

## Work environment – Rural safety

15.04.10

# Rollover protective structures (ROPS) >

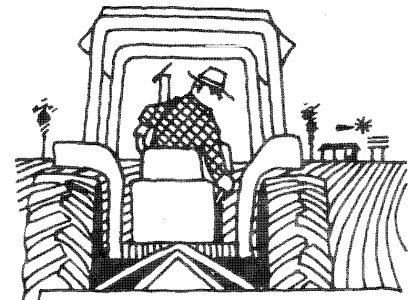
**This bulletin outlines some simple safety guidelines for those working in the rural industry and is one of a series on Rural Industry safety.**

The Advisory Standard [AS 1636](#) 'Tractors – roll-over protective structures – criteria and tests' advice on how to manage injury risks associated with rural plant. Listed below is a summary of the requirements about the fitting of ROPS.

## Tractor supply

In Queensland there are no exemptions for the fitting of ROPS on new tractors weighing more than 560kg. In fact, any new tractor for which there is an approved roll-over protective structure should have one fitted at the point of sale.

**Second hand** tractors greater than 560kg should also be fitted with an approved ROPS where practicable. Approved ROPS in a fixed or fold-down format are available for most tractors manufactured in the past 30 years.



In the following circumstances it may not be practicable to supply a tractor with an approved ROPS:

- where the tractor was not designed to have a ROPS fitted;
- where there is no available approved ROPS for the tractor and it would be cost-prohibitive to have one manufactured;
- where the tractor is being traded in to a tractor dealer.

In a situation where a tractor does not have a ROPS fitted at the point of supply, the purchaser should request of the supplier a written statement as to the capacity of the tractor to have a ROPS fitted (eg no approved ROPS may be available for that model).

## Tractor owners

All tractors weighing more than 560kg, for which a ROPS has been manufactured, should only be operated if a ROPS has been fitted.

In some instances it may not be practicable to operate the tractor with an approved ROPS fitted, as the farming task will not be able to be performed satisfactorily. For example, when used under trees or in a place too low for a tractor to work while it is fitted with a ROPS. However the ROPS may be lowered or removed for the period the tractor is used in such a situation. In this case the employer should ensure that the tractor is operated with due care.

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## **ROPS supply**

ROPS are available from your local tractor dealer. They range in price from \$500.00 upwards. Major wholesale suppliers of ROPS in Queensland are: Bare-Co and Flatford Tractor Frames.

## **Home-made frames**

A home-made frame is not an approved ROPS unless it has been tested under stress by a ROPS testing centre. A rigid frame while being strong enough to withstand a roll-over may break the mounting bolts on the tractor, or may suddenly fracture rather than yield, providing little protection to the operator during a roll-over.

## **Common questions asked about ROPS**

***I am a supplier. I have a 1926 tractor for sale in my yard for which there is no available approved frame. Can I still sell the tractor?***

The tractor may still be sold without a ROPS fitted as the tractor was not designed to have an approved ROPS fitted. The supplier should provide a written statement to the new purchaser about non-availability of an approved ROPS. The tractor should be operated with due care.

***I have a very old tractor which I rarely use. Do I need to have a ROPS manufactured to fit the tractor?***

The owner may decide that it is not practicable to have a ROPS fitted to the tractor, on the basis that the manufacture of the ROPS would be cost prohibitive. However, the owner/operator should operate the tractor with due care on those occasions when it is used.

***I am using a tractor as a trade-in to a dealer. Do I need to fit a ROPS before sale?***

No. The dealer should have an approved ROPS fitted before re-selling if an approved ROPS has been designed for that model of tractor.

***I am using my tractor for horticulture. Do I need to fit a ROPS?***

Tractors used for horticultural purposes are now covered by the Workplace Health and Safety legislation. Therefore the same conditions apply to tractors used in other workplaces. Where practicable, all tractors weighing more than 560kg for which an approved ROPS has been designed should have a ROPS fitted. If it is not practicable to operate the tractor with an approved ROPS, the employer should ensure the tractor is operated with due care. Fold-down ROPS were designed to use in horticulture and sheds.

***Can I copy the ROPS frame/design of my neighbour's tractor which is the same model as mine?***

Approved ROPS frames have undergone a destruction test which ensures that they will protect the operator in the event of a roll-over. A home-made frame while being strong enough to withstand the roll-over may break the mounting bolts on the tractor and not provide adequate protection to the operator. It is desirable that only approved ROPS be fitted to tractors.

***Can I lower the height of the ROPS so that I can fit the tractor in my shed?***

You should not interfere with an approved ROPS construction as it will affect the performance of the ROPS in the event of a roll-over. Likewise you should not weld attachments to a ROPS. Tractors and is one of a series of twenty five on Rural Industry safety.

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