Safe Operating Procedures

SOP 05 – Mustering

**DO NOT** proceed in this operation unless appropriately instructed and permission to operate has been given.

**COMPULSORY PPE**

- Foot Protection Must Be Worn
- Protective Clothing Must Be Worn
- Sunscreen Must Be Worn

**AS NEEDED PPE**

- Dust Mask Must Be Worn
- Head Protection Must Be Worn

**PRE-OPERATIONAL SAFETY CHECKS**

1. Wear farm work boots.
2. Use sun protection when working outside (hat and sunscreen with long sleeved shirt and trousers).
3. Choose appropriate personal transport (e.g. motor bike, quad bike, four wheel drive vehicle or horse; if these are used the operator must demonstrate appropriate competency).
4. Wear appropriate PPE for chosen transport. (e.g. helmet)
5. Have clear instruction of the location of the mob/ flock/ herd to be mustered and the location they are to be taken.
6. Ensure gates are opened for the required route.

**OPERATIONAL SAFETY CHECKS**

**Mustering Cattle**

1. When mustering, consider the geography and terrain of the paddock, gateways, direction of travel so that cattle will move in the direction chosen.
2. Allow cattle to gather together in a loose bunch before attempting to move them in the required direction.
3. Stock generally move better uphill than down; into wind and normally handled in an anti-clockwise direction.
4. Yarding - cattle should always enter yards via the same entry point and leave by a separate exit gate at the other side of the yards. This will encourage cattle to enter the yard themselves.
5. Docile cattle should be moved through the yards with the stock person on foot.
6. Identification of flight and fright zones must be understood.
7. Cattle should not be overcrowded in yards.
8. Where mustering has caused physical exertion, cattle should be rested before drafting or handling.
9. Drafting - should be performed in specially designed drafting yards or through gates between yards. The excessive use of force is unnecessary.
10. The drafted animal must be able to see where it is to go (i.e. their ‘escape route’).
11. Visual driving aids such as flags are best used to direct cattle or block movement. Hard canes, whips and dogs should be unnecessary.

**Mustering Sheep**

1. Avoiding mustering mobs of ewes with very young lambs to prevent mis mothering.
2. Quietly move around the sheep to bring them together into a mob; as you do this, move to appropriate...
positions for optimum sheep flow.
3. Be aware of the effect of entering a sheep's flight zone and know where a sheep's balance point is.
4. Understand flocking behaviour, the usual direction of movement in the paddocks to be traversed, and be aware of any hazards in the area.
5. Trained sheep dogs may be required to assist movement of sheep.
6. Move the mob towards the yards by travelling behind or beside the animals to steer them whilst maintaining a constant walking pace.
7. Note that some dogs work by bringing the mob to the handler so it is necessary to move slowly ahead of the mob to the desired location as the dog controls the mob.
8. Do not rush the animals, and slow down when passing through gateways.
9. When the sheep reach the yards, it may be necessary to ensure that sufficient people/dogs are available to hold them together while they enter the yards.

Animal Safety
1. Avoiding mustering and moving stock long distance in hot conditions.
2. Schedule mustering for early morning in hot weather.
3. Allow the animals to rest and get water if conditions are hot or the animals show signs of heat stress.
4. Avoid moving weak or pregnant sheep too quickly or too far.
5. Avoiding overcrowding in yards that may cause smothering.

HOUSEKEEPING
1. Wash hands and exposed body parts thoroughly with soap and water after handling animals to prevent infection.
2. Always close gates; assess and report their need for repair.

SPECIAL NOTE

NO PERSONNEL ARE TO USE THIS EQUIPMENT PRIOR TO OBTAINING:
• COMPETANCY IN THE CORRECT USE OF THE EQUIPMENT
• READING AND FULLY UNDERSTANDING THE OPERATOR’S MANUAL
• READING THE STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE
• UNDERGOING THOROUGH PRACTICAL TRAINING WHILE PROPERLY SUPERVISED
• SUPERVISOR TO ENSURE SOP IS SIGNED OFF

All completed SOPs are to be recorded in TRIM Container A17/2181 utilising a TRIM license in your School/Business Unit. Completed SOPs are to be published on Safety Hub for ongoing utilisation.

Employee Name: __________________________________________________________

Employee Signature: ___________________________________ Date: ______________

Supervisor Name: __________________________________________________________

Supervisor Signature: ___________________________________ Date: ______________

This SOP should be used in conjunction with relevant machinery manuals and manufacturer recommendations.