



# Safety Bulletin

May 2019

## Quad Bike Safety

Quad bikes (sit-on vehicles) and all-terrain vehicles (sit-in) have been involved in many serious incidents in agriculture and forestry. Head injuries are the most common cause of death.

The hazard is the activity of riding the quad bike. Operating them can be dangerous if you don't know what you're doing; they may not look it – but quad bikes are powerful and complex pieces of machinery. The rider needs to shift and use their body weight to control the bike. This is called 'active riding'.

Quad bike riding skills are not intuitive, and need to be learned through riding experience and training.

Riders who are unfamiliar with the particular quad bike or site terrain, and/or unskilled in the proper active riding techniques are at increased risk of injury.

Ensure quad bike riders have the knowledge, skills and training necessary to operate a quad bike safely, or are closely supervised until they are assessed as competent.

Recognise dangerous areas by establishing 'no-go zones' on forestry sites and safety plans and prohibit people from riding quad bikes in these identified areas of the site.

- Regularly review seasonal / weather effects on ground, identify preferred safe routes for quad bikes on different areas of the forest site, and maintain tracks;
- Encourage riders to adopt a 'safety first' and 'speed-appropriate' riding style. This includes getting into the habit of assessing the ground before choosing to ride over it – and if they are not confident, going another way, or turning around and using a more appropriate means to complete the task;
- Set appropriate speed limits for riders as part of forestry management practice – relating to particular areas of the forest site, tasks, or weather/track conditions as necessary;
- Is the quad the right machine?
- Do not overload the quad – carrying materials can make the quad more unstable;



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## ***Everyone who drives a quad bike should:***

- Have received adequate training and know how to do the tasks required (if you supply a new vehicle, the operator may require additional training);
- Drive with due care and attention at all times;
- Be aware of other forest users;
- Keep both hands on the handlebars and both feet on the foot pegs while riding the quad bike. Wherever possible, stop the quad bike before performing another task.
- Quad bike riders should always wear a helmet;
- Don't overload;
- Don't carry passengers;
- Assess the terrain carefully before choosing to ride on it. Steep slopes, particularly if the dirt is loose or wet, should be avoided as they can cause the quad bike to roll over;
- Watch the ground ahead for potential hazards. Riding into or over rocks, pipes or any other obstacle can cause an accident.

## **New Zealand example**

15% of New Zealand farm quads are now fitted with roll over protection (ROP). ROPs sound sensible because anyone pinned under a 250-kg plus quad bike has a pretty high chance of dying (or being seriously injured), especially if they are working alone in an isolated location.

Fitting ROPs in New Zealand is seen as a matter of personal choice as ROPs are not approved by the manufacturers.

The manufacturers expect measures like correct terrain, helmets, age restrictions and rider training to prevent injuries.

The Lifeguard from New Zealand, is a flexible roll bar that cannot collapse and won't kill you if it hits you. As it's flexible and takes the weight of the vehicle it can actually allow the driver to get out from underneath if the quad does rolls.