



### Work place regulators take a tough line on quad bike safety

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Australia and New Zealand are taking a tougher stance on quad bike safety, the body representing Australasia's work health and safety regulators has announced.

The Heads of Workplace Safety Authorities (HWSA) have endorsed measures aimed at leading to safety improvements across the quad bike and farm industries. The safety measures have been developed by a Trans-Tasman quad bike industry working group comprised of work health and safety regulators from Australia and New Zealand plus manufacturers, unions, automotive associations and farming associations.

Chair of the Heads of Workplace Safety Authorities (HWSA), John Watson, said the new safety measures were part of an ambitious industry strategy to reduce fatalities and injuries from on-farm use of quad bikes.

"According to Farmsafe Australia, since 2000, there have been more than 130 deaths on farms across Australia involving quad bikes while in New Zealand an average of five people are killed on farms each year and over 845 are injured," Mr Watson said.

"Most fatalities are a result of head injuries or from being trapped under overturned vehicles.

"Every single fatality has an immeasurable effect on families, friends and communities and it's clear that something needs to be done.

"That's why today we can announce that Australia's work health and safety regulators have committed to taking a tougher stance on farm quad bike safety.

"Across the Tasman, the Department of Labour launched its quad bike safety campaign along the same lines last November.

"A range of strategies have been developed that will involve working with the farming community to improve safety and reduce injuries and fatalities.

"While some of these measures may not be popular, we believe they are essential if we are to reduce the number of injuries and fatalities from on farm use of quad bikes."

The industry strategy includes:

- Improvements to point of sale material to guide farmers in purchasing the vehicle best suited to their needs and profile
- Providing farmers with the option to fit safety improvements such as devices to protect riders in case of a rollover, under certain conditions
- The introduction of nationally recognised rider training
- Guidance materials to assist in providing a better match between quad bike accessories and the host vehicle

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## Heads of Workplace Safety Authorities

Australia and New Zealand

- Compliance with manufacturers' guidelines in relation to passenger-carrying, load requirements and rider age, i.e. children do not operate adult sized bikes
- The mandatory wearing of approved helmets

“Manufacturers, suppliers, employers, employees, farming associations and regulators all have a role to play in improving quad bike safety,” Mr Watson said.

“This program supports the *National OHS Strategy 2002 – 2012* and is another example of Australian states and territories, the Commonwealth and New Zealand working together to develop a consistent approach to workplace safety.”

The industry strategy can be found on the Heads of Workplace Safety Authorities website [www.hwsa.org.au](http://www.hwsa.org.au).

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