

## BUILDING AN EFFICIENT WORKFORCE FOR HARVEST: EXPERT TIPS FROM PROCESSWORX

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As harvest season approaches, your workforce, like your machinery, needs to be well-prepared. A streamlined and compliant approach to hiring and managing staff will increase productivity and safety during this busy time. Whether you're hiring seasonal workers for the first time or refining your processes, staying compliant with HR and Work Health & Safety (WHS) legislation is key. Here are five essential steps to prepare your workforce for harvest, ensuring you comply with legal requirements while maximizing efficiency.

### 1. Employment Contracts and Documentation

Having a well-drafted employment contract is crucial for clearly defining the rights and obligations of both the employer and employee. Under the Pastoral Award, every employee must have a written employment contract. The contract should detail key terms such as pay rates, hours of work, accommodation, and vehicle usage. Employment contracts also provide clarity and help resolve disputes about pay and entitlements.

Having the right paperwork in place is essential for both HR and WHS compliance. Make sure you prepare:

- **Employment contracts** that outline the terms of work.
- **Fair Work and Casual Employment Information Statements** to inform employees of their rights.
- **New Employee Checklists** to ensure all paperwork is completed before the first day, such as tax and superannuation forms.
- **Induction Checklists** to confirm that HR and WHS policies have been communicated, including machinery training, farm rules, and accommodation details.

### 2. Individual Flexibility Agreements (IFA)

Due to the seasonal nature of farm work, payroll processes can be complex. An Individual Flexibility Agreement (IFA) allows you to tailor the terms of the award to suit your farm's unique needs, such as paying a flat rate instead of calculating allowances and penalties separately.

An IFA simplifies payroll, but it must comply with the Better Off Overall Test (BOOT), ensuring that employees are not worse off than they would be under the award. Failing to meet this requirement could result in penalties, so be sure to calculate the flat rate carefully and document everything in an IFA.

### 3. Inducting Workers

Inductions help employees adjust quickly, reducing confusion and downtime. As an employer, you are legally obligated to provide this training. Your induction should cover the farm layout, machinery, accommodation, emergency procedures, and HR and WHS systems. Checklists and online tools can streamline the process, ensuring all employees understand their responsibilities and are ready to perform their duties safely and efficiently from day one.



### How ProcessWorx can help your business:

With over 10 years of experience working with small businesses, ProcessWorx knows the importance of understanding and protecting your business from ongoing changes to the Industrial Relations landscape, while ensuring you remain compliant.

If you need assistance implementing any changes in your business or would like a review of your current workforce planning and contracts, please contact ProcessWorx and they can assist you with your IR compliance.

If you would like more information about Industrial Relations for your business, please contact ProcessWorx on **(08) 9316 9896** or email **enquiries@processworx.com.au**

Your farm should have a documented system in place for reporting incidents and hazards. Make sure all workers are trained on the equipment they'll be using and are aware of emergency protocols, and document that you have conducted this training. Holding regular safety meetings not only ensures compliance but also reinforces a culture of safety on your farm

### ProcessWorxShield: Your HR & WHS Solution

Our cloud platform, ProcessWorxShield, simplifies HR and WHS management, providing access to essential documentation, training modules, and compliance tools. Through the platform, you can manage your workforce's records, track legislative changes, and ensure compliance with both HR and WHS laws.

The integrated Employee Kiosk allows for easy access to training and data management, ensuring your team is ready for the season ahead.

Prepare your workforce for harvest with ProcessWorx and set your business up for success!

## 4. Staffing and Budget Planning

Before hiring seasonal workers, assess how many employees you will need and what skills are required for the job. Create detailed position descriptions to clarify expectations for both casual and full-time roles.

It's also important to budget carefully for staffing costs, including:

- **Remuneration:** Ensure that your pay rates comply with the BOOT if you are using a flat rate.
- **Accommodation:** Provide safe, suitable accommodation if required, and decide whether you'll charge rent or include meals as part of the employment agreement.
- **Recruitment Costs:** Factor in expenses for advertising or engaging a recruitment agency if needed.

## 5. WHS Compliance and Safety Meetings

Agriculture is a high-risk industry, and ensuring compliance with WHS legislation is essential. Before harvest begins, hold safety meetings with your team to review key procedures, update your risk register, and ensure everyone is aware of their responsibilities.

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