



Workplace regulators launch pilot quad bike training package

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Australasia's work health and safety regulators will today launch a pilot quad bike training package as part of an ambitious industry strategy to reduce fatalities and injuries from on-farm use of quad bikes.

The pilot training package will be launched by the Heads of Workplace Safety Authorities (HWSA), at TAFE NSW-Western Institute, Dubbo College, Rural Skills Centre where teachers from six TAFE institutes will participate in a three-day pilot.

HWSA Chair and General Manager of WorkCover's Work Health and Safety Division, John Watson said the training package involved in-class and practical tuition and would be delivered by Registered Training Organisations (RTOs).

"According to the Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety, more than 97 per cent of two and four wheeled motorcycle riders on farms have never participated in a formal motorcycle training course," Mr Watson said.

"With more than 140 quad bike deaths on Australian farms since 2000 it's clear that there is a pressing need for improved training in on-farm use of quad bikes.

"Feedback from this week's pilot will provide vital insight into the final package which is rolled-out across Australia.

"Australasia's work health and safety regulators are committed to reducing the number fatalities and injuries from on-farm use of quad bikes and we believe this training package will play a major role in achieving this."

The quad bike training package provides practical-based training in quad bike checks and basic maintenance, safe bike handling, transportation, loads and towing, and quad bike safety on the farm.

On successful completion of the course quad bike operators will be awarded the national Unit of Competency *AHCMOM212A Operate quad bikes*. Assessment will be based around practical skills in quad bike handling and riding and demonstrating knowledge of how to use quad bikes safely on a farm.

Head Teacher at TAFE NSW Western Institute, Geoffrey Bastian said "TAFE Western welcomes the initial delivery of this quad bike training program for TAFE trainers from across NSW. TAFE NSW strongly supports this training initiative as a practical way to improve quad bike safety on farm and reduce the number of quad bike related fatalities and serious injuries."

NSW Farmers Executive Councillor Reg Kidd said the association supported increased training for on-farm use of quad bikes.

"There have been a number of incidents that possibly could have been avoided if the rider was better skilled in how to handle the quad bike equipment," he said.

"This training package will give farmers the opportunity to undertake training which provides them with the skills required to handle quad bikes in various situations and incorporate it into their safe work practices," Mr Kidd said.



Heads of Workplace Safety Authorities

Australia and New Zealand

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.

The safety measures are part of an industry strategy which includes:

- Improvements to point of sale material to guide farmers in purchasing the vehicle best suited to their needs and profile
- The mandatory wearing of approved helmets
- Providing farmers with the option to fit devices to reduce the likelihood of the rider being trapped under the quad bike in the event of a rollover;
- The introduction of nationally recognised rider training
- Guidance materials to assist in providing a better match between quad bike accessories and the host vehicle
- Encouraging compliance with manufacturers' guidelines in relation to passenger-carrying, load requirements and rider age, i.e. children do not operate adult sized bikes

The industry strategy supports the *National OHS Strategy 2002 – 2012* and can be found on the HWSA website www.hwsa.org.au

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