Rural Safety and Health Alliance

A NEW BEGINNING
A New Alliance

Australia’s Rural Research and Development Corporations (RDC's) have a long history of investment in health and safety research, development & extension (RD&E).

A decline of the Primary Industries Health & Safety Partnership in recent years, coupled with the stubbornly high record of death, injury and illness, has signalled the need for a renewed approach to this important area.

RDC’s have come together in a new collaboration, called the Rural Safety and Health Alliance, to lead change for the better.

The Rural Safety and Health Alliance has a mandate to set clearer RD&E priorities based on risk, stronger accountability for funders and funding recipients to deliver a Return on Value, a bias towards practical extension, and an underpinning of clear and visible leadership from RDC and Industry Association leaders.

The Rural Safety and Health Alliance is powered by

The seed-funding RDC’s are aligned with three objectives of this renewed approach:

Reshape, Refocus, and Regroup

Read on to discover more about these objectives and timeline for action in 2019 and beyond
Objective 1: Reshape

Resource up
The existing partnership model saw a gradual decline in engagement and in turn investment from RDC’s, which indicated the need to reshape the approach. Under an independent Chair & auspiced by Agrifutures, an outsourced Secretariat model was endorsed by the majority of RDC’s. This provides the operational resources necessary to deliver a new, renewed approach to health and safety RD&E

Get Shark-Tanked
Part of the reshaping comes in the guise of a new funding model. Like the popular TV series Shark Tank, a competitive approach to funding will bring savvy RDC’s funders together with RD&E project proponents. RDC’s will be making informed investments, and funding recipients will have greater accountability for demonstrating investment value - RD&E that works

More dollars, stretched dollars
RD&E funding is a precious and limited resource. Increasing investment efficiency with cross-sector projects, and attracting funding from private and corporate sources will enable more RD&E of greater value to be undertaken, helping us make meaningful progress quicker.
Objective 2: Refocus

**Risk-based, data driven**
The question of RD&E priorities is critical to ensure money is well spent. A strong focus on risk, assessed using contemporary risk tools, will inform future investment. Likewise, tapping into existing and new sources of data will provide rigour to RD&E projects.

**Evidence-informed, evidence generating**
Evidence helps us answer the question, what works? It also helps us know what questions remain unanswered. RD&E projects must be clearly framed by existing evidence, and in turn will generate new evidence about what works.

**Extension-Bias**
We already know so much about what to do to effectively reduce death, injury and illness. The question which often remains unanswered is how can we enable those things to happen in reality? A bias towards extension-focussed investments will help us answer this question.
Objective 3: Regroup

**Strengthening RDC leadership in health and safety**
The commitment and leadership of RDC’s to health and safety, on behalf of their members, is unquestionable. But articulating and demonstrating health and safety leadership across an entire industry is a challenge. The new Alliance will seek to support that leadership evolution.

**Return on Value**
Demonstrating Return on Investment is challenging, Return on Value even more so. Improving health and safety isn’t simple nor short term. Nevertheless, RD&E investments must demonstrate return on value, which the Alliance will help articulate and ensure for sector-specific and cross-sector investments.

**Connect the Collective**
There are so many passionate individuals and committed organisations working in this space including RDC’s - however they are often disconnected. The Alliance will seek to connect this collective to leverage existing effort and identify value creation opportunities.

**Recognise and Embrace Complexity**
Rural, agricultural and primary production health and safety is complex - workplaces, business, homes, families, and communities all intertwine unlike any other industry in Australia. Understanding and appreciating this context will enable better value RD&E investment.
Bringing the Rural Safety & Health Alliance to life

Nou2017

- RDC MoU’s Finalised, Secretariat engaged

CY2018

- Presentation to RDC’s by PIHSP Chair on the case for change
- Initial RD&E priorities & Investment Strategy co-design

Dec18-Jan19

- RSHA created and commenced operation
- Initial quarterly Alliance meeting, commence projects as per Investment Strategy, & establish operational rhythm

Feb2019

Patrick Murphy, Chair, RSHA

Patrick is passionate about leading health and safety change through his numerous roles as a health and safety executive, Chair of the Safety Institute of Australia, and Board Member of Workplace Health and Safety Queensland. patrick@rsha.com.au

Andrew Barrett, Executive Officer, RSHA

With a track record leading strategic change in health and safety, Andrew is not only a certified health and safety professional and successful business leader, he is known as a connector of people & ideas, an innovator, and thought leader. andrew@rsha.com.au

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