

Media Release



27 October 2021

VFF call for urgent action on telehandler licence reform

The Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) says WorkSafe is prioritising compliance over safety by not providing adequate and fit-for-purpose telehandler training for farmers after the proposed reforms were shelved.

VFF President Emma Germano says after nearly three (3) years of patiently working with WorkSafe on the reforms, the decision to place it on the backburner and wait for National reforms is not good enough and puts farmers' safety at risk.

"I'm bitterly disappointed Worksafe have reneged on an undertaking to reform telehandler licencing."

"We have worked patiently with WorkSafe, participating in countless meetings, industry roundtables, reports and industry surveys, so for WorkSafe to suddenly turn around after three (3) years and say it is too hard, is a complete slap in the face."

"Safety isn't something that should be put on hold and it's alarming WorkSafe have decided to wait for National reforms, because it was too difficult."

Ms Germano added the current costly, time consuming and largely irrelevant training is doing little to equip farmers with the skills and knowledge they need.

"Victoria is one of only two (2) states that require both a crane and a dogmans license to operate a telehandler over three (3) tonnes with forks."

"Attaining a crane licence can cost several thousand dollars to complete and requires a number of days off-farm, yet it does little to specifically improve the capability and safety of telehandler operators."

"WorkSafe know this after their own reports found that the current licensing system is fundamentally flawed, but have chosen to do nothing."

"We are calling on Minister Stitt and WorkSafe to urgently reform Victorian telehandler licensing requirements to help allow farmers to come home safety after work," Ms Germano said.

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