RURAL AND REGIONAL SERVICES AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Inquiry into cause of fatality and injury on Victorian farms

Seymour – 14 April 2004

Members
Mr M. P. Crutchfield  Mr R. G. Mitchell
Mr B. P. Hardman     Dr D. V. Napthine
Mr C. Ingram         Mr P. L. Walsh
Mr J. M. McQuilten

Chair: Mr B. P. Hardman
Deputy Chair: Mr C. Ingram

Staff
Executive Officer: Ms K. Murray
Research Officer: Dr V. Koops

Witness
Mr G. Kurzman, farmer.
Mr KURZMAN — My name is Graham Kurzman, and my address is ‘Glenalvie’, Stotts Road, Wandong. I have come along for the committee’s inquiry into country football, but having listened to what is going on, I would like to say that I have had my fair share of accidents, I suppose you could say. I came out of Melbourne 15 years ago. In the first five years I was a large hobby farmer. I have my own farm and I agist on neighbouring farms. Basically what happened in my case was a lack of information and, I suppose you could say, complacency. I rolled my tractor, cut my finger off with a chainsaw and poisoned myself with chemicals — you name it! Since then I have done all the courses, such as farm chemicals courses, chainsaw course — the whole lot!

As I was listening to the previous speaker I thought that one of the problems was the cost involved. I do not think people are prepared to put money up front for the sake of safety, which is a pity. I currently work in an industry which is heavily involved in safety. We have a tool box meeting every morning. Since being involved in all that I can see where everybody should be going, but lack of training and ensuring that people do what they are supposed to do can make people quite complacent. You may not have the safety jacket on, and you think, ‘Will I go and get my helmet or my safety glasses?’ It does not matter what education you give people, they are their own bosses once they are on that land. The problem is there, and I am only giving suggestions as to how to help it out and try to do it. I do not where you are going to try to try and educate these people, because once you jump on that tractor you are your boss. Now I can see each time where I went wrong. I have not had an accident in the last 10 years, but in the first five years I can see exactly where I went wrong. It is basically because of my background training that I have got during the day time set-up.

The DEPUTY CHAIR — I thank everyone for coming and those who gave evidence. We will adjourn until 1 o’clock when we will continue with the inquiry into country football.

Committee adjourned.