

Mobile Shearing Trailers

A new innovation in the area of wool harvesting has been the establishment of a new generation of Mobile Shearing Trailers (MST's). These are mainly originating out of Esperance, WA.

They vary in size from two stands to six and either on tandems or tri axles. They have an elevated race behind the shearer so there is no drag required. They are essentially a raised board shed with all the attendant features and a few more. The two pictures below demonstrate MST's in operation:



An early four stand version of MST at work



A more recent version of an MST

The trailer can be positioned for use inside an existing shed or outside and attached to the yards. They all carry light portable yards for lead up races and holding/forcing pens. Existing sheds and yards are employed for sheep cover. One stand has two plant brackets to accommodate a left handed shearer or to be used for an extra shearer.

Weights vary according to design. Common units are 7.9 metres (26 foot) long total, 6 metres (20 Foot) shearing board, and weigh less than 2 tonnes. All the sides fold up for travel.

The height of the board is adjustable and can be set a comfortable work height for wool handlers.

There are hangers put in place for all the shearers paraphernalia with an insistence that no flapping articles, sweat towels , or clothing are anywhere near the race.

“Catching Pens”

MST’s use “elevated Catching Races”. While it has been well documented in Australia that elevated races may work in the initial years of operation, that they become increasingly more difficult to load sheep into the race. However, several new innovations have been employed from the wealth of knowledge and experience gained by shearers whom have seen first hand what works and what doesn’t.

The subsequent improvements have the aims of:

- improve the work environment and improve the quality of life for the shearer by reducing the effort required to catch and drag heavy sheep to either crutch or to shear;

- reduce exposure to insurance claims; and
- increase productivity – and hence profits.

Lead Up Ramps

It has been found that if the interior of the lead up ramp and raceway are painted in a flat black paint sheep will enter the race and run better.

The flat black paint eliminates contrasts and glare on/off the walls of the race and there are no shadows cast. There is a decoy sheep at the head of the race so the lead sheep will draw to it. The head of the race is generally pointed in a direction of open ground so sheep can see an escape route. There is no preference for sheep entering the race from left to right or right to left as the plant can set up to accommodate both directions.



Interior of the race painted black and the head of the race acting as an escape route.

Productivity

It is claimed that twenty percent (20%) increases in productivity gains have been recorded.

MST's can be used as an alternative to building a new shed or where:

- Farmers are concerned their existing shed is not in a safe workable condition; or
- When the existing shed is too small or additional shearing capacity is required to finish a shed quickly.