#

# MANAGING HEALTH AND SAFETY RISKS ON FARMS

This document summarises how to manage Work Health and Safety on your farm.

## This Action Plan is the most important document that you can maintain.

Managing risks involves four steps:

1. What are the issues? **Identify the hazards** that could cause harm.
2. **Assess risks** - what type of injuries could be caused by the hazard, how serious could it be and how likely is it to happen (high, medium, low). If death or permanent injury could result, the risk is high.
3. **Control risks** - implement the most effective control measure that is reasonably practicable using the hierarchy of controls (eliminate risk, substitute for lesser risk, engineering control, administrative control, Personal Protective Equipment).
4. **Review control measures** - ensure control measures are working.

Control measures must be selected to eliminate the risk, so far as is reasonably practicable. If elimination is not reasonably practicable, the risks must be minimised so far as is reasonably practicable.

# PCBU’s RESPONSIBILITY FOR MANAGING SAFETY RISKS

Farm owners are Persons Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU) and are **legally responsible for managing work health and safety risks.** Sometimes several PCBUs may share responsibility with other business operators (e.g. contractors) who are involved in the same activities, or who share the same workplace. These PCBUs must consult, cooperate and coordinate activities with all other persons who have a work health or safety duty, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Tasks to manage risks may be delegated, but ultimately each relevant PCBU holds this responsibility under the law.

Each PCBU must ensure that relevant workers are involved in the risk management process. PCBUs should also ensure that whoever carries out any step in the

risk management process has the necessary skills and experience to do so and understands when specialist help might be needed.

# WHAT IS ‘REASONABLY PRACTICABLE’?

Deciding what is ‘reasonably practicable’ to protect people from harm requires taking into account and weighing up:

1. The likelihood of the hazard or the risk occurring
2. The degree of harm that might result from the hazard or the risk
3. Knowledge about the hazard or risk
4. Ways of eliminating or minimising the risk, and
5. The availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or minimise the risk

Where there is a known (accepted) control, that control should be used. Codes of Practice provide advice on minimum safety performance and known controls.

# KEEPING RECORDS - SAFETY ACTION PLANS

It is good practice to keep records of risk management activities even if only in your top pocket diary. Keeping records of the risk management process demonstrates proactive safety management and assists in meeting legal obligations. Maintain records for at least 7 years.

## OWNER / MANAGER: Completed by:

**PROPERTY NAME & ADDRESS:**

**PHONE: FAX:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Safety Issues (Hazards)** | **Risk Level (H,M,L)** | **Action Planned** | **Cost****$** | **Target Date** | **Date Completed** | **Person Responsible** | **Notes** |
| For example:- Broken PTO shaft guard | H | Remove slasher from tractor until new PTO guard fitted | 200 | ASAP | D/M/YY | John Smith | Slasher unhitched. Guard purchased (d/m/yy) & fitted |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

RIRDC Project No PRJ-010099