

Non-intentional Farm Related Incidents in Australia



The National Farm Injury Coronial Database was developed by AgHealth Australia to provide the most comprehensive evidence on which to build prevention approaches towards the safety and wellbeing of people in Australian agriculture. Information collated for the purpose of this project is captured through Australian print and online media. The process of media monitoring is utilised to highlight the prevalence of farm related deaths and injuries.

Deaths

During the period of 1 January - 31 December 2018, a total of 67 on-farm deaths were reported. In the corresponding period for 2017 there were 68 cases. A comparison of the data for the 2017 and 2018 periods through to 31 December by state, is provided in Figure 1.

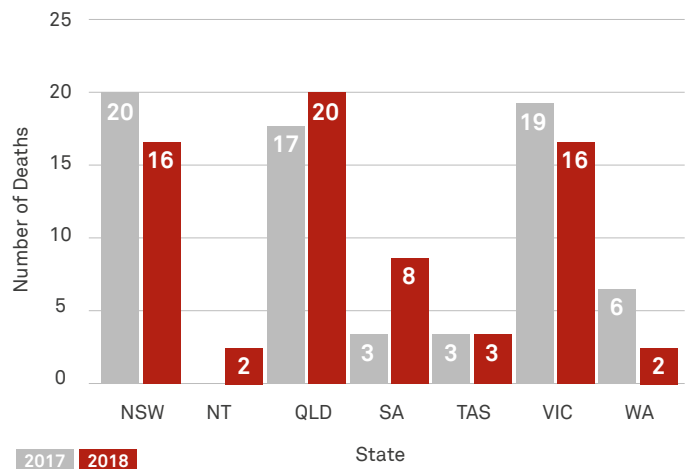
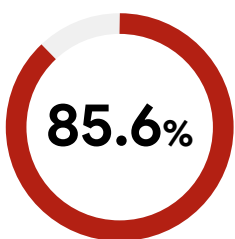


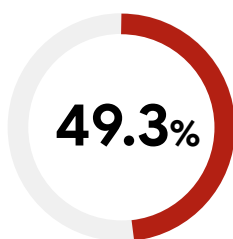
Figure 1 On-farm deaths reported in Australian media by state, 1 January – 31 December 2017 and 1 January – 31 December 2018.

Since 2001 across Australia, 1,423 people have lost their life on a farm due to non-intentional injury



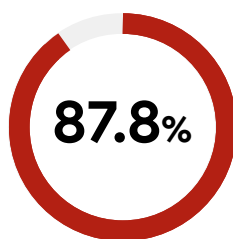
85.6%

Of the total number of deaths reported, 1,218 cases (85.6%) have been finalised and “closed” by the coroner.



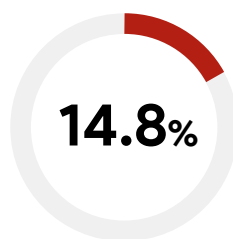
49.3%

Persons in the 50+ years category (n=701) accounted for 49.3% of all reported incidents.



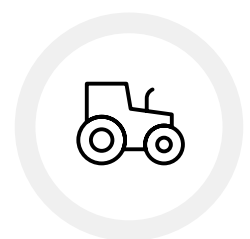
87.8%

Males were involved in 1,250 of these cases (87.8%).



14.8%

Children under 15 years accounted for 211 cases (14.8%).



Tractors (n=230) and quads (n=176) are the leading agents causing fatal injury.



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For the 2018 period (Table 1) tractors (n=9), utilities (n=7), quads (n=6) and motorbikes (n=5), were reported most frequently. Males were involved in 55 of these cases (82.1%), with data for age and gender presented in Table 1

Table 1 Agents of injury, by age group causing on-farm deaths, 1 January – 31 December 2017 and 1 January – 31 December 2018.

Category	Agent	2017			2018		
		<15yrs	>15yrs	Total	<15yrs	>15yrs	Total
Animal	Cattle		4	4		3	3
	Horse		1	1	1	2	3
	Insect		1	1			
	Snake					1	1
	Animal NEC*					1	1
Farm Structure	Dam		1	1		2	2
	Electric Fence				1	1	2
	Powerline					2	2
	Silo		1	1			
	Water Storage	1	3	4		1	1
Farm Vehicle	Aircraft		1	1		1	1
	Car				2	1	3
	Motorbike		2	2	2	3	5
	Quad	3	8	11		6	6
	Side By Side	1	1	2		1	1
	Trailer					1	1
	Truck	1	3	4		3	3
	Utility		1	1	2	5	7
	NEC*					1	1
	Farm Vehicles						
Materials	Hay Bale					3	3
	Rope		1	1			
Mobile Farm Machinery	Earth Moving Equipment					1	1
	Fertiliser Spreader		1	1			
	Grader		1	1			
	Grain Auger					1	1
	Hay Baler					1	1
	Harvesting Machine		1	1			
	Locomotive		1	1			
	Slasher					1	1
	Tractor	1	12	13	1	8	9
	Mobile Farm Machinery NEC*	1	4	5			
Other	Firearm					1	1
	Other NEC*		1	2			
Powered Equipment	Ride on Mower		1	1			
Working Environment	Fire/smoke/flame		2	2		3	3
	Heat		1	1			
	Lightning/storm		1	1			
	Log					1	1
	Trees being felled		4	4		3	3
Workshop Equipment	Grinder NEC*		1	1			
Total		9	59	68	9	58	67

*NEC: Not elsewhere classified

Table 2 Number of fatalities by age group and gender
1 January – 31 December 2018.

Category	n	%
0-14 years	9	13.4
15-29 years	14	20.9
30-44 years	11	16.4
45-59 years	17	25.3
60-74 years	6	8.9
75 + years	10	14.9
Gender	n	%
Male	55	82.1
Female	12	17.9

Injuries

An additional 155 non-fatal on-farm injury events were reported in the Australian media for the current period. Notably:

- Twenty-two (14.1%) of the injury events involved children aged under 15 years
- Quads (n=25) and tractors (n=18), were the leading cause of injury
- These incidents were closely followed by motorbikes (n=15) and horses (n=15)
- Quad, tractor, motorbikes and horse incidents (n=73), accounted for almost half of all incidents.

References

1. Pollock K, Griffith G, Fragar L. The economic cost of farm-related fatalities. *Journal of Agricultural Safety and Health* 2012;18(1):11-30.
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4. Australian Bureau of Statistics 6401.0 - Consumer Price Index (various). <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/6401.0>

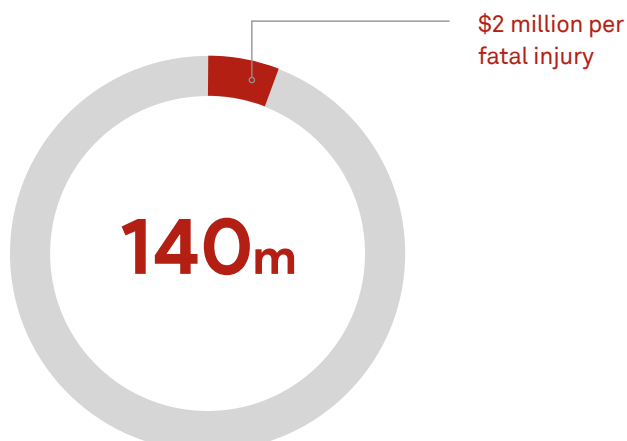
AgriFutures Australia supports activities focused on the physical and mental health and safety of farming families. Through this project, AgriFutures Australia is working with AgHealth Australia to track and monitor death and injury statistics in primary industries.

These statistics are reported biannually and are available at agrifutures.com.au/national-rural-issues/health-safety/

This work is in addition to projects delivered with other Rural Research and Development Corporations on research into new and existing prevention controls.

Economic impact

The estimated total cost of on-farm fatal injuries in 2018 approached \$140 million (\$138,260,000), with an average cost over \$2 million per fatal injury (\$2,064,000).



The economic model for measuring impact includes:

- Loss of future earnings
- Insurance payouts
- Workcover investigations
- Police investigations
- Coronial costs
- Premature funeral costs
- Ambulance and hospital expenditure
- Loss of household contributions

It is reasonable to assume that these estimates are conservative and are lower than the true costs. Additionally, the model does not consider the significant social costs associated with such fatal events.

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