

## JUNE 2026 UPDATE

Welcome to Workplace Horizon's June 2026 update for SA Dairyfarmers' Association's members. We trust you find this update informative and useful. If you have any topic suggestions for future updates, please contact us. Your feedback is also welcome!

All updates are also now accessible on our website via [SA Dairyfarmers' Association - June 2026 Update](#)



### SADA'S 90<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

On Friday, 15 May 2026 we had the pleasure of attending SADA's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration dinner, a milestone event that brought together approximately 200 guests to honour almost a century of industry contribution and community connection.

Held in a warm and festive atmosphere, the evening was a true celebration in every sense. Guests were treated to a beautifully curated menu, where dairy naturally took centre stage, showcasing the richness and versatility of local produce. Special thanks to [Udder Delights](#), [La Casa Del Formaggio](#), [Fleurieu Milk Company](#), [The Yoghurt Shop](#), [La Vera Cheeses](#), [Golden North Ice Cream](#), [Barossa Valley Cheese Company](#) and [Foodland Supermarkets](#). Without doubt, the menu paid fitting tribute to the industry SADA has represented for generations.

Beyond the exceptional food, the evening offered a valuable opportunity to reflect on SADA's impressive history. Through stories and speeches shared throughout the night, guests gained insight into the organisation's evolution over the past 90 years, from its early beginnings to its current role advocating for and supporting the dairy sector in South Australia. It was a reminder of the resilience, innovation and collaboration that continue to shape the industry today.

It was a pleasure to connect with a range of attendees from across the agricultural and business communities, including the chance to meet with one of our valued SADA clients. Conversations throughout the evening highlighted the strong relationships and shared commitment that underpin this sector.

Events like this not only recognise significant milestones but also reinforce the importance of community and partnership. Congratulations to SADA on reaching this remarkable 90 year achievement and hosting a wonderful celebration. We look forward to seeing what the next chapter holds. We also made the Stock Journal! 😊 [South Australian Dairyfarmers' Association: 90 years leadership | Stock Journal | SA](#)



## PAYDAY SUPER REMINDER

As referenced in previous updates, from 1 July 2026, all employers are required to pay superannuation at the same time as wages or salaries, replacing the current quarterly model. Every ordinary pay cycle will trigger a seven (7) day deadline for super contributions to be processed and received by employees' super funds. If an employer misses the new seven (7) day deadline for super payments, the superannuation guarantee charge (the penalty for failing to pay super contributions correctly) will become payable immediately from the next calendar day, with daily compounding interest on the shortfall.

This is not a small change and the Australian Payroll Association advises that *"...it will affect payroll processes and cash flow"* and *"...it could cost the employer more on an annual basis, so [planning] should be done in plenty of time to ensure superannuation budgets for FY27 are accurate."*

The changes could lead to an increase in employee queries about super contributions and employers may consider updating the payslip format.



## ANNUAL WAGE REVIEW 2026

### Unions Up Pay Demand

The Fair Work Commission's (FWC) upcoming Annual Wage Review decision is due within weeks and will directly impact the wages of millions of Australian workers whose pay is set by awards.

Previously, unions had been arguing for a 5% Annual Wage Review increase for the nation's lowest-paid workers, but are now suggesting that a 6% increase is needed, as the ongoing conflict in the Middle East *"continues to tear"* into workers' living standards, and in light of the 2026 Budget forecast that inflation will hit 5% by mid-year, if not higher.

### Employers Urge Caution

Employers have continued to argue for restraint however have acknowledged that the energy crisis has simultaneously caused an inflation spike and undermined economic growth. Employers have proposed a 3.9% increase as a cautious and moderate approach.

*A separate member update will be circulated as soon as possible after the FWC releases its AWR decision.*



## WORKPLACE HEALTH & SAFETY

### Formal Safety Systems Matter More Than Ever on Farms

In many agricultural workplaces, work health and safety (WHS) has traditionally been learned informally. Knowledge is often passed down through experience, observation, and word of mouth. While this approach reflects the strong practical heritage of farming, it is increasingly being challenged by a clear reality - informal safety practices are no longer enough to manage modern farm risks.

### *The Reality: Farming Remains High Risk*

Agriculture continues to be one of the most dangerous industries in Australia, with consistently high rates of fatalities and serious injuries.

Common causes include:

- Vehicle and quad bike incidents (as reported in April and May member updates)
- Machinery entanglement
- Falls, trips and being struck by objects

At the same time, recent data highlights a worrying increase in incidents, reinforcing that existing approaches are not adequately controlling risk.

Relying on experience alone is not preventing injuries or saving lives.

### *The Problem*

Informal safety systems typically rely on:

- Verbal instructions
- “Common sense” decision-making
- Learning through observation or trial and error

While these approaches can work in low-risk environments, they create gaps in agriculture where:

- Work is high-risk and unpredictable
- Tasks involve animals, machinery, chemicals and isolation
- Workers may be seasonal, young, or inexperienced

Critically, informal systems:

- Are inconsistent across workers and tasks
- Depend heavily on memory and individual judgement
- Often fail under pressure, fatigue or distraction

Even experienced workers can make mistakes in a split second when attention lapses, despite having the right training and intentions.

### *Why “Experience” Isn’t Enough*

Modern WHS thinking recognises that incidents are rarely caused by a single unsafe act. Instead, they result from a combination of:

- Time pressure
- Fatigue
- Distraction
- Routine complacency

These are normal human behaviours, not failures.

However, informal systems assume people will “*just do the right thing,*” even under pressure. Formal systems, by contrast, are designed to support safe decision-making when it matters most.

### [What Formal Safety Systems Do Differently](#)

A formal WHS system creates a structured, repeatable approach to managing risk. It typically includes:

#### [Clear processes and documentation](#)

- Documented safe work procedures
- Induction and training checklists
- Defined roles and responsibilities

#### [Risk management frameworks](#)

- Identification of hazards
- Risk assessment and control measures
- Regular review and improvement

#### [Monitoring and reporting](#)

- Incident and near-miss reporting
- Safety audits and inspections
- Action tracking and accountability

### [Why This Matters for Primary Producers](#)

In primary producer enterprises, the risks are amplified:

- Animals are unpredictable and can cause serious injuries
- Facility design (yards, pens, raceways) directly affects safety
- Manual handling and repetitive tasks increase physical strain

Formal systems ensure:

- Workers understand animal behaviour risks
- Safe workflows are built into facility design and operations
- Controls are applied consistently—not just when someone remembers

### [The Cost of Getting it Wrong](#)

Beyond the human impact, poor safety systems result in:

- Lost productivity and downtime
- Workers’ compensation claims
- Staff turnover and skill shortages

- Reputational and legal risk

With agriculture already facing labour challenges, creating a safe, professional workplace is also critical for attracting and retaining workers.

### [Moving from Informal to Formal: A Practical Shift](#)

Transitioning doesn't require complex systems. It requires consistency and commitment.

Practical first steps include:

- Formalising induction processes for all workers
- Introducing simple risk assessments for routine tasks
- Keeping a basic incident and near-miss register
- Reviewing high-risk activities (machinery, livestock handling, confined spaces)
- Embedding regular safety conversations into team routines

### [The Bottom Line](#)

Informal safety practices have shaped farming for generations, but the complexity and risk profile of modern agriculture demand more.

Formal safety systems don't replace experience, they strengthen it.

They ensure that:

- Knowledge is shared, not lost
- Safety is consistent, not variable
- Decisions are supported, not left to chance

In an industry where conditions can change quickly and consequences can be severe, a structured approach to safety is no longer optional—it's essential.

***If your safety approach relies on informal practices now is the time to review it. Formalising your WHS systems could be the most important investment you make this year, for your people and your business.***

*Need help developing your safety systems? [Workplace Horizons](#) can assist.*



### [WAGE GROWTH MARCH QUARTER](#)

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has released the latest data on wage growth in Australia, showing it remained steady in the March 2026 quarter, led strongly by enterprise agreements.

- The Wage Price Index rose 0.8% in the March quarter 2026, remaining steady since the September quarter of 2025.

- Private sector wages rose 0.8% in the March quarter, while public sector wages increased 0.5% over the quarter.

According to the index, jobs with pay set by an enterprise agreement contributed 52% of wages growth, with the larger March quarter contribution driven by:

- Rises in state public sector agreements
- Jobs linked to the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) worker retention payment that shifted pay setting to meet grant conditions
- Regular private sector scheduled rises.

Healthcare and Social Assistance industry made the largest contribution to wages growth, with a 0.7% increase for the quarter.

A major Commonwealth-funded initiative in the Early Childhood Education and Care workforce saw wage rises paid in the private sector for that industry, while Queensland hospital health care workers were the main driver of public sector growth.

### State/Territory Growth

- The Australian Capital Territory registered the highest quarterly growth in wages at 0.8%.
- The lowest quarterly wage growth was recorded in New South Wales, South Australia, and Western Australia at 0.4%.

### Annual Growth in Wages

- Annual growth in wages was 3.3%, a slight decrease from the 3.4% recorded in the December quarter of 2025, according to the ABS.
- Annually, public sector wages grew at a faster pace than the private sector for a fifth consecutive quarter, but the gap has narrowed substantially.
- Annual private sector wages rose 3.2% in the year to March quarter 2026, slightly lower than the 3.3% recorded in the same time last year.

In the public sector, wages grew 3.3% in the year to March 2026, also slightly lower than the 3.6% reported in the same period last year.

On a state and territory basis, the Australian Capital Territory logged the highest annual growth at 3.7%, while the Northern Territory recorded the lowest at 2.3%.





- Cows can recognise and remember faces, human and herd mates alike, for years.
- South Australia has nearly 200 dairy farms and around 65,000 dairy cows in production at any given time.

**Do you have a 'Did You Know' or 'Fun Fact' to contribute?**

Please email Robynne at [robynne@wphorizons.com.au](mailto:robynne@wphorizons.com.au)

If you have any questions regarding this newsletter or we can assist with your 'people needs', please don't hesitate to contact us:

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**Don't forget to check out our new website!**  
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