

## Quad bikes and the workplace



### Details

Small off road vehicles such as four wheeled quad bikes (also known as all terrain vehicles / ATVs) have become a commonly used and integral part of many workplace systems in Australia.

Recent information shows there are, on average, 15 fatalities a year associated with using quad bikes in the Australian rural industry sector. Many more people are injured.

A recent coronial inquest into seven fatal incidents involving quad bikes (two in Tasmania and five in Victoria) has sparked a renewed call for improved safety on quad bikes.

As a result, Workplace Standards Tasmania has adopted a policy of zero tolerance of breaches of duty of care responsibilities with quad bikes.

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## Contributing factors

The recent coronial inquests highlighted a number of serious safety concerns, including:

- operating quad bikes without having attended certified training
- carrying or towing loads on terrain that is not level and flat
- riders not wearing helmets.

## Recommendations

If you are an employer, you have a duty of care obligation under the *Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995* to ensure:

- your quad bike is properly maintained and used according to the manufacturer's specifications
- all quad bike operators at your workplace have undergone training and wear protective gear.

The right quad bike, used by a competent person, in the right conditions, for the right task, can be an invaluable vehicle. But despite their name, quad bikes are *not* suitable for all terrains; nor are they suitable for all operators, all work tasks, or all conditions.

**Do** ensure all riders have been appropriately trained in the safe operation of quad bikes.

**Do** ensure an approved helmet is provided and worn at all times when quad bikes are operated.

**Do** ensure suitable clothing, which provides full skin cover, is worn at all times when quad bikes are operated.

**Do not** allow passengers on quad bikes unless the bike is designed for passengers and is fitted with an approved passenger seat.

**Do not** carry or tow loads on terrain that is not level.

**Do not** operate the quad bike other than in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications.

Training is essential to help reduce the risk of serious injury and death associated with using quad bikes. Training provides the operator with:

- improved safety awareness and skills
- knowledge to assess the capabilities of the quad bike and identify terrain it is not suitable for
- skills and knowledge in correct control techniques, load carrying and towing limits.

Training should involve skills assessment, where the operator demonstrates they have knowledge about the quad bike and its operation, and can use correct riding techniques.

If you would like further information contact Workplace Standards Tasmania on:  
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