



Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety

Information Sheet 2

Modified caravan and boat for spinal cord injured people.

Dean Hearne was brought up on his parent's farm and always wanted to be a farmer. In January 1989 Dean had an accident while surfing which left him with a spinal cord injury confining him to a wheelchair with a C5-6 quadriplegia, yet he was determined to continue farming. Dean did continued to farm by modifying 2, 4WD tractors with lifts and controls and a 4 wheel motorbike (quad runner) was altered and used for mustering.

Dean and his family continued farming until June 1999 when the farm was sold and he and his parents retired to the outskirts of Dalby. Dean was 35 years old and decided to see Australia, so he set to work designing a caravan to suit his needs.

The caravan was built by Kendron in Brisbane and the lift on the back was fitted with the help of Aion Engineering in Dalby.



The caravan has turning room inside, air conditioning, TV, stove, 12 volt electrical system with gas hot water and external shower, which Dean uses at the back on the lift deck with shower screens. Dean tows the van with his Holden Aventura all-wheel-drive wagon. This vehicle was chosen because it is lower and easier to transfer into.



Dean has also designed modifications for his fishing boat. The boat has ramps set up to allow him to transfer from the wheelchair into the boat. The larger seat in the centre of the boat slides from one side to the other to centralised weight. Dean also has 2 electric (12 volt) fishing rods which help him catch fish with limited hand function.



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