

Safer quads means safer farms


National Farmers'
FEDERATION

We're supporting the adoption of greater safety measures for quad bikes, putting Australia on the path toward fewer deaths and injuries from quad bike accidents.

At a glance

- There were more than 240 deaths from quad bike accidents between 2001 and 2017.
- Over half of all quad bike accidents occur as a result of a rollover, which can cause riders to be crushed or asphyxiated to death.
- The ACCC recommends the fitment of CPDs and a five-star safety rating system.
- CPDs are of key importance, as they provide a 'crawl out' space for riders in the event of a quad rollover.
- Combined with other measures, the use of CPDs will lead to the greatest reduction in fatalities and injuries from quad bike accidents.

Between 2001 and 2017, there were more than 240 deaths from quad bike accidents. There were 12 fatalities in 2017 alone, with 11 occurring on-farm. Approximately 58% of quad bike deaths occur as a result of a rollover, which typically causes the quad rider to be crushed or asphyxiated to death. Each year, there are more than 650 hospitalisations as a result of quad bike accidents.

What is being proposed?

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) has conducted an investigation into quad bike safety. The ACCC recommends the fitment of crush protection devices (CPDs) on all new quad bikes, and the introduction of a five-star safety rating system assessing things like mechanical suspension and dynamic handling. The ACCC recognises the continued need to observe safety procedures when riding quads; however a focus on behavioural change, such as increased helmet use and rider training, has proven largely ineffectual in reducing quad-related fatalities and injuries.

Crush protection devices

For the NFF and other bodies supporting the ACCC's recommendations, the installation of CPDs on quads is of key importance. This is because:

- Combined with other measures, the use of CPDs will lead to the greatest reduction in fatalities and injuries from quad bike accidents.
- CPDs protect riders in the event of a rollover through creating a 'crawl out' space between the overturned quad and the ground.
- Quad bikes have a propensity to roll due to their high centre of gravity, so it is logical to have a protection measure such as a CPD in place in the event of a rollover.

What is the cost of CPD fitment on new quads?

While the fitment of CPDs will increase the manufacturing and retail cost of quads, this cost is negligible compared with the cost of taking no action. Currently, there's an estimated loss of **\$208 million per annum created by quad-related deaths and injuries**. This is excluding the intangible losses caused by grief and hardship.

How do we know they will work?

Between 2003 and 2011, there was an 87% reduction in fatalities from tractor accidents thanks to similar rollover protection devices. This figure is indicative of what might occur if CPDs are mandatorily fitted to all new quad bikes.

Support for changes and next steps

There are several entities which support the ACCC's recommendations, and want to see them adopted by federal government. The National Farmers' Federation and its members, Farmsafe Australia, the Country Women's Association of Australia, the Rural Doctors Association of Australia, and the Rural Health Alliance are just a few.

The Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries (FCAI), which represents the manufacturing sector, is the main body opposing the recommendations. In response to the ACCC's findings, FCAI has attempted to demonstrate the ineffectiveness and even *danger* of

CPDs, but their claims have been refuted through testing. Results from testing by the UNSW's Transport and Road Safety group are resoundingly in favour of the safety and effectiveness of CPDs. What's more, their testing shows that CPDs have minimal impact on the dynamic handling of quads, dispelling fears around the impact of CPDs on quad usability.

We are anticipating the release of the ACCC's final report on quads to federal government. In the meantime, we must demonstrate support for the changes and lead a united campaign to see the changes adopted at a federal level.

National Farmers Federation

14-16 BRISBANE AVE, BARTON, ACT

 02 6269 5666

 www.nff.org.au  @nationalfarmers

 www.nff.org.au



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