

SA200906 – 30/04/2009

## No seat • No belt • No ride

### Purpose

To alert employers, workers and the wider community of the hazards associated with travelling as a passenger in the back of utility vehicles, open tray style trucks or other farm equipment.

Traditionally, many properties throughout the Northern Territory have used the load space of utility vehicles to transport workers and others around the property/farm.



There have been a number of deaths and serious injuries resulting from this hazardous practice and as a result new laws were introduced under the *Traffic Act* on 1 January 2003 that make it illegal in the Northern Territory to ride in the back of all utilities, even those fitted with a roll-cage.

Under the *Workplace Health and Safety Act 2007*, Section 55, an employer must ensure (as far as reasonably practicable), that workers and others are not exposed to risks to health or safety arising from the conduct of the employer's business.

An employer must:

- Identify hazards; and
- Identify and assess the seriousness of risks resulting from the hazard; and
- Determine appropriate risk management measures.

The hazard of passengers travelling in the back of utility vehicles, open tray style trucks or other farm equipment where there is no seat and seatbelt fitted poses an unacceptable risk of serious injury and/or death and employers are required by law to take active steps to either eliminate or control these risks.

Employers should consider the following risk control options and implement measures to reduce the risk of death or injury:

- **Eliminate the hazard**  
Stop passengers travelling in the back of utility vehicles, open tray style trucks or other farm equipment where there is no seat and seatbelt fitted
- **Substitution**  
Purchase alternative means of transport that is designed for the purpose of safely transporting people
- **Engineered measures**  
Existing vehicles or equipment may be modified by an engineer to have additional seats fitted with seatbelts and a roll over protective structure.
- **Safety rules**  
Give effective safety induction and training to workers so that everyone understands; no seat, no seatbelt, no ride.

## General safety recommendations

You must identify all hazards from work, which may affect the health and safety of a worker, and any other person who could be affected by the work.

Conduct a risk assessment. The following are the principles for reducing injury risk in any workplace. They are also what the *Workplace Health and Safety Act* and Workplace Health and Safety Regulations require.

1. Elimination of the hazard
2. Substitution for a hazard of lesser risk
3. Other engineering measures to prevent injury
4. Safety rules
5. Personal protective equipment

The more effective controls must always be considered first. Best practice in OHS risk management will require a mix of the above measures, however consider that recommendation 1 is the highest form of control and recommendation 5 the lowest.

## Emergency communication

As work is often conducted remotely from the farm base, it is very important that you have an effective communication system between the workers and base, and that the location of where workers are going and the expected time to return is known. EPIRBs (Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacons) are in use in some larger enterprises. These signal an emergency and locate the position of a person in distress for emergency services.

## Legislative requirements

[Workplace Health and Safety Act:](#)

Section 55  
Employer's general statutory duty of care

[Workplace Health and Safety Regulations:](#)

**38 Hazard identification and risk assessment**

**39 Risk management**

## Further information

Additional information on this issue or other safety matters is available at NT WorkSafe:

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