



SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES: myBMP CAN HELP

WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY LEGISLATION INTRODUCED LAST YEAR MEANS FARM OWNERS AND MANAGERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SAFETY OF EVERYONE WORKING ON THEIR FARM, INCLUDING CONTRACTORS AND VOLUNTEERS.

“Harmonisation” is an attempt to standardise all Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) rules and legislation across the country. While it will help employers understand their legal obligations better and ensure worker’s rights are protected, the major change affecting farm owners, managers and contractors is safety responsibility.

At no other time of the year is a farm busier than at harvest, with more contractors and seasonal staff working long hours in a fast-paced environment.

“Part of this legislation means farm owners (family and corporate) are responsible for the safety of anyone who comes to work on their farm, whether they be contractors, students or consultants,” says John Temperley, the Farm Safety Program Leader from the Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety.

“This will mean firstly starting with a safe workplace which means identifying potential hazards and then controlling them.

“Secondly farm owners/managers should conduct safety inductions for all contractors’ staff and any other workers, and contractors themselves should induct their own employees as well.

“In identifying the risks involved with any situation, it is worth asking yourself ‘what are the risks?’ and ‘what can I do that is reasonably practical to address it?’.”

myBMP is a great starting point if you are not sure what’s required in employing staff on farm and a great way to help keep up to date on managing staff in an ever changing environment.

The Human Resource Management (HR) module in *myBMP* has been significantly expanded and supported by extensive tools resources and information to reflect recent law changes, and also to keep pace with evolving needs of growers.

“This improved module will include whatever documents, links to webpages PDFs are needed to allow users to understand what each practice stands for and additionally the resources to help comply with the practice,” *myBMP* Manager Jim Wark said.

“With our seemingly ever-increasing level of competition for employees and changing laws this module is the guidance to help firstly meet legal obligations around employing staff, and secondly, put in place procedures to help you optimise employee productivity and safety.”

- *myBMP*: myBMP.com.au - Jim Wark jwark@cotton.org.au
- Cotton Australia CottonSafe resources and information:
<http://cottonaustralia.com.au/cotton-growers/cottonsafe>
- John Temperley 02 6752 8210 / 0419 248 399
- For more information about harmonisation:
<http://www.safeatwork.org.au/rights-and-obligations/legislation>
- CRDC Harvest Safety DVD: www.crdc.com.au or individual chapters available for viewing on YouTube