committee (ISAC), is undertaking a review of the current woolpack standard. This review has partly resulted from the RTA clamping down on wool bale overhang from trucks and therefore the size/shape may need to be changed. A series of meetings are underway that have been initiated by the RTA and includes representatives from the transport industry, wool industry and police. We will keep you informed of the outcome.

Wage Increase: 1 July 2011

On 1 July all Award based wages will increase as a result of Fairwork Australia's decision to change the Minimum wage of Australian workers by 3.4%.

The Minimum Wage will increase by \$19.40 per week to \$589.30 or \$0.51 per hour to \$15.51. Likewise the increase will flow onto the Pastoral Award whereby the shearing 'flock rate' will increase from \$253.42 to \$261.13.

Although the minimum wage increased by 3.4%, the effect on the individual pay rates for the Pastoral Award have not been as high, with the overall effect

of the increase to the wage cost of the contracting price staying closer to 3%. The main reason for this is that the increase in the 'flock rate' was only 3% and as this cost not only makes up approximately 50% of the contract price but numerous other rates in the award are derived from the 'flock rate'. Incidentally, the controversial Vehicle Allowance of \$0.74 has remained unchanged.

As always, a full list of 'rates' has been sent to members but are available in the member's area of www.scaa.org.au or call the Secretary for copies.

New services for SCAA members - JointAction

For numerous years SCAA has been pursuing Workcover with regard to reducing the cost of workers compensation for the shearing industry. One of the ways SCAA has achieved improvements in this area is using grants from the various state Workcover authorities. These grants have been used to run a selection of projects and initiatives that have greatly assisted in reducing costs to the industry as a whole. For the time being this course of action has come up against several hurdles, the obvious being the funding of new projects.

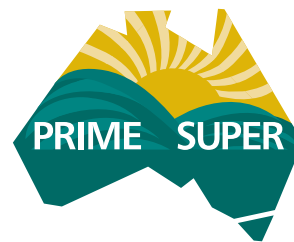
Along with this process, SCAA has also been directly assisting members to ensure that they are minimising the cost of workers compensation to their business by avoiding the pitfalls such as 'claims history adjustments'. Although SCAA is resided to assisting members in this area, the committee has decided to take a 'two-pronged' attack on workplace injuries by addressing the 'physical' issues facing members and their employees. The intention is to offer practical assistance in the areas of **injury prevention** and provide guidelines for **injury management**, if an injury does occur.

To this end SCAA has engaged JointAction: a health and safety organisation that is committed to assisting

employers and employees with injury prevention and injury management in their workplace. This service will be free to SCAA members and it is being trialled on a six month basis. Its success is to be measured primarily on usage by members.

Please see article featured over page that has been extracted from the recent media release.

SCAA is proudly sponsored by



JointAction: Prevention & recovery advisory service for Australian shearers

MEDIA RELEASE

Ballarat, VIC June 6, 2011

JointAction and the Shearing Contractors Association of Australia (SCAA) have partnered to provide Australian shearers and shed staff with access to leading advice and knowledge about preventing injuries, and recovering after an injury.

Across Australia injured shearers and shed staff are dealt with in a very piecemeal way, and in many cases 'give up' on the system and are lost from the industry and sometimes the workforce. The advisory service (JointActionDirect) is a remote advisory service so that shearers and shed staff, anywhere, anytime, can speak with high-level physiotherapists, ergonomists and other professionals about how best to recover and to actually understand the nature of the injury and expected outcomes.

Derek at Stawell Gold Mine in Victoria who used the service after an injury said "I liked the description of the injury; why I injured myself and how the healing process would progress if I followed the advice, and why it would take longer if I didn't. This understanding motivated me to follow the advice."

The injury prevention focus of the partnership is on early identification of aches, pains and injuries; determining if the aches and pains are anything out of the ordinary and providing advice to address the aches, pains and injuries.

"I'm excited about this opportunity for our members and the shearing industry as a whole" said Jason Letchford, Shearing Contractors Association of Australia, Secretary. "This will be the first programme of its kind for the shearing industry that is offering employers and employees, real-time practical guidance on how to prevent injuries from occurring the first instance but also what to do if an injury does occur."

Access to JointActionDirect for SCAA members and their employees begins from July 1, 2011.

About JointAction:

JointAction is a leading provider of services focused on the prevention of musculoskeletal injury by addressing the causes of injury in physical work and office environments.

Founded by a shearer turned physical ergonomist, an international rugby strength conditioner and Olympic physiotherapist, it is dedicated to bringing the most up-to-date knowledge of injury prevention and recovery from elite sport and industry to people working everywhere.

Contact:

Roscoe McCord

JointAction Pty Ltd

Phone: +61 418 989 100

<http://www.jointaction.com.au>

Of Historical Note

The 1891 shearers' strike

Who were the main players?

The dispute involved the Australian Shearers' Union and the Pastoralists' Federal Council (the employers).

What was it about?

The shearers were concerned their rates of pay would be reduced as employers began to employ non-union labour at lower cost. Their demands included the continuation of their existing rates of pay, protection of their rights and privileges, fair agreements and the exclusion of Chinese labour.

What was the outcome?

After striking for many months, it was clear that shearers were unable to maintain strike action. In August 1891, the Pastoralists' Federal Council and the Australian Shearers' Union reached agreement, albeit in favour of the pastoralists. It was agreed that employers could choose and employ union or non-union labour as they pleased.

Why was it significant?

There was little actual violence except for arson, but striking shearers formed camps, and were armed. In Queensland over 2000 soldiers and police were deployed, and 1099 special constables had been sworn in. As the strike ended some of the union leaders were arrested and charged with conspiracy and some were sent to jail. A view formed amongst labour leaders that industrial action of this sort had its limitations and that a political party that represented the needs and interests of the workers might be more effective. The 1891 shearers' strike is now considered one of the factors that led to the formation of what we now refer to as the Australian Labor Party (ALP).

Excerpt from [Waltzing Matilda and the Sunshine Harvester Factory](http://www.fwa.gov.au/documents/education/resources/Waltzing_Matilda_Part_1.pdf) by Fair Work Australia. Read more at: www.fwa.gov.au/documents/education/resources/Waltzing_Matilda_Part_1.pdf

Did you know?

Shearing contracting in the UK

Q. Who looks after the interests of shearing contractors in the UK?

A. National Association of Agricultural Contractors (NAAC)

Founded in 1897, the NAAC is the representative organisation for contractors in the UK who supply all types of land-based services to farmers, government, local authorities, sports and recreational facilities. Jill Hewitt is the Chief Executive and her contact details are included below.

Q. How Many Shearers go to the UK each season?

A. The NAAC estimates that 500 shearers usually come to the UK from overseas. Of a total population, the overseas shearers cover approx. 20-25% of the national flock – a total of 5-6 million sheep each year.

Q. Can anyone work there?

A. Worker entry laws for Aus and NZ shearers going to the UK have been changed. The NAAC has been successful in negotiating a concession for Australian & NZ shearers to come to the UK. This overcomes a lengthy entry clearance process for visiting shearers. The shearers can only stay 3 months but this should be sufficient with the busy season being between 1 April and 30 June.

Interested parties should contact NAAC Chief Executive **Jill Hewitt** on Mobile: +44 7889 511245 Tel: +44 8456 448750 or email: jill.hewitt@naac.co.uk

Death of a worker leads to Health and Safety Review for the Shearing Industry

Background

In November 2007 an unfortunate and very sad incident resulted in the death of 19-year-old female shed hand Julia McLean. This tragedy has highlighted a gap in the understanding and communication of first aid and emergency response in the shearing industry, as part of employee health and safety in shearing sheds.

Ms McLean's death at a shearing shed near Walgett, NSW was the result of acute lung disease, most likely caused by Goodpasture's Syndrome.

Ms McLean started work at the shed on a Monday the Daily Liberal story from 3/7/2010 wrote "*Ms Mclean arrived at the property on a Sunday night in November of 2007. She did not eat much from Wednesday that week until she died on Friday. Ms McLean had been vomiting the night before her death and complained of being sick the next morning.... She collapsed at work on the Friday and was taken to the living quarters. After lunch, a co-worker, found Ms McLean on the floor of her bedroom barely able to breathe. Ms McLean's boyfriend, was alerted and after making attempts to help her, he eventually put her in the car and took her to hospital. But by that stage, it was too late.*"

Coroner's findings

Deputy State Coroner, Magistrate Hugh Dillon found that Ms McLean died of Acute Necrotising Pulmonary Disease, which manifested itself while she was working as a shearing hand.

The Magistrate concluded that medical attention should have been sought a lot sooner and he questioned why no one used the landline in the workshop to call an ambulance.

Coroner's Recommendations

1. Magistrate Dillon recommended that the Workcover Authority of NSW produce and disseminate through appropriate sheep industry bodies, such as the Shearing Contractors Association, the Australian Workers' Union, the Farmers bodies and TAFE Colleges, an industry alert or fact sheet incorporating the content of Section 12 of the Workcover Health and Safety at Work (2002) Guide for the shearing industry in relation to Emergency Response and First Aid.
2. Magistrate Dillon recommended that the Workcover Authority of NSW consider regulating to require owners of active sheep shearing sheds to display signs outlining emergency response procedures and the location of first aid kits and emergency communications.
3. Magistrate Dillon recommended that the Shearing Contractors Association of NSW, Farmer bodies and AWU advise shearing contractors of the desirability of training at least one member of their teams in the provision of First Aid, and of the need to alert members of their teams as to the locations of First Aid facilities and to identify to all members of their teams a means of communication with emergency services in the event of emergencies.

What this means to you, the Employer

The directions given by the Coroner to Workcover and in effect Employers, reiterates two things

- The employees safety is paramount
- The employer is responsible for their safety

As a result of the Coroner's directions to Workcover, you need to examine your processes around health and safety in the shearing shed with three simple, obvious measures you need to ensure are in place:

1. Improved Communication process; appropriate communication equipment,
2. First aid kits available, their whereabouts well indicated and content well maintained,
3. Always having one team member trained in first aid

Note

In general terms the health and safety laws do not 'prescribe' the exact steps and measures but present the overarching requirement to prove that you maintain the right processes and environment to ensure a workers safety. It is when an injury occurs that you will have to prove that you have taken the correct steps and actions to prevent these accidents and injuries from occurring.

What SCAA will do to help

1. Provide you with the FACT SHEET
 - Download and print from the SCAA website
 - A paper copy will be sent with next Sheepto
2. Look at coordinating First Aid courses for you and your staff to attend.
3. Source a poster style communication that you can display in your workplace.
4. Highlight as a requirement to mention in "Start of shed talk" for next edition of Tally book and any other appropriate printed material.

Workcover NSW Health and Safety at Work (2002) Guide for the shearing industry

Where SCAA has provided you (in the Resource folder for NSW members and some other states without a specific guide) with the Workcover Health and Safety at Work (2002) Guide for the shearing industry, please read Section 12 in relation to Emergency Response and First Aid. The coroner refers to this guide in his recommendations. If you would like a copy please contact the SCAA Secretary - secretary@scaa.org.au.

Super basics

Choice of Fund – When you enter into an employment contract with an individual who is entitled to super, you must allow them to choose which fund to invest their super. If your employee makes a choice, you are obligated to pay their super into their chosen fund. If they don't make a choice, you must have a default fund in place in which to pay their super contributions.

Paying super entitlements – You are required to pay all eligible employees superannuation. An employee is eligible for the superannuation guarantee if they're aged between 18 and 69 (inclusive) and earn \$450 or more (before tax) in salary or wages in a month. Employees aged under 18 must, in addition to meeting the conditions above also work more than 30 hours a week to be entitled to super.

The Super Guarantee (SG) is currently 9% of an employee's ordinary time earnings. It's also a good idea to notify the relevant superannuation fund that the contributions being made are on behalf of you and the grower. This doesn't cost any money and it will protect both parties down the track if super contributions are questioned by an employee.

You can pay your employees super contributions as often as you like but you must ensure that you make payments at least four times a year. The cut-off dates are 28 days after the end of each quarter (28 October, 28 January, 28 April and 28 July).

You should also remember that if you use a clearing house to pay super contributions (excluding the Small Business Superannuation Clearing House run by Medicare) you are deemed to have paid your super on the day the super fund receives the contribution and not the day you make the payment to the clearing house.

There are tough penalties for not paying the SG - If you make your SG payments late, have not made the correct payment or have not made the payment to the correct super fund, you will be deemed not to have met your SG obligations and you will be penalised by the ATO. You will need to lodge a Superannuation guarantee charge statement – quarterly (NAT 9599) with the tax office and will be liable for the SG charge.

The SG charge is made up of three parts - the SG shortfall amounts (including any choice liability), interest on that amount (currently 10% per annum), and an administration fee of \$20 per employee per quarter.

You'll owe even more if you don't pay your SG charge on time - If you lodge a Superannuation guarantee charge statement - quarterly but don't pay the SG charge by the lodgement date, you will incur an additional General Interest Charge (GIC). The GIC accrues from the date your SG charge is due, up to the date you pay your full SG account. The GIC is calculated on a daily compounding basis and is tax deductible in the year you incur it.

For more information on the penalties incurred for non-payment of the super guarantee please visit www.ato.gov.au/super. For more information on Superannuation please email Rod Stewart (rstewart@primesuper.com.au), Radek Kotlarczyk (rkotlarczyk@primesuper.com.au) or Scott Boyle (sboyle@primesuper.com.au).

Free health checks for Vic Employees

SCAA member, Trevor King has organised free health checks for his workers through WorkSafe Victoria. He suggested that all members in Victoria take advantage of this new opportunity. The information below is extracted from the WorkHealth website.

What are they?

A trained health professional visits the workplace. Workers complete a questionnaire, have their waist circumference, blood cholesterol, blood pressure and blood glucose measured and receive immediate information and advice based on their results.

Benefits for the Employer

- Warning signs can be picked up before symptoms emerge, leading to less sick leave and healthier workers who are less prone to workplace injuries
- It can increase productivity
- It will raise the morale of your workers
- Reduces staff turnover
- Quick for your workers to do the health checks – and done on site
- Easy to organise – can be scheduled around your time table

Cost

Employers will need to pay the endorsed service provider for each WorkHealth check delivered, and will subsequently receive reimbursement from WorkSafe Victoria.

Go to: www.workhealth.vic.gov.au for more information.

Election 2011

Both stage one and two of this year's election ended with an uncontested declarations of results:

Committee of Management

As the number of nominations accepted did not exceed the number of positions to be filled, the candidates below were elected. The office bearers were elected in the presence of a representative from the AEC (Australian Electoral Commission) as noted:

CANTY, Noel	
EVANS, John W	(Vice-President)
GRIGG, Austin D	
KEMP, David	
KIMBER, Warren John	(Vice-President)
KING, Trevor	
LETCHFORD, Ivan	(Trustee)
LETCHFORD, Jason	(Secretary / Treasurer)
MILLHOUSE, Doug	
RAUDINO, Damian	
SCHOFIELD, Michael	(President)
SUTHERLAND, Frank	(Trustee)

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