

# FACT SHEET

## FIRST AID AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE IN THE WOOL HARVESTING INDUSTRY

Wool harvesting exposes workers to risks associated with plant and equipment, working with animals and working in variable climatic conditions, often in remote locations. This fact sheet assists employers, contractors and workers to manage the risks associated with the delivery of first aid and emergency response in remote work locations.

### WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

An emergency can occur at any time, with or without warning. Employers should ensure that in the event of an emergency at the shed, arrangements have been made for:

- the safe and rapid evacuation of people from their place of work
- emergency communications
- appropriate medical treatment for anyone who is injured.

### WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Inadequate first aid and emergency response can result in:

- an injury or illness made worse
- longer recovery periods
- higher medical and workers compensation costs
- long-term medical conditions
- death
- impact on an injured person's family

### WHAT CAN YOU DO TO MANAGE THE RISKS IN YOUR WORKPLACE?

Everyone involved in wool harvesting should be aware of what to do in an emergency. You should have an emergency plan in place to deal with any incident that could occur.

In setting up an emergency plan, you should consider:

- Who is trained in first aid
  - A trained first aid person should be on-site during wool harvesting operations
- Communication arrangements with workers in areas isolated by time or distance
  - Arrangements must be made for emergency communications – eg mobile, landline or satellite phones, or UHF radio. A system of communication must be available to workers at all times, and tested regularly to ensure it operates where work is to be carried out.

- Some operations, such as mobile crutching and lamb marking, may be carried out in far-flung locations, far removed from any assistance. Suitable communications should be in place before the work starts.
- All those involved in wool harvesting operations should be instructed in the use of the emergency communication systems.
- Accessibility of first-aid equipment
  - First-aid kits must be centrally located, and visible and easily accessible by everyone in the workplace. They should be checked regularly to ensure anything used has been replaced with new stock.
  - Employers are responsible for maintaining first-aid kits that are appropriate for the number of workers in the shed. Consult with your local emergency or medical service provider for advice on the best kit to meet your needs.
- Knowing who does what and in what order when an emergency occurs
  - Establish a system that provides for the safe and rapid evacuation of the injured person to the nearest hospital or medical centre
  - All those involved in wool harvesting should know what emergency management arrangements are in place.
- Record and prominently display emergency services contact details and location-specific information, such as:
  - directions from the nearest town
  - description of entrance to the property
  - significant landmarks
  - GPS location.

See the *Rural emergency card* (catalogue no. WCO4839)

This fact sheet should be read in conjunction with the requirements set out in the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000*, the *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 2001* and *Shearing: health and safety at work* (catalogue no. WCO0692).

For more information, visit [workcover.nsw.gov.au](http://workcover.nsw.gov.au) or call **13 10 50**.

#### Disclaimer

This publication may contain occupational health and safety and workers compensation information. It may include some of your obligations under the various legislations that WorkCover NSW administers. To ensure you comply with your legal obligations you must refer to the appropriate legislation.

Information on the latest laws can be checked by visiting the NSW legislation website ([www.legislation.nsw.gov.au](http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au)).

This publication does not represent a comprehensive statement of the law as it applies to particular problems or to individuals or as a substitute for legal advice. You should seek independent legal advice if you need assistance on the application of the law to your situation.

Catalogue No. **WC03044** WorkCover Publications Hotline **1300 799 003**



**WorkCover NSW** 92-100 Donnison Street Gosford NSW 2250  
 Locked Bag 2906 Lisarow NSW 2252 WorkCover Assistance Service **13 10 50**  
 Website [workcover.nsw.gov.au](http://workcover.nsw.gov.au)

ISBN 978 1 74218 788 4 © Copyright WorkCover NSW 0211