



Change to the rules governing supply of quad bikes



The product safety standards that apply to the sale of new quad bikes have recently changed, and a couple of new requirements are now in operation.

Businesses that supply new quad bikes or all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) are now required to supply them with improved markings, and must fit them with Operator Protection Devices (OPDs) at the time of supply. The changes do not apply to second-hand quad bikes, and they must be fully implemented by 11 October 2021.

On rural properties, quad bikes are involved in more fatalities than motorcycles and more injuries than tractors. Many incidents are associated with rollovers. Based on current evidence, the single highest cause of fatalities involves general use quad bikes rolling over sideways, to the left or right, pinning the operator and causing crush injuries or asphyxiation.

Rollover risks increase when the quad bike rider crosses slopes, travels at high speed, tows attachments, drives over rocky or uneven ground or carries a heavy or unstable load, for example a chemical sprayer.

Between 1 January 2011 and 31 December 2018, there were 128 quad bike-related fatalities across Australia, 77 as the result of a rollover. At least 76 fatalities were due to unstable or uneven terrain, and 43 of the victims were aged 60 years and over. 14 victims were children aged 11 years or less.

The estimated cost to the Australian economy of quad bike fatalities and injuries is at least \$204 million per year.

There are several actions that can be taken to help prevent injuries and deaths involving quad bikes.

Firstly, critically assess whether a quad bike is the right vehicle for the job and if the rider is physically capable and appropriately trained. Consider other vehicles with rollover protection structures and seat belts as alternatives to quad bikes. A motorcycle might suit some tasks better.

Riders of all ages must always wear an approved helmet, and children should always be supervised and should never be allowed to ride an adult quad bike.

Towing attachments or carrying loads on the front or rear racks of a quad bike affect stability and handling. For example, liquid loads like spray tanks are particularly unstable as contents shift when cornering or traversing slopes.

Assess the terrain prior to using the quad bike. Rocky, steep, uneven, sandy or muddy terrain will greatly increase the risk of a quad bike rollover.

Most quad bikes are designed for one rider. Never carry a passenger on a single person quad bike.

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