

1 March 2010

## **Another tractor death in regional Victoria**

WorkSafe Victoria is investigating the death of a man who died when a tractor he was driving tipped over in north-east Victoria yesterday.

The man, aged in his 20s, had been moving bee hives at Bruarong, south of Yackandandah.

He was the second Victorian to die at work since Friday and the second in two weeks to die in a tractor-related incident.

The previous tractor-related death involved a farmer in his 70s who was found on 17 February after being run over on a property near Donald in the state's north-west.

The director of WorkSafe's Manufacturing, Logistics and Agriculture division, Ross Pilkington, said yesterday's incident was a warning to tractor operators and the people who employed them.

"Tractors are the single greatest contributor to workplace deaths in regional Victoria accounting for five lives in 2009.

"With two deaths already in 2010, it is essential that tractor safety is a high priority. They are large and powerful and when something goes wrong, exceptionally dangerous."

A major issue in regional areas is that people often work on their own or in isolated areas where it is hard to raise the alarm if something goes wrong.

"All together, this creates a highly-dangerous working environment which requires high levels of care by employers and workers.

WorkSafe's call is for people, whether or not you've used tractors for decades or done a job a thousand times, to review the way you use them, ensure they have rollover protection are properly maintained and, where possible, seatbelts are fitted and used."

There have been five work related deaths in Victoria this year, two in regional areas. At the same time last year there had been seven deaths, four in regional areas.

**WorkSafe media inquiries only:** Michael Birt 0411 256 605.