

Tractors and Mobile Plant

Step-by-step – Setting up for safety on your farm tractors and their attachments and mobile plant

Getting started

Read through this information pack carefully.

Complete the **Safety Self-Assessment** (traffic lights) pages.

Make a list of things to do and **set a date** to have each thing completed in the **Action Plan**.

Set up your **Standard Operating Procedure** for use of tractors and each type of mobile plant relevant on your farm (use the templates available with your Farm Safety Manual, and available on The People in Dairy website).

Put a copy with the documents you use to **induct new staff**.

Review your **maintenance of tractors and mobile plant** and ensure you have a record of what is done.

Pick a topic to discuss with staff or family at your next **workplace meeting** (you should have at least one safety topic each meeting).

Resources in this section

- › **Information** about safe use of tractors and mobile plant on dairy farms and your legal obligations.
- › **Safety Self-Assessment**.
- › **Standard Operating Procedure** templates.

Information and templates provided in this folder are also available at www.thepeopleindairy.org.au/farmsafety. You can edit the templates to suit your farm.

Work Health and Safety regulations require that you must assess and manage the risks to health and safety associated with use of any plant. You must:



- › identify reasonably foreseeable hazards that could give rise to the risk of a tractor or mobile plant accident
- › eliminate the risk so far as is reasonably practicable
- › if it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate the risk, minimise it by implementing control measures in accordance with the hierarchy of control
- › consult, so far as is reasonably practicable, with workers who are (or are likely to be) using tractors, their attachments or mobile plant.

The regulations require that risk control measures must be maintained so that they continue to protect workers and other people from the hazards associated with plant.

The control measures must be:

- › fit for purpose
- › suitable for the nature and duration of the work, and
- › installed, set up and used correctly.

The regulations require that a person with management or control of plant at a workplace must:

- › so far as is reasonably practicable, prevent unauthorised alterations to or interference with the plant
- › take all reasonable steps to ensure the plant is only used for the purpose for which it is designed, unless a competent person has assessed that the proposed use does not increase the risk to health and safety
- › ensure all safety features, warning devices, guarding, operational controls, emergency stops are used in accordance with instructions and information provided.

Tractors and Mobile Plant

Step-by-step – Setting up for safety on your farm tractors and their attachments and mobile plant

Tractors of all sizes and ages are to be found on most dairy farms. As farms have become larger and handling of bulk materials has become necessary, specialist mobile machinery has become more common. This type of plant includes, for example, industrial front end loaders and telehandlers.

A variety of attachments to tractors come with their own risks, particularly those driven through the power take off (PTO). Attachments that pose significant risk include front end loaders (FELs), post-hole diggers, post drivers, slashers, mowers, silage and hay feed-out wagons and carts.

Rollovers, run overs, falling objects, exposure to moving parts and injury whilst undertaking maintenance are all hazards associated with tractors and mobile plant. Working near overhead or underground powerlines and on road can be hazardous for operators. Operating around buildings and homes can also put pedestrians and especially children at risk.

The possibility of fire is another hazard when using tractors or mobile plant in summer. Observe fire danger restrictions. Avoid operation in or leaving tractors in long grass and crops and monitor hot parts such as bearings, moving parts and exhausts especially for grass or straw build up. The exhaust should have a spark arrestor. A fully charged extinguisher should be carried at all times.

Operator health can be affected when using tractors and machinery. Hazards include noise, dusts, UV exposure, hazardous substances, ergonomic hazards associated with poor posture, vibration, and fatigue.

For all tractors and mobile plant, it is important to ensure that operators are competent. Training may include an independent formal training course or on-farm instruction on the particular machinery. An induction to the hazards of the tractor, its attachments and the work environment should be undertaken for new users. The induction can be based around the safe operating procedure of the machinery and an outline of the farm rules associated with its use. Supervision should be provided for new and learning operators. Tractors are designed for adults and children should not be allowed to operate tractors and heavy machinery.

When working alone or remotely, injuries resulting from an incident could become more serious or even fatal if help is not provided promptly. Having good communication and emergency response systems in place becomes critical. This means having mobile phone or UHF access, letting others know where you are working, maintaining regular call ins, and everyone understanding an emergency response plan. Trained first aiders and access to up-to-date and relevant first aid kits should be part of the plan.

Work Health and Safety regulations require that you must assess and manage the risks to health and safety associated with use of any plant. You must:



For mobile plant, regulations require that:

- › If there is a possibility of the plant colliding with pedestrians or other powered mobile plant, the plant must have a warning device.
- › Risks to be managed include those associated with the plant overturning; things falling on the operator of the plant; the operator being ejected from the plant; the plant colliding with any person or thing and mechanical failure of pressurised elements of plant that may release fluids that pose a risk to health and safety.
- › No person other than the operator rides on the plant unless the person is provided with a level of protection that is equivalent to that provided to the operator.

By law, you are responsible for all the people who operate tractors or mobile plant or are bystanders on your farm.