



News in brief

The past few months have contained some personal tragedies for friends and members of the SCAA

Phillip Pullin

The death of Barry (President of NZSCA) and Trish Pullin's 19 year old son Phillip left us all in a state of shock. Phillip was a passenger in a car accident that occurred on his way home from Polytech (TAFE). The death of someone so young make us all ask questions of ourselves and makes one wonder about the 'fairness' of life. There seems to a special irony to Phillip's passing in that his parents Barry and Trish are some of the most thoughtful and caring people and arguably the best operators in New Zealand when it comes to keeping their workers safe. Our condolences go out to Barry, Trish and family.

Robbie Bush

On Monday 8 November, SCAA member and proprietor of NSW Shearing Supplies, Robbie Bush passed away as a result of a heart attack whilst in New Zealand

The news is a huge shock to all. Only last month I was talking to him about life outside of working in the shop. He was telling me that there was more to life than working and we all needed to make the most of our time. He was certainly on the right track. The tragedy is that it has been cut very short for him. Robbie was a great bloke and a big supporter of the SCAA. He will be missed and remembered fondly.

Jan Martinussen

Earlier in the year Victorian member Jan Martinussen lost his battle with cancer. Jan worked closely with Frank Sutherland for many years and was a supportive member of SCAA. Jan will be missed from the shearing contracting community. The SCAA extends it condolences Jan's family and friends.

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Award review

Life on the industrial front has certainly quietened down since July this year when the Woolpresser's rate was amended (see below). I am sure you will agree that a little stability is positive, allowing all of us to get on with the day to day issues of running our businesses.

The implementation of Modern Awards on 1 July 2010 affects every employer in Australia, directly or indirectly. The only change to Rates since the 1 July introduction of the (Modern) Pastoral Award 2010, which saw the shearing rate go to \$253.42 per hundred, was the amendment of the Woolpresser's run rate from \$48.18 to \$49.92 per run. This came into effect on 19 July 2010 and was the result of calculation error made by Fairwork Australia to rates that were published on 1 July 2010.

The only employers who were not directly affected by the introduction of the Modern Award were Employers in Queensland and Western Australia who were not a registered company or Trust i.e. trading as a 'Sole Trader' or 'Partnership' as at 1 July 2010. These employers can lay claim to still being covered by State Awards

State Awards

State Awards, known as Division 2B State Awards, have continued to apply until 31 December 2010. After this date all employees will be covered by the relevant Modern Awards without exception.

In reference to these State Awards, there was an article in Queensland's country life earlier this year

that was somewhat misleading as to the validity of state award rates and conditions. The article omitted some important information including the fact that Queensland State Awards were not amended to comply with the National Employment Standards (NES). This meant that employers paying workers under this Award, were more than likely in breach of the over arching federal law, the NES. To quote Fairwork Australia: "Employees under State Awards must receive conditions that are at least equal to the minimum entitlements in the NES (to the extent that they apply) and the national minimum wage". So in other words, even if you are a Sole Trader' or 'Partnership' structure that is registered in Queensland, it is likely that if you have been paying staff under the Queensland Shearing Industry Award, you may be in breach of the NES and the 1 July National Minimum Wage increase

Award Quiz - see back page.

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SCAA election report

Election results

On 27 July the Committee of Management results were declared. Again the election process was a drawn out affair, running over several months due to the fact that there were only 10 nominations officially received in the required time frame, resulting in a second round of nominations being called. Fortunately two more nominations were received in the second round and no more which spared us from the need to run a ballot if a total of more than 12 nominations were received. The last phase was the nominations for the Committee of Management, which again ran without 'contest', that is there was only the required number of nominations for each position, again removing the need for a ballot. The election results are:

- President: SCHOFIELD, Michael
- Vice-Presidents: LETCHFORD, Ivan; SUTHERLAND, Frank
- Secretary/Treasurer: LETCHFORD, Jason
- Trustees: EVANS, John William; KEMP, David
- Committee: CANTY, Noel; GRIGG, Austin D; MILLHOUSE, Douglas; MORRISON, Andrew John; RAUDINO, Damian; KING, Trevor Wayne

Changing of the guard

There has been a 'changing of the guard' with the leadership of the SCAA being passed from long standing President, Ivan Letchford to Michael Schofield. The change is a result of Ivan's vision to handover the leadership to the next generation with 'fresh ideas' while still having the opportunity to pass on his many years of experience.

Michael Schofield has graciously accepted the challenge to lead the Association into the next decade and he believes that the previous leadership of Ivan and Frank Sutherland will be a very "hard act to follow". He is also grateful of Ivan and Frank's offer to stay on in the committee in the roles of Vice-President, to provide guidance and experience where required.

Michael's comments of being "a hard act to follow" is a very modest comment as he has served on the SCAA committee for more than 10 years, most recently in the role of 'Industrial Officer' greatly assisting with the industry's transition from 'old' Awards to 'modern' Awards. Michael is a contractor with a run based out of Cooma in NSW's Monaro Region. Michael is currently the president of the Cooma Racing Club and whose responsibilities include the running the annual Cooma Cup race meeting.

Drugs in the shearing industry

At the NZ ShearHarvest conference in May this year, there was some very confronting examples of the destruction of drugs and why as an industry we do not have the luxury of turning a 'blind eye' to the problem. The wool harvesting industry, like our community at large, need to start to tackle the problem from different angles as there appears to be 'no silver bullet' for a wide ranging problem in terms of who it affects and to what extent.

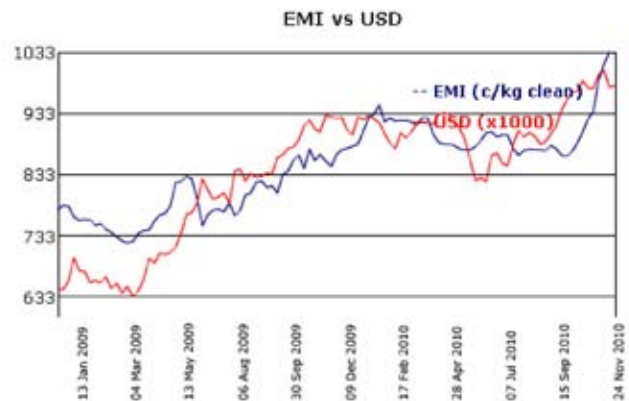
The 'path of least resistance' approach to this problem i.e. do nothing until we confront it directly, is not acceptable. Only last week I had another member call regarding a situation where their employee shearer had separately killed 3 sheep during the week. It became apparent that the employee's behavior was a result of drug use. The situation here has had obvious consequences for the Contractor but it could have been far worse if the employee takes out their drug related aggression on co workers.

As an Association we are somewhat limited in our scope to tackle the problem as we can not dictate to members as to what they do or don't do. Our role to date has been keeping members informed as to what our minimum requirements are in terms of the Law. Even the recommending a policy of drug testing employees for drugs is a difficult one to implement.

All that said, following the lead of Barry Pullin in New Zealand, one way the SCAA can be more proactive in our response to the problem, is by taking up a policy of only sponsoring shearing competitions / Speed shears that require drug testing for competitors. I will propose a motion for such a policy to the committee at its next meeting and ask them to consider other ways that we can tackle this significant problem.

2010 Wool price review

You can see from the chart below that wool prices have experienced a steady increase over the past calendar year. The Eastern Marker Indicator (EMI) has increased by more than 30% in Australian Dollar (AUD) terms and by more than 50% in US Dollar terms. The increase in the EMI may have increased by more (in AUD terms) if the AUD had not had such a strong increase against the USD. That said, overall it is good news for our customers, giving them more reason to keep sheep / return to sheep over competing farm income sources.



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Below is a chart reflecting wool prices since 1973-74 where the generally trends is heading in the right direction – up! (Please note these figures do not include the 2010 data).



Source data: ABARE

Projects update

With less pressing matters happening on the industrial front, it has given me a little more time to review what projects the SCAA (mainly through the hard work of Michael Lawrance and his team) have embarked on and been part of, in order to help prioritise some of our goals for the coming year:

With few exceptions the projects run by the SCAA have been funded by both the NSW and Victorian Workcover Authorities. Their financial support has been integral in the process.

Some of the projects that have been run with:

NSW Workcover funding include

- ShearSafety Program – Woolshed design, worm drive rebates
- Rebates scheme for safety improvements to sheds
- Management of System Resource and Training
- Western Div OHS Workshops held in 2008
- VWA Shearing OHS Guide

Victorian Workcover funding include

- Workplace Injury insurance Safety Fund (WISF) Workshops
- Back Harness Supports subsidies
- Management System Resource
- Ultimate Shearers Guide
- Shearing OH&S Summit Melbourne 2006
- NSW Shearing OHS Guide

It was from this Shearing OH&S Summit Melbourne 2006 that the ANZ Woolharvesting Safety Group was formed and subsequently the Woolharvesting Safety Resource Centre was developed (see below). In turn, this work led to the ShearHarvest Conference the have been held on the Gold Coast in 2008 and Christchurch in 2010 which have been an immeasurable success.

Australia New Zealand Woolharvesting Safety Resource Centre (ANZ WSRC) (2007 – 09).

The more recent focus of the Woolharvesting Safety Resource Centre has been the continued development and sustainability of the Australian and New Zealand Woolharvesting Safety Group (ANZWWSG). This group laid the foundations for the development of an Injury and Claims Management Program (see below) specifically for the shearing industry along with a sustainable funding of a health and safety service. Also in this work was the BoomBox project (see below) which was a programmed that used positive and practical tools to increase the awareness of employee safety in the shearing environment.

Injury & Claims Management Service

The Injury & Claims Management Service initiative is aimed at organising an injury and claims management service for the shearing industry; for shearers, shed staff, contractors and farmers. This has strong and active support from the key stakeholders who see finding a solution crucial for the industry. This and the need for a more logical application of the numerous rates of workers compensation and how they are applied are the key to improving safety and claims performance in this industry.

BoomBox Project

The BoomBox project was a large practical program that ran in both Australia and New Zealand. Our New Zealand counterparts, led by the NZSCA, predominantly commissioned the University of Otago to examine industrial noise in shearing sheds and report on its cause and prevention – a summary of this study is below (written by Jill Angus Burney).

On this side of the Tasman the program looked at the prevention of handpiece injury, heavy hazardous manual handling injury, working in heat hazards, Noise induced hearing loss (NIHL), problems related to drugs and alcohol in the workplace. The project in Australia aimed at getting some positive action on the shearing board at the start of each shearing at each shed. Over thirty of these start-up safety tool boxes have been distributed to SCAA members throughout Victoria and New South Wales (as WorkCover NSW provided the start-up funding for this project). These BoomBoxes include a noise level meter with straight forward instructions in how to get a noise “snap-shot.” They include a simple safety clutch torque tester for correct testing and adjusting of the safety spring tension. The feedback and results from these BoomBoxes have been collated and evaluated (Please read Evaluation report provided separately)

Urgent areas of concern

Although much has been achieved in the past couple of years, there is still plenty more work to be done. Three areas of concern exist:

1. Due to the peculiarities of the workers compensation scheme/s affect on the industry OH&S improvements are inconsistent, unlikely to improve further and at risk of regressing without some careful industry and regulator attention.
2. Industry regulators and individuals have invested considerably in achieving the improvements to date and creating the opportunities for sustained and further improvement. The continuation of this work is at risk due to the uneven funding of workers compensation levies and resulting “reverse carrot and stick effect.” For example be a “bad industry citizen”, avoid paying any premium by sharing the “employer” status across multiple low premium or no premium categories and you have a business cost advantage while flying under the radar of regulator scrutiny.
3. The “responsible industry citizens” who are the candidates for, and carriers of, sustainable shearing industry OH&S and workers compensation improvements, are not able to obtain funding from their own industry or from candidate sponsors of industry given the above circumstance. This finding is the outcome of intense research and work by industry partners SCAA and AWU with expert input on workers compensation and injury management systems (ClaimTrak).

Important dates

- AGM – Saturday 7 May 2011 – Sydney - Castlereagh Inn
- Adelaide Meeting Saturday June 2011 (possibly the first weekend - to be confirmed at AGM)
- Victoria Meeting - Ballarat
- Conference Gold Coast May 2012

Fact corner

Zoonoses (From WA Dept of Commerce Website [http www.docep.wa.gov.au](http://www.docep.wa.gov.au))

1. What are they?

Zoonoses are diseases of animals that can cause serious illness in people. It is the technical term for a disease that can be passed from animal to Human.

The two most common zoonoses in Australia are Q FEVER and LEPTOSPIROSIS.

Those most likely to be infected by zoonoses include abattoir workers, farm workers, shepherds, shearers, wool sorters, veterinary personnel, pelt and hide tanners, livestock handlers and animal laboratory workers.

A third zoonoses, Brucellosis, has been virtually eradicated in Australia, though a few people may still carry this disease.

2. How they are caught?

Leptospirosis is usually contracted from the urine of infected animals or from contaminated water. The disease gets into the body through cuts in the skin and through the linings of the eyes, nose or throat.

It is most common in pigs and cattle, but sometimes occurs in sheep, dogs and cats.

Q fever is caught by breathing infected material - including contaminated dust - from the afterbirth, birth fluids and excreta of infected animals.

You can also catch it by drinking unpasteurised milk, and by contact with contaminated straw, wool, hair or hides.

Q fever is found in cattle, dairy cows, sheep, goats, bandicoots, kangaroos and wallabies.

Animals carrying Leptospirosis or Q fever may not appear to be sick.

Catching either disease from another infected person is extremely rare.

3. Symptoms and effects

Initially, both Leptospirosis and Q fever feel like the flu. You may have muscle pains, severe headaches and fever.

Leptospirosis: As it takes hold, you may also have chills, a stiff neck, and be sensitive to light. All symptoms usually ease within 10 days, but may recur.

A serious form of Leptospirosis may cause vomiting and jaundice (yellowing of the skin and eyes). The kidneys may be affected and internal bleeding may occur, and at this stage it can be fatal.

Q fever may progress from high fever, muscle pain and headache to pneumonia. Some people also develop liver and heart problems. Some people experience ongoing fatigue after the initial disease has resolved. This is known as Post Q Fever Fatigue Syndrome.

4. What is the treatment?

Both Leptospirosis and Q fever can be treated with antibiotics. If you think you may be infected with either disease, see a doctor quickly.

Tell the doctor you have been in contact with animals and may have caught a disease from them, or show your Occupational Health Alert Card.

In the case of either disease, a blood test is needed to confirm infection.

5. Reducing risks

Employees in workplaces where zoonoses may be a hazard should be given information on zoonoses, and be trained in safe work procedures to minimise infection risks.

Suitable hygiene facilities, including facilities for hand washing, cleaning, and provision for laundering contaminated clothing will help reduce zoonoses risks.

News in brief (cont.)

AWI has new CEO

(extracted from "Shearing" magazine, edited by Des Williams)

Australian Wool Innovation has appointed Stuart McCullough as its new Chief Executive Officer. AWI Chairman Wal Merriman said Mr. McCullough had shown while acting in the position that he is very capable of achieving the strategic intent of the Board and Shareholders while demonstrating good leadership of staff. "Mr. McCullough has worked in various senior roles at AWI in his nine years with the company. Having worked in the wool industry for 21 years, he has extensive knowledge of the fibre, its markets and its people." Mr. Merriman said AWI was now getting on with the business of research, development and marketing of Australian wool with a series of key corporate plans and agreements being developed recently. Stuart McCullough said while his appointment was a great honour, there was a large amount of work to be done to get Australian wool back where it belongs. "There are no shortcuts or quick fixes to increasing the profitability of wool growing."

World Shearing & Woolhandling Championships Wales - Kiwis take the honours

Numerous SCAA members made their way to Wales to watch and support our team. Unfortunately Australia's showing was not their best however spectators did see the crowning of a new champ, relegating Kiwi legend & 4 times world champion David Fagen to second.

Results were:

Machine Shearing: 1st - Cam Ferguson (NZ), 2nd - David Fagan (NZ), 3rd - Gareth Daniel (Wales), 4th - Gareth Evans (Wales), 5th - Gavin Mutch (Scotland), 6th - Kieran McCullough (Northern Ireland)

Teams Machine Shearing: 1st - New Zealand, 2nd - Wales, 3rd - Scotland, 4th - Northern Ireland, 5th - England, 6th - Falkland Islands

Blade Shearing: 1st - Zingisele Elliot Ntsombo (Lesotho), 2nd - Sokesese Doba (Lesotho), 3rd - Brian Thomson (NZ), 4th - David Ferguson (Scotland), 5th - Mayenzeke Shweni (South Africa), 6th - John Dalla - (Australia)

Teams Blades Shearing: 1st - South Africa, 2nd - Lesotho, 3rd - New Zealand, 4th - England, 5th - Scotland, 6th - Republic of Ireland,

Woolhandling: 1st - Bronwen Tango (Wales), 2nd - Sheree Alabaster (New Zealand), 3rd - Menir Evans (Wales)

Woolhandling Teams: 1st - Wales, 2nd - New Zealand, 3rd - Scotland

Award questions and answers (cont.)

Question 1: Woolclassers Contract Rate: When does a woolclasser go onto 'contract rates'?

Answer: If a classer is on the current Award rate of \$225.24 (classing and wool rolling) then once they class more than 800 sheep in a day they will need to be paid by the contract rate of \$281.55 per hundred. The Award requires you to pay the greater of either day rate or the calculated contract rate. Calculation hint: to work out the number of Fleeces a classer would need to class before they will earn more on the contract rate: divide the day rate by the contract rate per hundred and times by 1000

Day Rate	X	1000	=	Fleeces per day to be on contract
Contract per Hundred rate				

Question 2. re Cooks Wages minimum engagement: If the cook cooks breakfast and morning smoko do they get a full days pay or 2 runs?

Answer: You can engage a cook by the half day i.e. 2 runs

Question 3. re Woolclassers minimum engagement: If a woolclasser only works 1 run in the morning, how many runs are they paid?

Answer: Woolclassers are engaged by the day. If you have instructed them to present themselves for work, whether or not a sheep is shorn, they would be entitled to a full day's pay.

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