

# Toward a National Framework

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November 17, 2008

14<sup>th</sup> CASA Conference and Annual General Meeting

# **Advancing Agricultural Safety**

## **Synthesis Report**

October 22 - 24, 2008

**Prepared by RANA International Inc.**

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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**INTRODUCTION ..... 1**

- Background ..... 1
- Objective ..... 1
- Third Party Neutrality ..... 1
- On the Use of this Report ..... 1

**ELEMENTS OF A NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR FARM SAFETY ..... 2**

- 1. Infrastructure Development..... 2
- 2. Information and Knowledge Transfer ..... 3
- 3. Relationship Building ..... 4
- 4. Research ..... 4
- 5. Measurability..... 4
- 6. Programs ..... 5
- 7. Resource Management..... 8

**CONCLUSIONS ..... 9**

## Introduction

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### Background

The 14<sup>th</sup> CASA Conference and Annual General Meeting were held between 22 and 24 October 2008. This Synthesis Report, entitled **Advancing Agricultural Safety – A National Framework for Farm Safety** represents the general consensus of the participants on a number of issues, in particular:

- The stakeholders' passion for improving farm safety at all levels on a national basis
- The leadership role that CASA should play in the promotion of national farm safety;
- The measurability of results of collaborative projects;
- The desire for improved communications across the broad range of stakeholders;
- The diversity and quality of the programs being implemented across Canada.

### Objective

The objective of this Synthesis report is to summarize the ideas and demonstrate the consensus arrived at during the CASA Summit.

### Third Party Neutrality

This Synthesis Report has been written by Paul Cormier, Vice President, Research and Development of RANA International in the role of a neutral third party for the purpose of establishing a national direction for farm safety in Canada. The words used in this Synthesis Report were drawn from the Conference As It Was Heard Report.

### On the Use of this Report

This Synthesis Report is designed to act as a framework for:

- Modifying CASA's and stakeholder strategic or business plans aimed at achieving national consistency in farm safety initiatives;
- Providing the basis for resourcing key priority initiatives in farm safety;
- Improving communications among stakeholders,
- Increasing the numbers of stakeholders in national farm safety; and
- Improving the diversity of the stakeholder involved in the national farm safety movement.

# Elements of a National Framework for Farm Safety

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## 1. INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

### *Background*

Infrastructure Development relates to the flow from national, to provincial and regional, to the producer level.

### *A Common National Plan*

- There is a need to develop and manage a common national plan with clear and consistent objectives that all stakeholders, e.g. provinces, agri-business, industries and individual stakeholders can buy into while respecting the diversity of regional needs.

### *CASA as an National Umbrella*

- CASA becomes the umbrella for its stakeholders, the provinces, agricultural organizations, the federal government, i.e. all those who share in the responsibility for farm safety; it will be important for each province and region to have some form of representative body, e.g. a committee, linked into the national strategy, implying:
  - The development of a farm safety infrastructure in each province;
  - The establishment of a global target for the national organization;
  - The assurance of required financial resources;
  - CASA reaching out for national industry support;
  - CASA partnering with the Association of Workers' Compensation Boards of Canada to improve programming.
- CASA should provide a model of how other provincial and regional groups can be structured to assist in starting up organizations that don't yet exist
- There is a need to conciliate a focussed approach nationally with provincial regional initiatives. For example, there may be the opportunity to have a coordinated approach that has different provinces focus on separate issues, for example, Alberta for livestock handling, Saskatchewan for tractor rollover, Manitoba for PTO usage. This may include the identification of a regional or provincial champion for each approach, supported by CASA through seed funding
- The National Framework for Farm Safety should clearly identify provincial and regional roles in terms of the national role and confirm CASA's role in advocacy of farm behaviour in safety
- CASA would provide a checklist for such activities as :
  - Information, central clearing, evidence based – Canadian content
  - Information re: a campaign needs to be available at least 6 months in advance

- CASA to work with provinces with no safety groups to identify a body or a group and provide them with resources, information and data
- Funding resources to allow provinces without internal resources to fund campaigns

## **2. INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER**

### ***A National Repository of Resources***

- CASA uses technical means to improve involvement, communications and feedback, e.g. “webinars”, an improved newsletter, etc.
- CASA becomes the objective and non-partisan portal and gatekeeper for the many safety organizations operating in farm safety and develops a national data gathering process with a centralized database of information, best practices, models, materials and resources for farm safety, aimed at reducing duplication and rework; this should include accurate statistically based information, benchmarks, proper evaluation methods and easy access to information by users.
- CASA would coordinate the identification of trends in farm accidents, e.g. how many are there, who is involved, what happened to them and when the accident occurred.
- CASA would ensure that stakeholders know what initiatives CASA is involved with, e.g. a listing of projects and products developed by CASA and make available the inventory of all of the national programs currently underway.

### ***Communications Strategy***

- There is a need to establish a robust National Communications Strategy that includes different means to access different groups, e.g. the media to access the general public; CASA needs to have a link with the organizations operating in regions and provinces to understand regional issues and how they are being dealt with, aimed at informing the National Communications Strategy.

### ***Branding***

- CASA can play the lead role in branding farm safety, with high level messages that are meaningful enough for each province to build upon.

### ***Website Management***

- The CASA website can be used to share contacts, resources, programs, projects, calendars of events, speakers’ lists, i.e., communicate more effectively and effectively in getting farm safety messages out; this includes ensuring the availability of website links to all of the organizations involved in farm safety.

### ***Newsletter***

- The quarterly newsletter to members should be produced with input from all regions

### 3. RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

#### *Stakeholder Identification and Gathering*

- There is a need to identify all of the stakeholders in national farm safety, e.g. through an inventory of groups and organizations and to ensure that they are represented at the national table, e.g. increased involvement of agribusiness, the industry and of producers through relationship building and management

#### *Sustaining Contact with Stakeholders*

- CASA and stakeholders need to multiply the opportunity for face to face gatherings of the stakeholders, even if “face to face” means participating in a web conference.
- Stakeholders need to continue with the annual CASA Summit on Farm Safety as the means to share experiences, discuss differences and arrive at nationally consistent solutions.

#### *CASA Promotion*

- All stakeholders in national farm safety should promote CASA as the means to achieve national consistency and measurability of achievement and work in a collaborative network

### 4. RESEARCH

#### *Best practices*

- CASA and its stakeholders should compile the Best Practices in farm safety for Canada and also for other jurisdictions, e.g. the US and UK.
- CASA and its stakeholders should continue to find resources to fund engineering studies aimed at making equipment safer for farm users.
- CASA and its stakeholders should provide for a focus on innovative ways of: 1) reaching the clients for farm safety programs; 2) developing new approaches for producers to use in achieving their farm safety goals.

### 5. MEASURABILITY

#### *Best Practices*

- There is a need to ensure that farm safety programs are evidence-based, e.g. the application to agriculture of child evidence safety education from Europe.
- Stakeholders could take advantage of existing injury prevention strategies from other sectors and countries and use ideas that transfer well to agriculture.

#### *Standards Development*

- CASA can also become involved in the development of standards and involve and engage stakeholders in follow through with the support of standards organizations, i.e. the CSA.

## ***Benchmarking***

In order to set up measures, there is a need to set up benchmarks that provide a base line for moving forward.

## ***Measures***

- Wherever possible, all stakeholders working on national, regional, provincial and local farm safety programs should provide measures of their effectiveness.
- Statistics for farm safety should measure:
  - CASA's effectiveness as an umbrella in nurturing national comprehensive programs in farm safety;
    - Regional and provincial effectiveness in developing and managing regional programs in farm safety;
      - Smaller local association effectiveness in reaching the producer;
        - Primary producers' implementation of programs, e.g. a Farm Safety Plan

## **6. PROGRAMS**

### ***Development of a National Farm Safety Management System***

- There is a need for a wide, encompassing approach, for example a CASA-led National Farm Safety Management System (SMS) within which provinces and regions can operate and aim at some national targets, e.g. reduction of % of farm injuries.

### ***Focus on the Producer***

- Stakeholders should keep the focus on bringing farm safety information to the producer with special attention to how it affects the farm directly, e.g. in the economics of the farm.

### ***Program Clients***

- There is a need to pay attention to youth programs, e.g. providing evidence-based education to the younger generation of producers, who are in a position to change the culture of farm safety.
- There is a need to educate health providers and doctors, e.g. dealing with stress and fatigue, understanding symptoms and relating these to the risks in the farm operation.

### ***Issues and Project Management***

- CASA can facilitate the identification of a limited set of issues or projects to focus on with the collaboration of stakeholders, e.g. during Safety Week.

**Emphasis on Successful Programs**

- There should be a fundamental understanding of what has worked well in the past, what hasn't and how to build on such success stories as:
  - Disabled farmer testimonials and quotes that eliminate the “can't happen to me” syndrome
  - Radio announcements to the public about equipment on the road raises awareness for both producers and the public
  - Hospital visits and peer support create more spokespeople on behalf of farm safety
  - Trade show booths and a presence at public events that increase awareness of safety on the farm
  - School programs and presentations to both rural and urban schools that involve children
  - Farm safety days and camps that allow for hands-on involvement with smaller groups with better results
  - On farm assessments that allow for working with farmers to self identify their own farm safety plan
  - Farmer safety contests that highlight the issues and financial incentives and position the media
  - Financial incentives for the farm that increase participation and affect the producer's bottom line
  - Individual help and coaching that allow for reaching the target audience directly, one producer at a time, with annual follow up
  - Rewards, i.e. financial incentives that provide positive motivation to producers, e.g. the Quebec Mutuel de Prévention program
  - Media workshops that change the language and approach of media reporters
  - News Canada that provides correct information on stories that can then be inserted into local newspapers
  - Internet access to international information that puts stakeholders and partners in touch with what is being done elsewhere
  - Appealing to the family on a personal level, thus bringing the story of farm safety to the home
  - Equipment safety modifications (required by law) that deliver effective ways of avoiding accidents, for example, with tractors
  - Peer- based learning that is effective because it is done by colleagues of the producer

- Organizing collaborative sharing of best practices that allows for producers to learn from peers

### **Program Priority Ideas**

- The following are ideas that deal with building on successes and focussing in on some critical few priorities:
  - Equipment and machinery safety and maintenance: breakdown management, PTO, crush, safety guards
  - Chemicals – clean-up after use, cloths, safety equipment, handling
  - Time management
  - Behaviours: fatigue, stress, complacency, etc.
  - Support network
  - Temporary foreign workers/ employees
  - Employee/ employer roles and responsibilities
  - HR process (family and employees)
  - Communications
  - Environmental risks
  - Farm safety plans and risk management
  - Confined space – detection equipment, ventilation
  - The economics of safety
  - Due diligence – responsibility, training, more legal financial, awareness and protection and participation, motivation
  - Child safety – parents, community, grandparents, schools, guardians farm and owner/ operator, EMS
  - Drowning/ suffocation – water, grains
  - Livestock handling
  - Fire
  - Farm women
  - Muscular skeletal disorders
  - Falls
  - Chemicals
  - Rollover protective structures
  - First aid/ farm response
  - Utilities infrastructure
  - Rural-farm interface

- Interface: farm/ health/ environment

### ***Top Program Priority Ideas***

- Farm Safety Plans
- Economics of Farm Safety
- Machinery Safety
- Farm level behaviours, e.g. dealing with stress, complacency, fatigue, etc.

## **7. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

### ***Funding Strategy***

- There is an overwhelming need to establish a robust Funding Strategy for CASA that ensures continuity of initiatives and projects, e.g. improved membership, sponsors and partners drawn from government and agri-business; this would enable CASA to distribute to all provinces equally and equitably and to fund necessary research and programs.
- Core funding is needed, e.g. from WCBs so that CASA can be the strong presence to deliver information and help other provincial groups to get established.
- Funding also needs to enable multi-year projects e.g. NB, Nfld, NS focus on developing safer berry harvesting equipment.

### ***Resource Sharing***

- There also should be a provision for collaboration with the objectives and initiatives of the National Injury Prevention Strategy and collaboration on resources that can be shared and that do not need to be duplicated by a province or region.

## Conclusions

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The following conclusions may be instrumental in the development and implementation of a National Framework for Farm Safety:

1. There is a strong consensus that CASA needs to play a national leadership role as:
  - A repository of information, materials, best practices, models, and resources;
  - A source of resources for the development and implementation of farm safety programs;
  - A facilitator of national infrastructure development and collaboration among the many partners and stakeholders who are, or should be, involved in promoting and nurturing safety on the farm, including development and rollout of common branding across Canada.
2. There is an equally strong consensus that CASA needs to be supported by its partners and stakeholders on an equal basis, i.e. ensure that CASA is not expected to do everything.
3. There is overwhelming concern over adequate funding for CASA as the national body representing the interests and needs of partners and stakeholders involved in farm safety: there is a need for core, multi-year funding tied to benchmarking and performance measures.
4. There is a great deal of commitment among the stakeholders for collaboration and economy of scale, including the desire to communicate heavily through various means, whether face to face or electronic.
5. There is a clear message that CASA, with the help of its stakeholders, needs to swell its ranks of stakeholders and partners, including those agencies that may also provide stable funding to the national organization.