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PASTORAL INDUSTRY BULLETIN— FEBRUARY 2005

## **PROTOCOLS AND PROCEDURES FOR TRANQUILLISING RAMS.**

The following protocols and procedures for tranquillising sheep, especially Rams should be observed at all times.

A commonly used tranquilliser is Acepromazine, used extensively by Veterinarians as a 'pre operation drug for horses and other animals. The drug has a calming affect on the animal. There appear to be no long lasting effects caused to animals, provided the drug is used as directed. Another drug that may also be used is xylazine. Acepromazine and xylazine are restricted S4 Drugs, requiring prescription or dispensation from a Veterinarian.

### **Access to Tranquillisers.**

Drugs such as Acepromazine or xylazine are available only from Veterinarians. Because they are restricted drugs, by law, they may be dispensed only by veterinarians for use in animals considered to be under their care. Generally, this means, they can only be dispensed to *bona fide* clients of the Veterinarian, if the veterinarian has knowledge of the breed of sheep and the owner's suitability to use these drugs effectively and safely. For sheep owners who are not *bona fide* clients, a veterinarian may be consulted to visit the property, advise on the administration of tranquillisers and dispense the drug.

### **Administering the Drug.**

The drugs can only be administered by, or on the instruction of the dispensing veterinarian. Shearing Industry Employees, must not be permitted to administer the Drug.

### **Prior to Shearing, or Crutching.**

The tranquilliser should be administered to the animal, 20, to 25 minutes, prior to Shearing or Crutching. {By a Trained Person} The drug works best if animals can be left undisturbed during this period

### **During Shearing or Crutching.**

To avoid undue stress on the animal, the Sheep {Rams} must be handled with care. Shearers and shed staff must avoid handling tranquillised animals roughly.

### **After Shearing or Crutching.**

After the sheep {Rams} have been shorn or crutched, it is preferable to return the sheep {Rams} to the catching pen, or a pen within the shed. Exiting sheep, {Rams} down a long chute is not desirable. Tranquillised sheep, {Rams} should be left undisturbed for at least 2 hours after shearing or crutching.

Dogs should not be in the vicinity of the shed, while tranquillised sheep {Rams} are being handled.

For further information contact your local AWU Organiser or contact Sam Beechey, National Pastoral Coordinator, Australian Workers Union, on 0419 372 478

*Authorised by Bill Shorten, National Secretary, Australian Workers Union.*

**This Protocols and Procedures for tranquillising Rams has been produced by the Australian Workers' Union, with guidance and advice from Dr Hugh Millar, Chief Veterinary Officer for the Department of Primary Industries and Dr David Hucker, President, Australian Sheep Veterinarians. Their assistance is greatly appreciated.**