

Farm Worker Safety Induction

Manual 1: Framework and Program Principles

© Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety

All rights reserved

Title: Farm worker safety induction – Manual 1: Framework and program principles

Authors: Temperley, J B and Fragar, L J

ISBN:

The views expressed and the conclusions reached in this publication are those of the authors and not necessarily those of persons consulted. Farmsafe Australia and the Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety shall not be responsible in any way whatsoever to any person who relies in whole or in part, on the contents of this document.

This guide is copyright. However, Farmsafe Australia and the Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety encourage wide dissemination of this product providing that the organisation is clearly acknowledged. For any other enquiries concerning reproduction, contact ACAHS Publications Manager on phone 02 6752 8210.

ACAHS contact details:

Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety
University of Sydney
P O Box 256
Moree NSW 2400

Tel: 02 6752 8210

Fax: 02 6752 6639

Email: aghealth@health.usyd.edu.au

Published October 2009

FRAMEWORK FOR RURAL WORKER SAFETY INDUCTION

FOREWORD

The Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety (ACAHS) assists farmers to attain improved levels of health and well-being by action to reduce the incidence and severity of injury and illness associated with life and work in agriculture.

Based at Moree in north west New South Wales, ACAHS is an academic Centre of the University of Sydney within the School of Public Health. The Centre is a member of the Australian Rural Health Research Collaboration with the University Departments of Rural Health at Broken Hill and Lismore and the Centre for Rural and Remote Mental Health, Orange.

The ACAHS through its National Farm Injury Data Centre has been leading research in the incidence of injury and deaths on Australian Farms. Translation of this data has led to the development of programs of work with industry and relevant organisations that seek to actively reduce farm related injuries.

The ACAHS is the operations centre of Farmsafe Australia, and also has responsibility for the executive duties of both Farmsafe NSW and Farmsafe North West.

Development of this document has been substantially guided by the 2007 *National Code of Practice for Induction for Construction Work*,¹ developed by the Australian Safety and Compensation Council as part of the National Standard for Construction Work.

¹ Australian Safety & Compensation Council. National Code of Practice for Induction for Construction Work. Canberra, May 2007.

PURPOSE

This document provides guidance to persons working in the agricultural and farming sectors on the types of safety induction training that may be needed to provide farm workers and contractors with an awareness and understanding of common farm hazards and how they should be managed.

SCOPE AND APPLICATION

What OHS training is needed in the agricultural industry?

The Australian agricultural and farming industry involves people working on farms in a continually changing and varied work environment. Hazards and risks change as farm work and seasons progress. The majority of Australian farm work is done by farm owners, their families, managers and employed workers. Many farm business also use contractors, who are employed at different times for a variety of work.

The safety instruction and training required to ensure people work safely on farms needs to recognise the pattern of employment and the way the agricultural and farm industries operate. Therefore, three types of OHS induction training may be required:

- **General Farm Safety Induction** provides persons employed (or before they are employed) in the farming industry, with a basic knowledge of requirements under OHS laws, the common hazards and risks likely to be encountered on farms and how these risks should be controlled.
- **On-Farm Safety Induction** provides information and instruction to anyone engaged on a particular farm with a knowledge of the owner/ manager's rules and procedures for farm safety, emergency management, arrangements for reporting hazards and injury, and participating in the farm OHS program.
- **Job/ Task-specific Safety Induction** provides information and instruction to anyone undertaking a particular farm job/ task and the potential hazards, risks and control measures relating to that job/ task.

This document provides guidance on these three types of OHS induction and includes a summary table at Attachment C.

Safety induction on its own is not sufficient to fully discharge all legal obligations in relation to OHS. Other forms of training, instruction, information and supervision may be needed on a regular basis to ensure currency of skills and knowledge and to manage risks associated with the changing nature of work and the workplace.

Specific competency based training that formally recognises and certifies a person competent may also be required for specific work, e.g. providing first aid, working in confined spaces and operators using registered plant such as backhoes, front end loaders and forklifts.

Who does this document apply to?

This document is relevant for all persons involved in farm work, including:

- Persons with control of farm work (e.g. owners, employers, managers, self-employed persons and contractors).
- Persons carrying out agricultural work (e.g. employees, contractors, labour-hire workers).
- Visitors, in the course of their employment, temporarily work on a farm providing services, use plant or deliver/ transport livestock, produce and supplies.

However, this document recognises that there may be some situations where varying levels of safety induction training are needed. For example, a visitor working temporarily on a farm, may need general induction, or only site induction, depending on the nature and extent of the following:

- The expected hazards they will encounter on the farm or level of risk, and
- The level of supervision.

DEFINITIONS

Competent person

‘Competent person’ means a person who has acquired through training, qualification, or experience, or a combination of these, the knowledge and skills enabling that person to deliver site-specific and work activity training.

Agricultural farm work

‘Agricultural farm work’ means any work on a farm.

Employee

‘Employee’ includes a person who is employed to work or works under a contract of employment or apprenticeship.

Employer

‘Employer’ means a person who employs people for work or other persons under contracts of employment or apprenticeship.

Hazard

‘Hazard’ means any object or situation with the potential to cause harm to people.

High-risk farm work

‘High-risk farm work’ includes the following:

- farm work involving tractors or powered mobile plant and machinery
- farm work involving motorcycles and quad bikes
- farm work involving farm vehicles
- farm work involving handling livestock
- farm work where there is a risk of a person falling
- farm work involving a confined space or having a reduced, contaminated or flammable atmosphere
- farm work near overhead powerlines or electrical installations and services
- farm work involving the storage, preparation and use of fuels, chemicals and agricultural pesticides
- work in packing sheds, cool rooms and controlled atmosphere stores

OHS induction training

‘OHS induction training’ means agricultural safety awareness training undertaken prior to commencing farm work. OHS induction training includes general, site specific and task specific safety instruction.

Farm

'Farm' means the area where agricultural/ farm work is undertaken.

Person with control of a farm

'Person with control of a farm' means a person who has the authority to specify the requirements for the use of plant and materials and to determine work practices, systems of work and appropriate measures to address health and safety risks arising from work on a farm.

Plant

'Plant' includes any vehicle, machinery, equipment, appliance, implement or tool, including any component, fitting or accessory to any machinery, equipment appliance, implement or tool.

Relevant OHS authority

'Relevant OHS authority' means the authority of the relevant Australian state or territory jurisdiction responsible for regulating occupational health and safety in workplaces in the jurisdiction in which the farm work is undertaken.

Risk

'Risk' means the likelihood of a hazard causing harm to a person.

Risk management

'Risk management' means the process of systematically identifying hazards, assessing and quantifying the degree of risk associated with the identified hazard and determining appropriate control measures, and includes monitoring, maintaining and adjusting the risk management process as required.

Self employed person

'Self employed person' means a person who works for gain or reward or under a contract of employment, whether or not employing others.

Structure

'Structure' means:

- including but not limited to any building/ shed, silo, fixed plant, scaffold, irrigation structure, overhead fuel tank, water tank, wind mill, dam and irrigation earthworks or underground tank.

DUTY HOLDER RESPONSIBILITIES

An important element in preventing work related injury and death is a clear understanding by all parties about who has responsibilities for ensuring health and safety in a work place, and the extent of those responsibilities.

What does the law require?

There is a duty of care placed on all employers under OHS legislation to provide a safe workplace and have safe systems of work that, where reasonably practicable, provide a workplace that is safe and without risk to health. This duty includes specific obligations to provide employees with the necessary training, instruction, information and supervision to enable them to work safely.

What are the responsibilities relating to OHS induction training?

Responsibilities are placed on various people involved in work to manage workplace safety. Persons with control of a agricultural and farm work, such as the owner/ manager, or supervisor, must ensure that everyone who works on the farm (including contractors and visitors) have undertaken OHS induction training.

OHS induction training is only one element of managing safety on farms. While induction may help to reduce the likelihood of deaths and injuries resulting from a lack of awareness of typical farm hazards and risks, it is important to remember that it is an administrative control measure. Hazards are more effectively controlled by higher controls, such as elimination/ substitution or engineering controls.

An effective safety management system relies on the following:

- Management commitment
- Identifying hazards, assessing and controlling risks, and
- Employee involvement
- Regular review and update of the safety management plan.

Management commitment to health and safety means that safety should be the employer's or contractor's priority and appropriate resources should be allocated, including those required for safety induction training and managing health and safety risk in the farming business. Good safety management can improve productivity, reduce incident and injury rates and create cost savings in reducing downtime, increase productivity and reduce workers' compensation costs.

Who has induction training responsibilities?	What are the induction training responsibilities?
<p>Persons with control of a farm (owners/managers), or agricultural farm work (supervisors).</p> <p>Employers and self-employed persons.</p>	<p>Do not direct or allow another person (including a self-employed person or contractor) to carry out farm work unless they are satisfied that the necessary OHS induction training has been undertaken.</p> <p>Assess OHS induction training needs and provide the necessary induction to ensure health and safety.</p> <p>Maintain appropriate training records.</p>
<p>Persons who carry out work on farms, including employers, supervisors, manager and contractors.</p>	<p>Do not carry out work unless they have undertaken the necessary OHS induction training.</p>

GENERAL SAFETY INDUCTION TRAINING

General safety induction training aims to provide all persons new to the farming industry with a basic knowledge of OHS legislative requirements, principles of risk management and the prevention of injury and illness in the agricultural industry.

General induction training should comprise a formal training program that provides workers in the agricultural industry with an awareness and understanding of:

- Health and Safety Law
- Responsibilities under OHS law
- Basic risk management principles
- Common hazards and risks in the farming/ agricultural industry, and
- The standard of behaviour expected of workers on farms.

Who needs to undertake General Safety Induction Training?

General Safety Induction Training is:

- Recommended for all employed persons who carry out farm/ agricultural work.
- Recommended for all persons who access work areas of the farm unaccompanied or not directly supervised by an inducted person, and
- Recommended for all persons whose employment causes them to routinely enter and work on a farm.

For all other persons, the need for induction training should be determined by a risk assessment. There may be people who may or may not need general induction training.

These could include:

- Government agents (fulfilling statutory functions)
- Practical visits by students not undertaking agricultural work and under escort and direct supervision
- Social visitors to the farm not involved with or performing any farm work

There may be other activities that relate to farm work where general safety induction training may be necessary. The person in control of the farm or work should determine this by examining:

- the nature of the work to be performed and the level of risk associated with those tasks
- the circumstances in which the work will be undertaken, and
- the level of supervision.

General Safety Induction Training should be undertaken by all persons working on a farm.

What content is covered by General Safety Induction Training?

General Safety Induction Training should at least consist of the following health and safety topics:

- Identify and understand roles, responsibilities and rights of employers and employees
 - Rights, responsibilities and enforcement under OHS legislation
- Understand OHS communication and reporting processes:
 - Raising issues and reporting unsafe conditions
 - OHS consultation arrangements, including where applicable the roles of OHS representatives
- Identify common hazards and control measures:
 - Tractors, mobile plant and machinery
 - Vehicles and traffic
 - Quad bikes and farm motor bikes
 - Manual handling
 - Handling livestock
 - Chemicals and pesticides
 - Noise
 - Plant and equipment (including inspection, maintenance, licensing requirements)
 - Solar and UV radiation
 - Electrical safety
 - Working at heights
 - Working in confined spaces
 - Infectious (zoonotic) diseases
- Interpret and apply safety information and documentation:
 - Safe work method statements, material safety data sheets, safety signs
- Use safe farm work practices:
 - Drugs and alcohol
 - Fatigue
 - Amenities
 - Smoking
 - Bullying/ harassment
 - Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Respond to OHS incidents:
 - First-aid
 - Accident, near miss and serious incident reporting
 - Emergency procedures
 - Workers' compensation and injury management

Who can deliver General Farm Safety Induction?

General Farm Safety Induction should be delivered by competent persons with a knowledge of OHS systems and approaches, plus agricultural and farming practice.

How are participants assessed?

General Farm Safety Induction is a structured program that has a nominal duration of six hours face-to-face delivery. This can be modified, where necessary, to accommodate learning preferences or special learning needs. Assessment is by completion of the General Farm Safety Induction program workbook.

When should General Farm Safety Induction be provided?

General Farm Safety Induction should be completed once upon entry to the industry and before commencing agricultural work on a farm.

However, General Farm Safety Induction may be repeated when the person with control of the farm business or work, decides that there is a need for re-training. This can be determined through supervision, incidents, risk management, or when a person re-enters the industry after an extended absence.

What evidence of General Farm Safety Induction is available?

A person successfully completing the General Farm Safety Induction program can receive a Certificate of Attendance.

ON-FARM SAFETY INDUCTION TRAINING

General safety induction alone may not be sufficient to meet all legal obligations in respect of safety training. On-farm Safety Induction, task-specific training and any identified need for refresher training are equally important to ensure persons have sufficient knowledge to allow them to work on a farm, without the need to be under escort or close supervision.

On-farm Safety Induction

On-farm (farm specific) Safety Induction aims to provide participants with knowledge of OHS issues and safe work practices specific to a particular farm workplace. It familiarises persons with work on a particular farm, with the procedures for OHS and emergency management on that farm, the supervisory and reporting arrangements, who the responsible health and safety supervisor or representatives are and any other issues relevant to that farm.

The farm owner/manager or person responsible for managing health and safety on the farm is responsible for ensuring that specific farm safety induction is carried out before the commencement of any work by an employee or contractor.

On-farm Safety Induction will vary between farms and agricultural commodities.

What content is covered by On-farm Safety Induction?

On-farm Safety Induction should be based on the OHS management plan, since the plan covers farm specific hazards, control measures, safety rules and other information specific to the farm. Farm site induction for general agricultural production should include at least the following health and safety topics:

- Any farm specific hazards and risk control measures involved in carrying out the work as identified by farm owner/ manager/ supervisor
- Regulatory requirements or codes of practice relevant to any specific hazards
- A farm orientation including safe entry and exit, location of amenities and first aid.
- Farm safety consultation and reporting arrangements, and details of relevant safety personnel, and
- Accident reporting, emergency and evacuation procedures on farm.

A sample checklist for providing farm safety induction to persons starting agricultural work who have completed general safety induction training is at Attachment A.

Where there are visitors to the farm, who are required to enter an area where there is work being performed, it is recommended that they attend a brief site induction session. A sample checklist for providing induction to visitors is at Attachment B

Who can develop On-farm Safety Induction?

It should be developed by the farm owner/ manager, in consultation with other duty holders during the planning and preparation stage wherever possible. It is recommended that farmers use the Managing Farm Safety™ Farm Worker Safety Induction resources. The content should be regularly reviewed and updated whenever there are changes to the farm business that may affect health and safety.

How are participants assessed?

On-farm Safety Induction should be provided in the form of information and instructions by a competent person who is familiar with the site and its hazards and risks (e.g. owner/ manager or supervisor). On-farm Safety induction should be tailored to overcome any language barriers. There is no requirement for assessment attached to this training.

How long does on-farm Safety Induction take?

There is no nominal duration for this training. The timing will vary based on the nature, complexity and level of risk associated with farm work. It may also be influenced by such things as the size of the farm and commodity sector.

When should on-farm Safety Induction be provided?

On-farm induction should be provided prior to commencing work at each new farm and whenever there are changes to the farm at which work is being undertaken that may affect health and safety.

What evidence of induction might be needed?

The owner/ manager or person with control of the farm work should make a record of the names of persons inducted and the date it was provided. Acknowledgement of the safety induction may be obtained from participants, e.g. a signature in a safety induction register.

JOB/ TASK SPECIFIC SAFETY INDUCTION TRAINING

Job and task-specific training aims to provide information and instruction to anyone undertaking a particular job/ activity of the risk factors and control measures relating to that task. It assists persons to gain the knowledge necessary for them to work and to carry out jobs and tasks safely.

Task specific training should be provided for persons performing high-risk agricultural work. For all other farm work, the person with control of the agricultural work should carry out a risk assessment to determine whether task-specific training is needed. It should consider the nature and complexity of the task, the associated risks as well as the level of supervision and the experience of the worker.

What content is covered by job/ task-specific training?

Training content should be based on the hazards, risks and control measures identified by the risk management process, the nature of the work, the workplace and individual job factors. For high-risk agricultural work, the training should be based on the safe work method statements. Task-specific training should include the following topics:

- Hazards, risks and control measures involved in carrying out the work activity
- Reference to relevant legal responsibilities, codes of practice or standards, and
- Safe farm work methods to be used.

Who can develop task-specific training?

It should be developed by the person with control of the farm work, in consultation with other duty holders during the planning and preparation stage wherever possible. The training should be regularly reviewed and updated whenever there are changes to the tasks, processes, systems of work, plant and substances that may affect health and safety.

How are participants trained and assessed?

Task-specific training should be provided in the form of information and instruction by a competent person.

The induction should be tailored to overcome any numeracy, literacy and language barriers. There is no requirement for skills assessment attached to this training.

When should task-specific training be provided?

Task-specific training should be undertaken prior to commencing high-risk agricultural work or new work activities. It should also be undertaken when supervision, incidents, risk management or other circumstances indicate the need for retraining.

What evidence of training is required?

The person with control of the farm work should make a record of the names of persons trained and the date it was provided. Acknowledgement of the training may be obtained from participants, e.g. signature on a training register.

RECORD KEEPING

It is important to document health and safety activities and keep these records for the sake of:

- Meeting legal requirements.
- Providing information to workers, and
- Monitoring health and safety performance.

Safety induction training records provide evidence of training activities and should include names of participants, the training content, who conducted the training and when it was provided.

Training records should be made available on request to relevant parties (subject to compliance with relevant privacy principles), including:

- Persons in control of the agricultural work or agricultural project.
- Persons undertaking the training.
- Employers or persons engaging others for the purposes of agricultural work, and
- OHS inspectors.

Record keeping responsibilities

- Retention, archiving and retrieval of farm safety induction records for a period of 30 years.
- Access by employees to their personal records.

There may be additional records that duty holders need to provide to the relevant OHS authority and to ensure compliance with state or territory requirements.

Responsibilities of persons with control

A person with control of a farm, or with control of agricultural work, should retain records of safety induction for the duration of employment or agricultural contract and a further three years after cessation of employment or completion of the agricultural contract.

Responsibilities of persons undertaking safety induction

Persons who undertake General Farm Safety Induction should keep their own copies of evidence of induction to indicate to relevant parties that they have satisfactorily completed OHS safety induction. Persons attending site specific or work activity induction should sign a training attendance register and should provide copies of all relevant qualifications and licences to the employer or contractor for their records.

ATTACHMENT A

Sample checklist for farm-specific induction

No	Items Covered	Yes	No	N/A
1	Competencies and qualifications of the employee/ contractor established.			
2	Have you introduced the person responsible for farm health and safety?			
3	Have you been shown a farm map of hazards?			
4	Have you discussed and clearly stated the procedures for reporting hazards, incidents, injuries etc?			
5	Have you shown the person what to do in an emergency and identified the location of the:			
	Assembly point & evacuation route?			
	Contact details of emergency services?			
	Provisions for emergency communications?			
6	Have you shown the person:			
	The location of the first aid facilities/kits?			
	Who can provide first aid treatment?			
7	Have you shown the person where all relevant fire fighting equipment is located?			
6	Have you shown the person where all the amenities and facilities are located?			
7	Do they have the correct work clothing and know the PPE available?			
8	Have you ensured that the person has been taken through relevant safe farm work methods for the jobs to be performed?			
9	Is any specialised equipment required/set up and have they been trained to use the equipment?			
10	Do they have any further questions or need clarification on any point/s and/or topics?			

ATTACHMENT B

Sample checklist for visitor induction

No	Items Covered	Yes	No	N/A
1	Have you shown the visitor:			
	What to do in an emergency?			
	How to contact help on the farm?			
	What to do in an emergency?			
2	Have you shown the visitor the location of the Emergency Assembly Point and Evacuation Routes?			
3	Have you shown the visitor the location of the first aid facilities/ kits and how to obtain first aid treatment/ assistance?			
4	Does the visitor have the correct PPE?			
5	Does the visitor know how to wear the PPE properly?			
6	Have you identified the major hazards and no-go zones on the farm?			
Visitor Name:		Signature:		
Date:				
Inducted By:		Signature:		
Date:				

ATTACHMENT C

Summary of OHS Safety Induction Training

	General safety induction	Farm safety induction	Job-specific safety induction
Aim/Objectives	To provide participants new to the agricultural industry with basic knowledge of OHS legislative requirements, principles of risk management and the prevention of injury and illness on farms.	To provide participants with knowledge of OHS issues and safe work practices specific to a particular farm.	To provide participants with knowledge of OHS issues and safe work practices relevant to particular farm jobs or tasks.
Frequency of Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally once upon entry to the industry, prior to commencing farm work • Employers may decide that a person requires re-training where circumstances indicate the need. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to commencing agricultural work on a new farm. • As required according to the outcomes of the risk management process • Whenever there are changes to the farm at which work is being undertaken that may affect health and safety. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to commencing the work on high-risk farm work • As required according to outcomes of the risk management process • Whenever there are changes to work being done that may affect health and safety.
Development	A recognised general induction training program, which has been developed by Farmsafe NSW.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A formal training program is not required • Site induction should be based on the site safety or OHS management plan and may be provided in the form of information and instructions specific to a particular farm work-site. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A formal training program is not required • Task-specific training should be based on safe farm work method statements and may be provided in the form of OHS information and instructions specific to a particular work activity.
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training should be delivered by competent person with a practical knowledge of farming health and safety. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training should be delivered by a competent person • There is no requirement for assessment attached to this training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training should be delivered by a competent person • There is no requirement for assessment attached to this training

	General safety induction	Farm safety induction	Job-specific safety induction
Course Content	<p>The training program should include at least the following health and safety topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OHS responsibilities and rights of duty holders • Consultation/ communication in the workplace • Principles of risk management • Common hazards and their controls • Safety information and signage • General safety standards and expectations • Incident reporting, first aid and emergency response. 	<p>Training content should be based on the hazards, risks and control measures identified by the risk management process, including the farm and the nature of the work</p> <p>Content should be determined by the farm owner/ manager in consultation with other duty holders during the planning and preparation stage.</p> <p>Site induction should include the following health and safety topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • any site specific hazards and risk control measures • regulatory requirements • codes of practice relevant to any site specific hazards • site orientation including amenities and first aid • on-site consultation and reporting arrangements, and details of relevant authorised personnel • accident, emergency and evacuation procedures 	<p>Training content should be based on the hazards, risks and control measures identified by the risk management process for the relevant work task.</p> <p>Content should be determined by the persons in control of the work, in consultation with other workers.</p> <p>Task-specific training should include at least the following health and safety topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • common hazards, risks and control measures involved in carrying out the work/ task. • relevant legal responsibilities, codes of practice or standards • safe farm work methods to be used
Training Duration	<p>This training program has a nominal duration of 4 hours face-to-face delivery. This can be reduced or extended where necessary.</p>	<p>There is no nominal duration for this training. The timing will vary based on the nature, complexity and level of risk associated with the farm work.</p>	<p>There is no nominal duration for this training. The timing will vary based on the nature, complexity, level of risk and changes associated with the work activity.</p>