

CHILD SAFETY ON FARMS STRATEGY

It is estimated that the number of children residing on Australian farms in 1994–95 was 53,336. Each year on Australian farms there are on average 30 child fatalities and 575 injuries resulting in hospitalisation.^{1,2} After extensive consultation with farm families, industry, and government *Child Safety on Farms: A Framework for a National Strategy in Australia* was published in 1999 by Farmsafe Australia.³ The strategy has been distributed widely through the Farmsafe Australia network. In May 2001, the then Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care announced funding of \$887,000 over three years to support the implementation of the strategy.

The strategy identifies the following dimensions associated with child safety on farms:

- child growth and development;
- farm family needs and aspirations;
- rural economy and farm business management;
- management of occupational health and safety in the agricultural sector;
- child care;
- education and training of children and young people for farm work;
- child protection;
- access of farm families to information.

The eight components of the strategy are:

- establishment of a national framework for action;
- identification of key hazards for children on farms;
- identification of effective strategies to control key injury risks;
- identification of educational needs and development of resources for children, parents and teachers;
- identification and development of flexible child care options;
- promotion of strategies to farm parents, farm managers, schools, service providers and others;
- identification of further research needs;
- evaluation of the national strategic plan.

Anyone interested in further information or becoming part of the *Child Safety on Farms* strategy should contact Farmsafe Australia on (02) 6752 8218.

REFERENCES

1. Franklin R, Mitchell R, Driscoll T, Fragar L. *Farm Related Fatalities in Australia*. Moree, NSW: Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety, National Occupational Health and Safety Commission, and the Rural Industries Research Development Corporation, 2000.
2. Franklin R, Harrison J. *Child injury hospital separation 1994–95 to 1997–98 where the place of occurrence was recorded as farm*. In draft.
3. Farmsafe Australia. *Child Safety on Farms: A Framework for a National Strategy in Australia*. Moree, NSW: Farmsafe Australia, 1999. ☒