

# Farm Rules: No Radio, No Work



## Emphasis on Safety

Karl Wright is manager of Te Tumu Paeroa Dairy Ltd Partnership, which includes Ouruwhero Farm, encompassing 360ha and stocked with 900 cattle. Wright's emphasis on worker safety meant the rollout of Vertex Standard 426CB two-way radios in August 2013, which are used for communication between management, workers, the milking shed and the homestead. The VX-426CB is approved for both CB and private channels, and therefore legally compliant.

## Safer and Greater Efficiency

Safety is just one benefit of the new equipment, says Wright.

**Greater worker safety:** "Employees work long hours, and by themselves for much of the time. The first requirement when you arrive at the farm is to get your radio, and no one is allowed to go around the property without it. The inspector at our annual audit was impressed by the way that it's mandatory for staff to carry them. He was going to push this approach at other farms."

"A new guy had been here two hours, and for his first job he went out into a paddock at 4am on a cold, wet night when he rolled the quad bike. He called via the radio and we had someone out there in four minutes. He'd tried his cell phone first but there was no coverage."

**Improved efficiency:** "I've no doubt it has improved efficiency. You can have team meetings all day and issue job sheets but – especially for new starters – they can only take in one or two things. Give them farm maps and they still get it wrong. Now if they're not sure they can call me or the 2IC immediately."

**Better productivity:** "If someone forgets a tool, it's very easy to call and ask someone to bring it out next trip. We used to have people driving around all day looking for each other, and coming back three or four times for forgotten stuff. I can see the benefits to the business and, in addition, workers are accountable for their time at work."

**Enhanced coverage:** "There are no black spots. On other farms without radios, they have to find a higher spot or where there is line of sight. We can even get coverage in the township 12 minutes away. I can stand in the farm supply store and hear 'We need x as well'. People are amazed!"

**Rugged gear:** "The handholds get exposed to weather but they're splash-proof and stand up to the treatment. They get pretty dirty but still work."

"Richardson Communications were brilliant. I haven't been satisfied with other companies or radios, but I could see that Mike wanted to make it work. He understands the farm and the necessity of good communication. He spent a lot of time driving all over checking the coverage, testing it in any tight gully he could find. I can call anytime with issues and someone will be straight out."

### Customer

Te Tumu Paeroa Dairy Ltd Partnership

### Industry

Agriculture

### Technology Partner

Richardson Communications

### Need

- Improved communications for worker safety

### Benefits

- Greater worker safety
- Improved efficiency
- Better productivity
- Enhanced coverage
- Rugged gear

**"We're getting through the work faster because we're not redoing work or chasing people we can't locate. The system has definitely increased productivity."**

Karl Wright, manager,  
Te Tumu Paeroa Dairy Ltd  
Partnership