



## 2005 SCAA AGM

The 2005 SCAA AGM and Annual Dinner were held in Sydney in January.

### Reports presented:

- **President Report:** Ivan Letchford reviewed the past year emphasising the tough trading conditions for contractors.
- **Industrial Report:** Frank Sutherland reviewed Industrial matters such as changes to the award and issues that are currently on the table.
- **Shearer Woolhandler Training Inc Report:** Austin Griggs highlighted the success of shearer training in Victoria.
- **Shearer Training funding via AWI Report:** Training Officer – Michael Schofield reported on the achievements to date and the program's objectives of the current year.
- **Traineeships Report:** Jim Murray (Dubbo Tafe) / Mary Sanders (DETNAAC) reported on the success of traineeships funded by DETNAAC.

### Resolutions were passed at the meeting:

- To change the financial reporting period from 30 November to 30 June each year, with interim accounts to 30 December to be presented at the annual AGM in January.
- To accept the financial records to 30 June 2004 as presented by the current Secretary based on the information supplied by the previous secretary.
- Acceptance of no minutes for 2004 AGM from the previous secretary and to write to the previous Secretary requesting a copy of the minutes.
- To increase the presidents honorarium from \$2,500 to \$3,000 per annum
- To increase membership from \$250 p.a. to \$300 (plus GST) per annum.

### Guest speakers at the meeting:

- **Bioclip:** Will Keene updated the meeting on Bioclips progress in chemical harvesting and the important role of contractors in the process.
- **Heiniger:** Larry Wittorf demonstrated the Heiniger Evo shearing plant. The main benefits of this machine are that it is lightweight and it stops instantly the moment it hits an obstruction.

### General Business:

- Cost plus contracting – passing on the “total” workers compensation cost to the customer. The use of a pro-forma document was discussed.
- Inviting John McCrae back on to the Executive Committee to fill the vacancy.

### Contacting SCAA

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### Dates to watch

2005 Regional Meeting Dates

- Armidale - 30 April
- Dubbo - 14 May
- Ballarat 17 May
- Moama 28 May
- Narrandra 18 June
- Adelaide 25 June
- Canberra 16 July

### Shearing World Championships

Just a reminder that The 2005 Wool Sheep Shearing and Woolhandling Championships are held in Toowoomba, Qld 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> June 2005. Email: worldshear2005@hotmail.com

## Victorian WorkCover Update

Major changes from 1 July 2005 are due to take place, including the retraining of 250 Inspectors (more to be appointed). Members need to be aware and not allow unsafe practices or dangers in the shed otherwise they may have orders issued, fines imposed or could be closed down.

Of the 500 plus industries in Victoria, shearing and meat processing have the worst records. This explains why premium rates increased so much and notice has been given for similar increases for next year. In regard to the WorkSafe program, the Authority has been pleased with our efforts to date and have allocated another 100 on the job visits by Michael Lawrence. Please contact Michael in Ballarat on 5332 2400 or 0417 562 881 to arrange additional visits.

Due to the poor safety record in the shearing industry the Victorian WorkCover Authority have set up a Workplace Inquiry Insurance Safety Fund. The SCAA along with VFF and AWU have signed an agreement. Steve Cowley from Ballarat has been selected as Resource Officer to initiate proceedings relating to organising meetings and setting some guidelines with a \$200,000 budget. Meetings to be held in Ballarat Fri 28<sup>th</sup> May and Moama Sat 29<sup>th</sup> May.

## Workers Compensation Overpayment

Brian Ingram, (Young, NSW) is currently in the process of having his Workers Compensation Policy costs reviewed by his insurer upon discovering that the insurer was paying nearly \$1,300 per week to an injured shearer (an over-payment of \$285).. Upon questioning the insurer, they could not tell him how the rate was derived. Brian later found out that the rate was being paid based on what the injured worker told the insurer to pay. This is obviously a very serious problem. How many injured workers have been overpaid on other policies? The Secretary has written to WorkCover requesting answers on this matter. If you are suspicious that this has happened to you, contact your insurer and request details of payments to claimants on your policy. If you have any queries contact the SCAA secretary.

## Sth Australia: Workcover & OH&S

The SCAA is currently talking with Workplace Services SA. This is the division of Workcover SA that deals with OH&S compliance. The aim of these talks is to develop an information package and hold a seminar(s) for South Australian Shearing Contractors and their clients

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## Secretaries report:

The past eight weeks have been another busy period:

The President and I attended the NSW WorkCover IRG Rural meeting. This is a forum where current worker's compensation issues that affect the rural sector are brought to the attention of Workcover. Some of the relevant issues discussed include:

- **Shearsafe:** not all \$750 rebate funds had been allocated. Hopefully most or some of your "needy" clients have registered for the rebate.
- **Rural Workers Accommodation and Amenities Draft Bill and Draft Code of Practice:** Some of the potential outcomes of this Bill have been publicised. In essence, it is aimed to make the employer liable for accidents occurring in and around accommodation and travelling to and from the job. Examples that highlight the madness of the Bill include accidents that occur because of driver tiredness after a days work, mechanical faults of the motor vehicle, blokes getting drunk around the huts, bad roads on private property (possibly even public roads) will fall on to the employer for not providing a safe work place. Of course the SCAA has been adamantly opposed to such legislation on the basis of it being unfair and unworkable. As a result of the SCAA and other Employer Organisations protesting against these changes to the Bill (i.e. enforcing "risk assessment") WorkCover has redrafted the Bill, removing "risk assessment" from the Bill. It appears as if common sense has come to the fore.

### Media Watch

- On his talk back radio program Ray Hadlee has been working through some of the unfairness and "craziness" of the current workers compensation legislation. He recently interviewed NSW Minister Dellabosca began exposing the "pitfalls". Aside from admitting that it is not "insurance", the Minister made the concession that the 18% interest charge against monies not paid out by WorkCover yet charged against your policy will be abolished. I did manage to speak with Hadlee on radio to highlight the plight of the shearing sector in regard to workers compensation.
- *The Land* newspaper has recently run some Workers Compensation related stories including the plight of the McGufficks at Walcha. On the back of this I was interviewed in a story that ran in the 3 March edition. Unfortunately the article did not publicise the point that regardless of whether you are responsible and or fined/prospected etc, it is the employer who pays every time there is an injury and furthermore, they are liable for the first \$150,000 in each accident. In other words, you can be the best employer and do everything by the book and still be the big loser.

### Cost of Fraud:

- Rodney Rowe (Walgett) brought to my attention the fact that CGU wanted to charge him \$2,000 to investigate a fraud claim where one of his ex-employees was working for another contractor, while on a workers compensation claim on his policy. The \$2000 was non-refundable. I have written to WorkCover requesting whether the insurer can charge the policyholder for this.

### Did you know ?



In the NSW Monaro district of Cooma and Bombala there are 2 Contractor's families of three generations: The Kimber family through Charlie, Peter and, now, Warren and the Schofield family of Wally, John and Mick. Further to this Bob Kimber (Peter's cousin) is a second generation contracting family in the same district.



The value of wool exported from Australia in 2003/2004 was \$2.8 Billion.



Total wool exports rose in volume by 23% but the dollar value of the exports only rose by 1%.

### AWI Training Funding

Stage one of *Australian Wool Innovations funded Regional Coaching - on the job coaching* has been completed

Stage two is *Regional Coaching plus Improver Workshops* for shearers and woolhandlers is now happening in each of the 5 regions (Bourke, Yass Dubbo, Armidale and Hay) and will continue over the next 6 months.

### 320 new traineeships

There are currently more than 320 shearers on traineeships in NSW with SCAA member contractors. This is a fantastic result to date. Congratulations to Jim Murray and his staff from Dubbo Tafe and to Mary Sanders from DETNAC at Orange. SCAA members are also to be congratulated for having the foresight to make the effort to take on this responsibility.

It is from these efforts that the industry as a whole is benefiting by not only increasing the workforce but also having a better skilled worker that is more productive

### Emery paper

Sales of the current stock of emery paper have been strong. We have only 1500 sheets of fine and course remaining at this price. The next order will undoubtedly cost more.

### Would you like to contribute to Sheepo?

We welcome members contributions to Sheepo, so please **fax** and information you would like to see in future editions to 02 9571 6700.

### Expressions of Interest OH&S Seminar (NSW)

If you are interested in attending another OH&S seminar covering the NSW Workers Compensation legislation we would like to hear from you. Notification of Victorian and South Australian legislation seminars will be forthcoming.

Please indicate your preferred month, your contact details and fax this page to **02 9571 6700**.

April  May  June  July

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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