

Introduction to the Veterinary Profession

VETS30030 / VETS90122



Safety on extramural placements and farms

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Safety

- It is really important that you start to review potential risks in a situation
- As a veterinarian you will be in charge of what happens around animals, and potentially liable for what happens to patients and/or clients
- Thinking about OHS for yourself and others
- MOST SAFETY IS SIMPLE, IT JUST ISNT DONE!



Range of risk on enterprises

- Varies between different enterprises
- E.g. on large animal properties major risk may be vehicles while major risk in animal welfare may be bites/needle sticks
- Risk = likelihood * severity
- E.g. if an event occurs once every ten years but always results in death then serious issue, if event occurs monthly but requires hospital also a serious issue
- Want to reduce frequency and severity

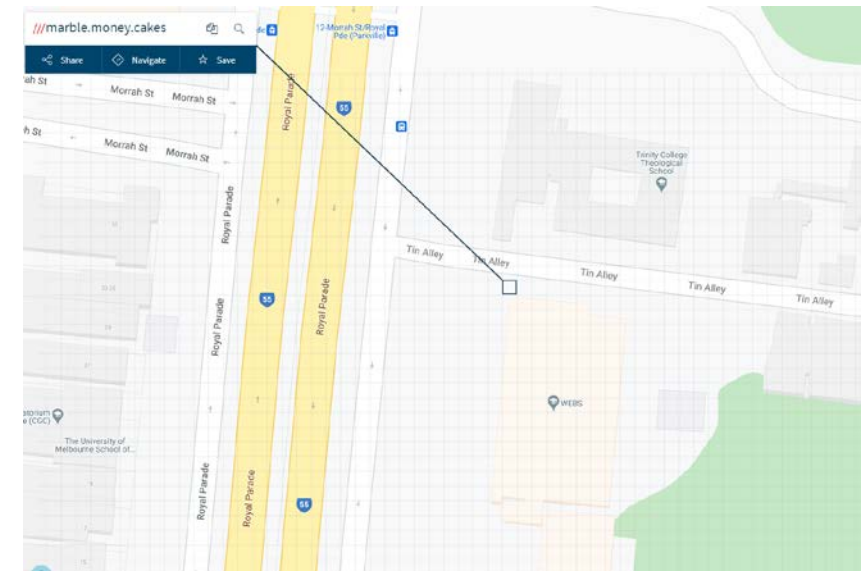


Before you go

- Research
- Emergency gear



- Download apps such as what 3 words or other emergency app (if no GPS you should know address/location)



Emergency gear

- Always carry a basic medical kit with you in case you need it
- Ensure you know what facilities are available on the enterprise, where they are and how you can access them if you need to (no time to be checking this if trying to solve an emergency)
- Location of nearest medical assistance



Basic research

- Before you go to any enterprise you should complete basic industry understanding research
- Identify the main industry OHS/EHS issues before you visit any enterprise
- On arrival at property work with enterprise manager/instructor to understand likely risks prior to undertaking work
- Consider the type of animals you are working with and likely associated risks e.g. sheep jumping out end of race, cattle moving into raceway, dog/cat/bird bites, machinery injury etc



Getting to enterprises

- A serious risk can be in travel to enterprises
- General car travel
- Gravel roads
- Long distance – TAKE A BREAK EVERY 2 hours (at least) and keep hydrated (no alcohol)
- Drive at speed for road conditions, NOT speed signs



Driving on roads

- Useful site <https://www.qld.gov.au/transport/safety/road-safety/driving-safely/driving-conditions>
- Unsealed road surfaces include gravel, sand or dirt. These surfaces can make your tyres lose traction with the road. You should decrease your speed when travelling on these roads and increase the distance between you and the vehicle in front.
- Weather can also affect driving conditions on unsealed roads. Some examples of how weather affects your driving include:
 - dry weather can create dusty conditions and limit your visibility
 - wet weather can make roads muddy, slippery and boggy.



Driver training

- Defensive driving or safe driving courses are valuable tools to keep you safe when driving (wherever you may drive)
- Worthwhile investment if you intend to drive during your career (even if only a short commute to work)
- Range of courses available



Machinery

- Tractors and ATVs
- FEL
- PTO
- Augers
- Care with jewellery (remove it), loose clothing, long hair



Understand how things work/move

- Before you use ANY item of equipment you need to know how it works so can anticipate any of the most likely dangers e.g. never standing under FEL in case hydraulic pressure fails
- You should read AND understand any chemical labels that you are using AND apply any safety directions e.g. wearing gloves and full chemical suit where label says so. Instructions are there for a reason.



Infrastructure

- Yards
- Silo
- Haysheds
- Power lines “look up and live”
- Water storage/water courses



Chemicals

- Livestock/plant chemicals in particular
- Knowing MSDS and pubcris links
- READ package inserts PRIOR to use, follow safety directions
- Know where nearest medical centre is and time to get there
- We appropriate protective gear AS PER DIRECTION



Animals

- Learn animal behaviour really well, it will keep you and others safe. Use ALL of your senses ie. Don't be watching your phone in stock yards or wear ear piece
- Don't underestimate small animals (you get a really nasty bite from a Chihuahua or more particularly a cat!)
- Watch stock BEFORE entering yards, this should tell you a lot about the herd/flock
- Always check yard handling areas before using, ensure safe/solid etc



Zoonoses

- Are vaccinations needed prior (eg working with bats)
- Are there any potential zoonoses (e.g. Q fever)
- Reducing likelihood = standard prevention... wash hands before eating, reduce contamination etc



Weather

- This can be a major issue in Australia
- Sunburn & heat stroke
- Hypothermia
- Longer term sunburn = skin cancer (slip, slop, slap, seek, slide)
- https://youtu.be/Uy6_csWyYL4



Noise

- Engines
- Shearing plant
- Tractor
- Other
- Measure DB to check if ear plugs should be used (there is an app for that!)



Further reading

- A range of good resources exist on farm safety at <https://farmerhealth.org.au/>
- You should visit this site to review industry safety
- I also suggest you view each of the 4D farms and compile a list of the points that may be higher risk. This will help you do similar when you visit a farm in person as you need to learn and practice where EHS may arise
- <https://4dfarms.vet.unimelb.edu.au/>

