

## WHAT CAN FARMERS DO

The current NSW Workers' Compensation insurance rate for Cotton Farmers is 6.9% of gross wages. This is a 23% increase over the 1992/93 rate of 5.6%. The states average across all industries is 1.8% of gross wages.

The highest rate is 8.4%. Examples of industries in this rate classification is Abattoirs and Saw Milling. Coal mining (which was previously the highest) is 5.6% of gross wages.

A non rural industry that attracts the same rate as farming is the Foundry Industry. These rates may not be exactly the same for other states. Some may be higher or lower.

The rural industry is fast developing a reputation as a very high risk industry in terms of human suffering.

"We are not a disposable Society"

"The greatest asset our industry possesses is people".

The people that work in our industry are highly skilled self motivated and dedicated to an industry that can clearly demonstrate its modern farming techniques are second to none in the world.

The quality and quantity of the Cotton produced is also second to none in the world.

To continue this high performance, we must improve by building on these unique qualities and attributes. The industry as a whole must protect and not waste their greatest asset, "People".

"The Result of Waste is Want".

One of the few aspects of our industry that is controllable is injury to people.

A goal for "The Australian Cotton Growers" is to aim at a reduction in the insurance rate and to apply for a separate rate classification for the Cotton Industry based on performance. This performance must be demonstrated by reduced cost of Workers' Compensation.

**Farm Safety**

**What Can Farmers Do?**

## OBJECTIVES

- a. To enhance staff awareness of the nature, possibility and impact of the cost of losses involving:-
  - Property or equipment damage
  - Exposure to public liability claims
  - Damage to the environment
  - Human injury
  - Vandalism and theft
  - Labour turnover
- b. To develop line management acceptance of moral, legal and financial accountability for the safe and efficient use of human and material resources provided.
- c. To generate in individual employees an attitudinal concern for the greater care of themselves, their resources, and the Farming community.

### FORMULATION OF STRATEGIES

The initial task involves the formulation of strategies covering:-

- Tactical action plan
- Conceptual training
- Operational training
- Programme implementation

The Tactical Plan is negotiated with Management in respect of:-

- Establishing cost targets
- Management cost control centres
- Schedule of conceptual training
- Schedule of operational training
- Programme implementation stages and timetable
- Communication circuits
- Monitoring, evaluation and loss control management procedures.

The Conceptual Training involves all Management and covers:-

- Possible achievement goals
- Programme methodology and performance criteria
- Preventative action objectives.

The Operational Training involves all Management operational personnel and covers:-

- \* Establishment of data acquisition forms and procedures
- \* Role of Senior Line Managers
- \* Role of Project Assistance
- \* Role of first level Line Managers

Programme Commencement Incorporates:-

- \* Establishment of universal cost relevant data.
- \* Identification and progressive review of goals and priorities.
- \* Monitoring action plan.

## MONITORING FOR EVALUATION AND CONTROL

- a. Establishment of monthly management meetings, chaired by Senior Management and attended by Cost Centre Managers, Project Assistant and Combrook Representative.
- b. Establishment of effective dates of:-
  - . receipt of data
  - . receipt and dissemination of agenda material
- c. Establishment of communication circuits and procedures for review of performance and goal achievements.
- d. Establishment of support service input procedures covering:-
  - . industrial relations
  - . rehabilitation and alternative duty programmes
  - . hazard reviews
  - . crisis management
  - . ex-programme training needs
  - . training of OH&S (workplace) Committee members
- e. Review of Loss Analysis Costs - overall and by loss control centres covering:
  - . targets
  - . actual
  - . variance
 for
  - . month to date
  - . year to date
- f. Review of Loss Classifications and Costs - overall and by loss control centres covering:-
  - . type
  - . nature
  - . location
  - . agency
 for
  - . month to date
  - . year to date
- g. Establishment of Action required to control matters in "f".
- h. Review of remedial measures taken and effectiveness.
- i. Review of remedial recommendations current and timetable for completion.

- j. Review of Communication of matters in "f" to first level line managers and ascertainment that employees have been informed and asked to exercise care while risk remains.
- k. Review of (potential) loss reporting difficulties or delays in follow-up action.
- l. Review of limitation of public liability action.
- m. Review by management of "outstanding" claims.
- n. Review of Motor Vehicle/Machinery Status Reports and action.
- o. Review of matters arising from minutes of Occupational Health and Safety (Workplace Committees).
- p. Review of action arising from Hazard Audits, Surveys, etc.
- q. Review of employee perception of Senior Management commitment.
- r. Review of penetration of employee attitudinal concern.

## **COSTS AND TANGIBLE BENEFITS**

Tangible benefits flow directly from the reduction in personal injury. The minimum target reduction recommended is 30%.

Tangible benefits flow directly in like manner from the reduction in damage to machines, property, the environment and the measures taken to limit liability claims.

Tangible benefits flow from the continual Vigorous Management of claims and the effectiveness of the rehabilitation programme.

Indirect benefits flow from the remedial action taken to prevent identified losses from recurring, especially in the non-people loss category. Not all of these may be amenable to remedial action due to technical reasons; some may not be implemented immediately due to economic considerations. However, the loss costs involved amount to many times the costs of personal injury and target for a 30% reduction offers a wide margin of possible achievements and a large measure of possible tangible benefits.

## ACHIEVEMENTS POSSIBLE

Savings accrue from two sources - reduction in the cost of claims for people injury, and remedial measures taken to prevent recurrences of the much larger losses not involving people injury. These include:

- . damage to or by a machine
- . damage to environs
- . idleness of machines and/or employees
- . pseudo maintenance (replacement of gearboxes without oil)
- . vandalism and theft
- . exposure to public liability claims.

The Combrook training programme will extend awareness of these kinds of waste to allow identification of costs, many times the cost of people-injury claims.

## WHAT MUST BE DONE

To achieve top notch performance.

Top notch performance cannot be reached without the firm belief that an accident is any deviation from planned operations, whether people are hurt or not. All accidents have the potential to hurt someone and need wider recognition and are wasteful.

Low Workers' Compensation cost can be sustained only through unrelenting vigilance. Experience has shown that a safe working environment can be fragile, it needs constant reinforcement. Waste control is the key.

Waste can be material, product, mechanical, time or people, the aim is to reduce this to a minimum.

To stop people from getting hurt, the causes of accidents (accidents that have not hurt anyone yet) must be examined and fixed.

As previously stated Combroom can lead, inform, guide, and contribute ideas from its store of lessons learned. But, sustained and fundamental change can only be achieved by Farm employees.

## BE INVOLVED OR COMMITTED

Breakfast of Eggs and Bacon,

"The Chicken was involved, the  
Pig was committed"

**KEY ACTIVITIES**

1. Train Supervisors in accident reporting with emphasis on non-injury events.
2. Provide training for Management in the areas of Loss Control techniques.
3. Establish a forward schedule for employee training in the area of Loss Control, Company Policies and Duty of Care.
4. Improve information from insurers on claims handling. Examine outstanding commitments and initiate action.
5. Set quantified objectives.
6. Conduct audits, hazard identification and follow up of corrective measures.
7. Stimulate the "no accident climate" eg via films, posters, lecturettes, achievement awards, etc.
8. Determine training needs for action.
9. Brief Chief Executive of progress, every 3 months.

