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# Intervention strategies for the retro-fitment of Rollover Protective Structures (ROPS) and fleet characteristic, farm tractors

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## Abstract

Retro-fitment of Rollover Protective Structures (ROPS) on old tractors continues to be a priority for farm safety in Australia. Methods: A state wide (New South Wales (NSW), Australia) random postal survey asked farmers about awareness of, attitudes to and barriers to fitting ROPS; age and number of tractors with/without ROPS on their farm; and considerations when purchasing a tractor. Results: In NSW there are 2.5 tractors per farm ranging from new to 79 years of age (average 17 years) of which 0.4 per farm do not have a ROPS (18 430 tractors). People who knew of someone who had been injured or killed in a tractor rollover were 3.6 times (CI<sub>95%</sub> 3.1–4.2) more likely to have all their tractors fitted with a ROPS. Those who thought ROPS were effective or knew it was a legal requirement were 1.5 (CI<sub>95%</sub> 1.2–1.8 and 1.4–1.7 respectively) times more likely to have all their tractors fitted with a ROPS. Some of the barriers to fitting a

ROPS were cost, availability of a ROPS and making ROPS a priority. The three most common considerations for farmers when purchasing a tractor are size, jobs to be undertaken and cost with safety coming in fourth. Ideas that were considered useful in prompting farmers to fit a ROPS were threat of fine or prosecution, increased awareness and high rebates. Discussion: As the average age of the primary working tractor is 17 years, any new tractor safety measure will have a long latency period if there is not some sort of retro-fitment. To increase retro-fitment rebates are a useful strategy. Any retro-fitment campaign needs to ensure that they create a need for the safety item and have addressed the barriers.



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## Keywords

Rollover protective structures; Safety; Retro-fitment; Awareness; Tractor

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