

The Employment of Safe & Environmentally Responsible Organisation Systems and Procedures when Working with and Handling Horses

INTRODUCTION

Many people ride horses in Australia on a regular basis, many more work in and around them each day. Unfortunately there are many reported accidents each day involving horses. The majority of accidents at the horse establishments are associated with horses themselves, either from riding or handling. Occupational health issues also arise from substances such as dusts and pesticides, and zoonoses.

This guide is designed to provide employees with some basic facts regarding horse safety.

LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Employers have duties to employees and non-employees eg the public/clients/visitors, self-employed people, contractors` employees, vets etc – to ensure their health, safety and welfare by:

- Establishing safe systems of work
- Providing instruction, supervision and training
- Consulting and cooperation on OSH issues
- Providing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Ensuring machinery and equipment is used, maintained and disposed of in a safe way
- Ensuring hazardous substances are properly used, stored and disposed of in a safe way

Employees` duties include taking responsible care for themselves and others and cooperating with the employer on OSH issues.

Key issues in securing a safe and healthy place of work are:

- Management of health and safety (risk assessment, record keeping, organising for safety and monitoring / auditing)
- Appropriate induction to familiarise new employees with the workplace
- Training to ensure competency in key areas eg manual handling, risk assessments, general safety awareness

HAZARDS & PRECAUTIONS

Manual Handling

Manual handling accidents account for almost one third of injuries reported in Work Safe:

- Eliminate manual handling activities where there is a risk of injury, if this is practical
- Assess and reduce the risk of injury from the remaining manual handling activities taking into account the following:
 - Look at the task: eg moving bales of hay; watering horses – can work be reorganised to reduce manual handling?
 - Assess the load: eg difficulty of handling awkward objects; could handling aids be used, could loads be split, could 2 people share the load?
 - The working environment: are storage systems and practices effective? Are floors even and in good condition?
 - What is your individual capability? eg age, fitness

- Get training to develop good handling techniques
- Ensure safe working practices eg in the stacking of feed

Hazardous Substances / Micro-organisms

Assessments may be needed for disinfectants, detergents, insecticides, veterinary products, harmful micro-organisms and dusts.

Employees should ensure they are familiar with the detailed information and guidelines of any hazardous substances which they may come into contact.

Dusts: known respiratory sensitisers found in horses' establishments are dusts found in horses' coats and moulds and fungal spores from hay, straw and animal feeds. Assessments may include reference to ventilation, working practices and suitable respiratory protective equipment (eg dust respirator).

Zoonoses (diseases transmissible from animals to humans): Steps should be taken to protect against the possibility of infection eg ringworm or leptospirosis. These may include wearing of protective clothing, maintaining good standards of personal hygiene, pest control and the provision of information / instructions.

Tetanus (possibly in droppings and manure heaps): all employees in contact with horses should be vaccinated; good personal hygiene is also essential.

Pesticides: Employees using pesticides must be competent and have received adequate information and training. Safety considerations include safe and proper use, safe location and storage and appropriate signage.

Horses

Horses are large, heavy and unpredictable animals but risk can be reduced by taking the following steps:

- Ensuring adequate training for employees
- Ensuring competency of handling through training, qualifications and experience
- Observing recognised methods of horse restraint and handling
- Using suitable personal protective equipment (safety footwear, protective headgear etc)
- Ensuring good standards of general horse handling (loading/unloading; handling in restricted areas etc)
- Taking extra care with children and novices and observing safe systems of work with all groups/

Horse Restraint

When using any restraining method, the horse should be handled quietly but firmly. It is important not to be too aggressive because this will upset the horse. It could get frightened and injure itself or put the handler's safety at risk. A bridle or halter is placed on the horse before any restraint method is used.

To avoid a dangerous situation:

- Make sure that the area is secure so the horse cannot run off in a panic
- Have all equipment ready before restraint begins
- Restrain and treat the horse in a quiet area where there are no distractions

- Assess animal temperament and only continue in horse is not distressed. Horse should be calm and relaxed before proceeding
- Assess the site for any dangers
- Use a minimum amount of force
- Keep the horse calm by talking quietly to it

Type of restraint: Nose Twitch

- To protect the horse:
 - The twitch is placed on quietly
 - The twitch has a nose loop made of soft rope or a hay band
 - A nose loop that is not too large so that a few twists will allow it to be put on securely
 - A handle made of soft poly pipe or a thick wooded handle
- To protect the safety of the handler and others working with the horse ensure that the handler:
 - Stands same side as operator
 - Keeps close to the horse's shoulder
 - Watches for signs the horse is becoming upset or moving backwards. It may strike out with its front legs or jerk its head up and hit the handler
- Attaching the nose twitch
 - Put hand through the loop
 - Grasp the horse's upper lip with the same hand
 - Slip the twitch onto the lip
 - Rotate hand upwards to twist (clockwise if the handler is on the horse's left side, counter clockwise if the handler is on the horse's right)
 - Tighten the loop around the nose
 - Leave a tight twitch on for as short a time as possible
 - Take twitch off quietly and rub the horse's nose

Horse Riding

When horse riding, you need to consider your limitations around horses, and avoid riding horses which are likely to exploit those limitations.

You need to:

- Wear boots, long trousers and a safety approved riding helmet
- Ensure bridles, bits, saddles and girths fit the horse properly – if not sure – ask
- Make sure that once the horse is saddled and bridled, you check the girth yourself before mounting– or ask a competent person to
- Keep the bridles, bits, saddles and girths in good repair
- Keep saddle cloths free from burrs and other foreign material
- Be aware that horses vary in conformation, temperament, ability and levels of training

Other practices that you need to consider are:

- Riders need to be careful when riding close to a bovine or other horse
- Take care when riding in slippery or boggy conditions
- Always remain alert and in a position of control whilst mounted
- Never take off your helmet whilst mounted – dismount first
- Only adjust your equipment from the ground

Environment and Welfare

Occupational Safety and Health Regulations 1996 cover all workplaces. Relevant requirements (amongst others) will include adequate ventilation, lighting and construction standards; safe access to feed and tack rooms; safe visitors' areas; adequate facilities for employees (toilet and washing facilities etc).

It is the responsibility of all employees to work with the employer to ensure the workplace is maintained in a suitable state to ensure a safe workplace.

NB: Good standards of housekeeping are important in reducing trips and falls.

Tack

Regular checks on safety aspects of saddles, stirrup leathers and irons, bridles, bits and personal protective equipment (PPE) including protective headgear, vests etc. It is the employees' responsibility to report any worn or defective equipment.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF INDUCTION

I was given a Workplace Health and Safety induction at the Numinbah Correctional Centre pertaining to Working with and Handling of Horses. I was informed of general Workplace Health and Safety responsibilities, procedures and precautions to be observed whilst employed around horses.

I agree not to approach the horses; unless I have been instructed, and completed the appropriate induction to familiarise myself in the Working with and Handling of Horses by my supervisor.

I agree to follow the Workplace Health and Safety instructions contained within this document and given by my Supervisor.

.....
YOUR SIGNATURE

.....
DATE

.....
DCS OFFICER TO SIGN

Date: _____ Name: _____

MANAGING FARM SAFETY

Prisoner Induction Booklet for:

- Farm Worker
- Mower
- Garden Blower
- Brush Cutter
- Treatment Plant



An adaptation of the self-help program (version July 1994) produced by Farmsafe Australia in the interests of creating a safer environment on Australian farms.

WHY MAINTAIN A TRAINING REGISTER?

Occupational health and safety legislation places a range of responsibilities on both employers and employees. Employers must not only maintain a safe workplace and provide safety equipment, they also have a responsibility to provide induction and training where employees are required to undertake hazardous tasks, and quite specifically where employees handle hazardous substances, including pesticides.

Some training will be available as a specific course, for example, the Farm Chemical User Training Program which is available in most States and Territories. However, most health and safety training will be on-the-job. That training should be practical and include a hands-on component where this is relevant.

Induction and training programs relating to hazardous substances are required to cover:

1. Duties under the occupational health and safety Act and regulations and/or codes of practice of the particular State or Territory.
2. The chemicals to which the employee may be exposed.
3. The significance of the container label including:
 - Safety directions;
 - Poisons Schedule and Dangerous Goods classification;
 - First aid and emergency procedures; and
 - Application rates, compatibility and withholding periods for chemicals.
4. Information contained in Material Safety Data Sheets
5. Work practices and procedures to be followed in the use, handling, processing, storage, transportation, cleaning up and disposal of hazardous substances.
6. The proper use of personal protective equipment.
7. Procedures to be followed in an emergency.
8. The nature of and reasons for, any monitoring (including health surveillance) required and access to results of monitoring.
9. Employees' rights and responsibilities in relation to access to information.

Induction and training for all other hazardous activities should also be addressed, for example, tractor driving safety, chainsaw safety and agbike riding safety.

WHAT SHOULD BE RECORDED?

The Register of Training of Workers is your record of the induction and training provided. It should include the names of persons receiving training, date of attendance, an outline of the course/training content, the names of the people providing the training, training material provided and, where applicable, a person's accreditation certificate number for a specific course.



HEALTH AND SAFETY IS EVERYBODY'S RESPONSIBILITY

INDUCTION INFORMATION FOR WORKERS

The health and safety of all the people who work and who live on this farm is the most important responsibility of this business. Our occupational health and safety program is an important part of our work together.

It is important that you understand your responsibilities in occupational health and safety. You should also understand the commitment that we as managers of this workplace have made to ensure your health and safety, and the health and safety of all others who enter this workplace.

Please read this leaflet carefully, and if you do not understand any section, please ask for an explanation.

1. WORK CLOTHES

You are expected to come to work in suitable clothes which do not pose a safety risk. These include:

- Sturdy work boots with non slip soles for general work
- Prison Greens
- Comfortable shirt. The sleeves should be either buttoned at the wrist, or rolled up in such a way that no loose ends can be caught in machinery or on protruding materials. Shirts should be tucked into trousers, and there should be no loose clothing which could be caught eg cords of jackets etc.
- A shady hat for outdoors work.

2. HYGIENE

Cigarette smoking can cause lung disease, and if you are a smoker, we would support your attempts to quit smoking.

6. GENERAL

- The laws of this state require that the Manager provide a safe place of work and safe work systems. In order to help us meet these obligations, you are asked to advise the manager of any safety hazard that you come across in the workplace.
- The same law requires that you as an employee take care to ensure the health and safety of others who are on this farm - including other workers, family and visitors.
- The law also requires that the safety of visitors and contractors who enter this workplace is protected. You are requested to look out for hazards to health and safety for family members, contractors and others who enter the workplace.
- ~~There are children on this farm. Their safety must be a high priority.~~
Please be vigilant driving machinery, never reversing without checking for children.

7 HANDLING FARM CHEMICALS

- Chemicals used on this farm include pesticides to control insects and parasites, herbicides to control weeds, fungicides and baits for control of rats and mice.
- All chemical handling must comply with instructions supplied on the label, with the product and MSDS.
- If you cannot read or understand the instructions, ask for help.
- Always have water on hand for washing purposes, such as hands before smoking, eating, in case of spillage on cloths ect.
- On completion of work all equipment should be washed down and chemicals returned to the chemical store.
- Material safety data sheets are available on request.

The safety of people takes precedence over all other considerations – especially when we are under pressure!

Declaration

I have read and understand the occupational health and safety instructions in this leaflet. I agree to do what is required to ensure that the health and safety of all people on this farm is protected.

Signed Date

Signed Date

FARM, LANDSCAPEING/MAINTENANCE OR WOMENS UNIT MOWER, BRUSHERCUTTER & LEAF BLOWER INDUCTION COURSE

- 1) Have you read the Owners Manual for the equipment you are operating?
Yes No
- 2) Do you understand the information contained in the manual regarding the safety instructions and the operating instructions for the equipment you are operating?
Yes No
- 3) Are you familiar with the controls and operating procedures of the equipment you are operating?
Yes No
- 4) ~~If you're using a brush cutter, mower or leaf blower and another person walks past or a vehicle drives past should you: (Please circle)~~
 - a) Stop what you're doing until they have past
 - b) Ignore them
 - c) Block the road so they can't get past
- 5) Should you wear eye protection when operating a brush cutter, mower or garden blower?
Yes No
- 6) Should you operate a brush cutter, mower or leaf blower if any guards are missing?
Yes No
- 7) If you leave the brush cutter, mower or leaf blower unattended for any length of time should the motor be switched off?
Yes No
- 8) Before clearing blockages, checking or working on the mower, what should you do first? (Please circle)
 - a) Rev the motor up so it doesn't snuff when you tip it on its side
 - b) Leave the motor running
 - c) Stop the engine and disconnect the spark plug
- 9) If the mower or brush cutter starts to vibrate abnormally after striking a rock or another object, what should you do? (Please circle)
 - a) Keep mowing
 - b) Stop the engine, disconnect the spark plug cap and inspect the mower, brush cutter
 - c) Rev the mower up so the vibration is less noticeable
- 10) What should you do before starting a brush cutter, mower or leaf blower? (Please circle)
 - a) Always be sure the equipment you are using is safe to operate before you use it.
 - b) Check the fuel.
 - c) Check the blades.
 - d) All the above.

Inmates Name.....

Inmates Signature.....

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF INDUCTION

I.....was given a Workplace Health and Safety induction at the Numinbah Correctional Centre. I was informed of general Workplace Health and Safety responsibilities, procedures and precautions to be observed whilst employed at the Numinbah Correctional Centre Farm, Landscaping/Maintenance or Women's Unit.

Furthermore, I agree not to use any Machinery, Electrical Equipment Tools, or Chemicals supplied by the Numinbah Correctional Centre unless I have been instructed in their safe use by staff, read the appropriate operators manual.

I agree to follow the Workplace Health and Safety instructions given by my supervisor and/or the Farm Officers.

.....
YOUR SIGNATURE

.....
DATE

.....
DCS OFFICER TO SIGN

CORRECTIONAL SUPERVISOR

Action Taken:

Name: Signature:

Date:

MANAGER, OFFENDER MANAGEMENT

Comment:

Name: Signature:

Date:

ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER

Comment:

Name: Signature:

Date:

Copies to:

Corr. Supervisor MOM, Men Operations Officer, Women
 Intel Officer Counsellor Psychologist Adviser, Business Services
 Other

Original to: Adviser, Sentence Management

CORRECTIONAL SUPERVISOR

Action Taken:

Name: **Signature:**

Date:

MANAGER, OFFENDER MANAGEMENT

Comment:

Name: **Signature:**

Date:

ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER

Comment:

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