

Welcome to a Special Edition of our newsletter. We hope everyone is keeping safe and well and complying with the rules.

AGCARD LAUNCH

We are thrilled to announce that the AgCard was officially launched by the Minister for Primary Industries and Water, the Hon Guy Barnett, at a special function on Thursday, 2 July, 2020.

AgCard is an essential new online portal that underpins workplace health and safety best practice and provides basic information as to workplace responsibilities.

The AgCard is not designed to replace on-farm inductions as each workplace is different, but instead encourage positive and proactive conversations around practical workplace health and safety habits and rural-relevant human resources matters.

The goal is to see less workplace health and safety incidents in the State's primary industries and to normalise constructive WH&S conversations and good behaviours.

Employees will be able to log into the AgCard through the Primary Employers Tasmania website, view a number of Safe Farming Tasmania videos, then proceed to answer questions to affirm they have viewed and understood the information. After completion, a certificate will be sent to the user to supply to current and future employers.



Ingrid Bradley and Joe Lawrence talk about their positive experiences using the AgCard

There is no cost for Tasmanian farm employers or employees to complete the practical training in year one, but a fee will be applied to all non-Primary Employers Tasmania members from year two.

Primary Employers Tasmania will be announcing shortly the appointment of a Project Officer. The Project Officer will present to schools and industry groups and provide online, over-the-phone and face-to-face support.

Primary Employers Tasmania is grateful for the generous grant provided by WorkCover, and the support of Fruit Growers Tasmania, Dairy Tasmania and Wine Tasmania. Thank you also to Eleanor and Marcus James from Junction Farm Equestrian Park for hosting the launch.



L-R: Joe Lawrence, of Meander, Ingrid Bradley, of Longford, Primary Employers Tasmania President Felicity Richards, WorkSafe Tasmania CEO Robyn Pearce, and Primary Industries and Water Minister Guy Barnett at the launch of Primary Employers Tasmania's AgCard

AWARD RATES OF PAY UPDATE

The Fair Work Commission has handed down its National Wage Case decision granting a relatively small increase to all award rates of pay. However, in recognising the impact of COVID-19 on industry, the increase will not take effect immediately, and for most awards has been deferred for several months.

In particular, the **Pastoral Award** and **Horticulture Award** increases will apply from **1 November 2020** and the **Wine Industry Award** increase will apply from **February 2021**.

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Primary Employers Tasmania will be providing updated wage schedules to members well before the increases come into effect. If anyone has any queries about their award please contact the office.

LUNCHTIME WEBINARS

Primary Employers Tasmania is delighted to introduce an exciting new interactive communication and learning tool for members – a bi-monthly webinar.

Every second Thursday of every second month, we will host a Zoom webinar on an important and relevant topic with an expert presenter.

This will give you an opportunity to learn the latest information and ask questions to ensure you and your business remain compliant and always achieving best practice.

The first 30-minute webinar will be on Thursday 9 July at 12.30pm. You can eat your lunch (with the microphone on mute!) and listen to Primary Employers Tasmania Executive Officer Andrew Cameron discuss the new award wage rates, annualised salaries, casual employees and the impact of a recent Federal Court decision, and provide a COVID-19 update.

Any person interested in attending this webinar should email pet@primaryemployers.com.au and we will send you the link.

Please mark in your diaries the following dates for 2020:

- **9 July at 12.30pm:** *Workplace Matters—with Andrew Cameron, Executive Officer, Primary Employers Tasmania*
- **10 September at 12.30pm:** *Making the Most of AgCard*
- **12 November at 12.30pm:** *Farm Safety Update – Are You Compliant? – with Phil Johns, Safe Farming Tasmania*
- **11 February at 12.30pm:** *Social Media Made Easy*

We look forward to welcoming you to our first Zoom webinar on 9 July.

MEMBER TRAINING

Thanks to a funding grant organised by Fire Up Coaching and Sarah Hirst Strategy, 28 members will be undertaking the Certificate IV in Leadership and Management.

The course will provide a great benefit to those who are in existing management roles, as well as those who aspire to take on leadership and management positions – both within their business and/or community, and others who would like to gain more confidence across a range of core areas.

EMPLOYMENT MATTERS – Farm Houses

Many producers have houses on their farms that are available for their employees to occupy. In some cases the owner charges a fee to the employee, in other cases it is provided without charge and forms part of the employment package.

It is very important that you document any such arrangement, and that the documentation reflects the agreement between the employer and the employee. The essential requirements are:

1. The occupation of the premises is tied to the employment, and therefore if the employment ends the employee vacates the premises.
2. How long the employee has to vacate the premises.
3. The agreement sets out who pays for services such as electricity, telephone, insurances.
4. Whether or not there is a security deposit to cover any damage to the property.
5. If there is no charge to the employee an acknowledgement that the value is to form part of the employment package.
6. The obligation on the employee to look after the property and surroundings and ensure that the premises are secure.

It should be noted that an arrangement for an employee to live in one of your houses is not a normal lease, but a right to occupy, and there is a significant legal difference.

Primary Employers Tasmania can help you draw up an appropriate agreement that protects the owner.

Andrew Cameron
Workplace Relations Director



HELP US GROW

We are launching a new competition for members. Whoever refers the most new members by 30 November 2020 will win a dozen bottles of premium Tasmanian Wines. Details are set out in the attached flyer.

OFFICE HOURS

Though the office is currently unattended we are still available to assist with all your workplace relations enquiries. Andrew can be contacted on 0407 200 909.

PRIMARY EMPLOYERS TASMANIA WEBSITE

Visit our new website here: www.primaryemployers.com.au

KEEP UP TO DATE

Don't forget to Follow us on Facebook at:

<https://www.facebook.com/primaryemployerstas>

Felicity Richards
President

