



Regional Meetings April-July

The SCAA successfully held 7 regional meetings throughout the Eastern States of Australia (Armidale, Dubbo, Ballarat, Moama, Narrandera, Adelaide and Canberra). Members travelled large distances from St George QLD, Bourke in Western NSW and Lock in central SA to attend. All meetings had larger attendances than in previous years. Thanks go out to Members for making the effort to attend and have some input into their industry. It is through these meetings and the AGM in January that members voice their opinion and determine the direction of their association and ultimately the industry over the coming 12 months.

Additionally, the SCAA would like to thank Will Keen (Bioclip), Denita Wawn (NFF), Felix Sher (Australian Primary), Paul Henry, Helen Clothier and Tony Williams (Workcover NSW), Worksafe Victoria and Steven Dohnt (Worksafe SA), and Larry Whirtorf and Ross Paton (Heiniger) for attending the meetings and providing members with valuable information and support of the industry and association. Thanks need to go out to committee members and especially Ivan Letchford and Frank Sutherland who donate huge amounts of their time to make the meetings possible.

Awards to Increase on 31 October

The Federal Pastoral Industry Award (Shearers and shed staff) and Woolclassers Award will change on 31 October to reflect a rise in the basic wage set down earlier in the year. In summary Shearers and shed staff will rise by 4% approximately. Woolclasser 3 will rise to \$994.35 per week or \$237.35 per 1000 fleeces. Copies of the Awards will be sent as soon as they are available.

BIOCLIP – To Conquer the RAM!

Over the past 4 months BIOCLIP® has spent a considerable amount of time attending the regional contractors meetings throughout Australia. Following feedback from SCAA members at these meetings, BIOCLIP® has fast-tracked the development a process to harvest the wool from rams. It is expected that the BIOCLIP RAM process (currently being fine tuned) will be available from spring 2005 and will suit all breeds (including large meat sheep), allowing the wool to be harvested without the need to turn to animal over. Furthermore, BIOCLIP is looking SCAA members to participate in the final stages of development of the BIOCLIP RAM process. Interested members should contact Will Keen at BIOCLIP - 0414 742 310.

The BIOCLIP presentations by Will Keen, were designed to introduce and/or update the members of the SCAA on the BIOCLIP process since its commercial launch earlier in 2005 by animal health company MERIAL AUSTRALIA.

To date, BIOCLIP has developed a wool harvesting process that is suitable for sheep up to 50kg (the limitation is based on the size of the nets). The process harvests the wool from the sheep without skin cuts or locks and is being specifically targeted at the difficult to shear younger sheep.

An open invitation has been given to all members of the SCAA to inspect a commercial BIOCLIP harvesting. Anyone wishing to become a BIOCLIP contractor must be trained (accredited) to treat sheep. Training days, free to SCAA members, are held routinely throughout Australia. If you would like to attend a BIOCLIP day, please contact the SCAA secretary for details.

Sedation of Rams

Following a motion raised at the Moama meeting, the SCAA undertook to investigate as to whether or not members could gain certification in order to purchase and administer the drug ACP to sheep. ACP, an S4 category pharmaceutical is designed as a sedation drug. Several SCAA members have had great success using ACP to sedate rams prior to shearing.

The SCAA contacted a division of the Australian Veterinary Association (AVA) to investigate certification for interested members. However the SCAA learnt that the current procedure is for vets to on sell ACP to a sheep owner who has previously been shown how to administer the drug.

Unfortunately, following a Code of Practice review by the AVA, the regulations for this procedure are likely to be tightened in the near future. This will most likely result in restricting the practice to only vets administering the drug. The SCAA will review the new Code of Practice when released later this year.

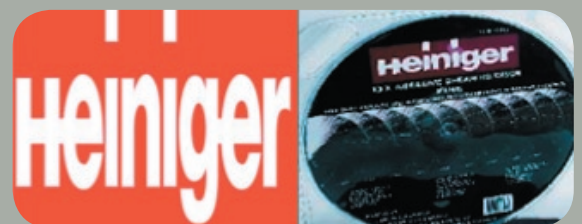
Rural Workers Accommodation (RWA): Bill and Code of Practice (NSW)

The SCAA has reviewed the second draft of the Code of Practice for the RWA and made a submissions regarding SCAA and employer interests. No date has been set for when the Code of Practice will come into force. Copies of the submission are available from the secretary.

Furthermore, the RWA bill has come into effect. The submissions of the SCAA and other employer organisations fell on 'deaf ears' and the Bill was passed with insignificant changes to the original draft. The new Bill means that the accommodation area is now subject to all the laws under the OH&S Act. The OH&S act is a piece of legislation that places the onus of responsibility on the employer via the "risk assessment" process. The consequences of the employer failing in their duties are severe fines and in the extreme, jail terms.

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Workcover Q&A?

Question: When will Workcover make a surprise visit to the worksite? This is a commonly asked question to the Workcover inspectors.

Answer: The chances of a surprise visit from Workcover are next to nil. A visit can will happen as a result from a serious accident or death. For example, where an ambulance is called Workcover will investigate immediately. All other accidents reported to insurers are passed on to Workcover each month. Workcover then reviews the reports and decides which accidents warrant further investigation. Workcover reviews the accident in terms of 'was the accident caused by an unsafe work place' criteria to determine whether to investigate further. A third way is a request from the union or a member of the public who has raised concerns about the safety of the workplace

Federal Industrial Relations Law Changes

Although there are many uncertainties surrounding the extent and magnitude of changes to National Industrial relations, the current Federal Pastoral Award will remain in place. However there will be greater flexibility for employers to implement Australian Workplace Agreements (AWAs) with their employees. It appears, as the particular relevant legislation has not been passed, the new AWAs will be ratified by an Industrial Commission if the Agreement is agreed to by 5 or more employees and it passes a 'no disadvantage' test. The *no disadvantage* test will be along the lines that an employer can overall not pay employees less than the Award however there will be an opportunity for trade-offs. Once an employer has an AWA in place, it is proposed, that it will be valid for 5 years and apply to all new staff that are engaged during that period i.e. new staff who did not sign the original AWA will still be engaged under the terms of your AWA.

NSW Workcover Premium Scheme Update

As publicised in previous newsletters and regional meetings new regulations come into effect in January 2006. However, some interim measures are in place from 1/7/05-31/12/05. In summary, the "experience factor adjustment" calculation will not be applied to policies that have a basis tariff premium of less than \$10,000. This is up from the previous base of \$3,000. So in other words, between now and 1/1/06 if your wages are kept below \$85,543 (annualised) you will not have to pay the experience factor adjustment on any injuries. From 1/1/06 if your wages are less than \$300,000 you will not be exposed to the experience factor adjustment. Please call the Secretary for further clarification.

Theft - Watch Out

Earlier in the year, a Victorian based SCAA member had an incident where a shearers handpiece and tools were stolen from a shed, located a short distance from a busy road. The incident creates an unfortunate situation of the uninsured employee wanting to be compensated for their loss by the employer. Each party can take out insurances to cover these situations but at the end of the day everyone has to take responsibility for their own equipment - employees included. The days of being able to leave thousands of dollars worth of gear lying around, especially near roads and towns have long gone. You may like to remind your employees to take care.

Vale: Gordon Oakdale

SCAA is saddened to hear of the passing of Gordon Oakdale. He was a long time member of SCAA and the shearing contracting community. He will be greatly missed by the industry. I am pleased to report his grandson Rod Mackander and partner Rebecca Lee are carrying on in Gordon's footsteps

SCAA is proudly supported by



AWI training Program

Congratulation to Mick Schofield who has been appointed chairman of Australian Wool Innovation (AWI)'s New South Wales Project Advisor Panel (PAP) and is also on the AWI's national PAP. Congratulations also to Doug Millhouse for his appointment to AWI's South Australian PAP. The Associating would like to express thanks to both of them for the large amounts of time and effort they invest in the development of shearer and wool training for the industry's benefit.

SA Worksafe

The SCAA has been in contact with Worksafe SA to initiate a programme of informing SA shearing contractors and farmers of their OH&S obligations. As a part of this we are seeking a grant from Worksafe SA to fund the programme.

Super choice forms

Members should have distributed the 'Super Choice forms' to all their current employees by the 28th July and are reminded to have any new employees fill in the form at the time of engagement – along with the ATO's "Tax file Number declaration" Form.

Heiniger Evo Shearing Plant Demonstration Offer

Heiniger Australia has generously offered any SCAA member the use of the Heiniger- Evo shearing plant on a trial basis. Many of you would have seen a plant demo and would be aware of the significant safety features. Furthermore, the plant is portable and easy to set up as it weighs only 14 kgs. If you are interested in trialling one of the plants, contact Ross Paton Heiniger, Australia 0409 689 944.

New Emery Paper and Glue Sales

Upon our stock of Sunbeam "Suregrind" emery paper running out, the SCAA committee has spent the previous month trialling new emery paper. The results of the trial have led the SCAA to order new "Brown" Heiniger emery paper. The price is \$4/sheet and freight \$12/100 sheets to anywhere in Australia. Orders will be delivered to you within 5 working days. Heiniger has also offered a good deal on emery paper glue. Packs of 12x 500 ml bottles are \$110 (RRP\$144) plus \$9 freight. For orders contact the Secretary by email, phone or fax.

Workcover NSW Safety Summit

The Secretary attended a two day Safety Summit in Orange in NSW during August. The aim of the summit was to achieve the 2012 targets of reducing workplace injury by 40% and workplace fatalities by 20%. The summit was attended by Premier lemma and the Minister for Workplace relations, John Della Bosca.

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