

## **NON-REGISTERED MOTORISED VEHICLES**

**Organisation:** Royal Australasian College of Surgeons

**Date Received:** 17/05/2013

# ROYAL AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS

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16<sup>th</sup> May 2013

Mr Greg Aplin  
Chair, Staysafe Committee  
Parliament House  
Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Mr Aplin

Re: Inquiry into Non-Registered Motor Vehicles

We are pleased that the Government is investigating this issue. Surgeons involved with trauma have long advocated for road safety measures such as seat belts, blood alcohol limits, mandatory helmet wearing and graduated driver licensing systems. The College has some concerns with the proliferation of non-registered motor vehicles. At the clinical interface non-registered motor vehicles are beginning to play a more significant role in trauma, often associated with alcohol.

The College has particular concerns with Quad Bike safety and we attach our position statement on the issue.

If this would assist the Inquiry, the College is happy to appear before the Committee to provide further information.

Yours sincerely

A black rectangular box redacting the signature of Robert Costa.

Robert Costa  
Chair, NSW Regional Committee

**QUAD BIKES****Background**

The College recognises the seriousness and frequency of injuries caused by riding Quad Bikes. Internationally there is increasing concern regarding fatal and serious incidents involving Quad Bikes. Australian mortality data indicate there were 11 fatalities for children under 14 years (66 in total for all age ranges) between 1989 and 1992<sup>1</sup> and 17 between 2000 and 2005<sup>2</sup>. New Zealand experienced 2 ATV fatalities and one 2-wheeler fatality in the year to June 2006<sup>3</sup>. Australian Hospital data suggests they are responsible for 8-11% of all on-farm injuries<sup>1</sup>. Rollover of the vehicle was associated with largest number of fatalities (39%) with head injuries occurring in 24% of cases<sup>2</sup>. In cases where the slope of the ground at the accident site was recorded, 69% of those accidents occurred on a steep slope, evidence for the instability of the Quad Bike<sup>2</sup>.

**Position**

The College recommends that:

1. Public awareness of the problems associated with the use of Quad Bikes be raised, with particular reference to:
  - The instability of Quad Bikes
  - The dangers associated with children using Quad Bikes
  - Restriction of their use by the under-16 age group
  - The severity of injury of the head, spine, chest and pelvis associated with their use.
  - Limitation of speed to less than 55 km / hr
  - Restriction to use off public roads.
  - Use only in situations where risk of collision with another vehicle is removed
2. The use of helmets for riders is strongly recommended. Until an appropriate helmet specific to the use of Quad Bikes is developed, the use of AS NZS 3838 (2006) helmets for horse riding and horse related activities is suggested.
3. Research towards the design of an appropriate helmet for Quad Bike use is promoted.
4. Information on the safe use and dangers of Quad Bikes be available and promoted at point of sale.
5. Research into the design and development of Quad Bikes which allow for roll over protection be encouraged.
6. Consideration be given to the mandatory provision of speed limiters
7. A requirement for training of workers who operate Quad Bikes to ensure competency and knowledge of safety measures.
8. Information is provided to users of Quad Bikes, as to the most appropriate use of forms of transport for particular tasks.
9. Removal from sale 3-wheel ATVs [trikes]<sup>4</sup>.

**References:**

1. Lower T, Egginton N, Ellis I & Larson A. Reducing All-Terrain Vehicle Injury. Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation, 2005

Division:	Fellowship and Standards	Ref No.	FES_FEL_035
Document Owner:	Director	Version:	3
		Approval Date:	August 2011
		Review Date:	August 2014

2. Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety. National Farm Injury Data Centre, Farm Injury Newsletter, Issue 20, July 2005.
3. Fatality Record from 01 July 2005 to 30 June 2006. Department of Labour, New Zealand,
4. American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons Position Statement,  
<http://www.arthroscopy.com/sp13002.htm>

**Approver:** Chief Executive Officer  
**Authoriser:** Council