Quad bike safety standard exposure draft

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Quad bikes are the *Swiss army knife* of farming, but they have a dark side. My youngest daughter lost a friend in a quad bike accident and I lost a large amount of blood due to the result of a quad bike accident.

I have been a dairy farmer all my life, in England and for the last 11 years in Western Victoria. Australia gave me scale, more land, more cows and more people, so I got a quad bike. Then I got another, as it was a disaster if the first broke. I was putting roll over devices on my quad bikes before the ROP's subsidy through the VFF.

Quad bikes are inherently unstable, having a high centre of gravity and pumped tyres. It is impossible to plan for ever eventuality, the state of the ground, the attitude of the stock, so unforeseen things happen, such as rollovers.

Roll over protection devices (ROP's) became compulsory on all new tractors in Australia in 1982. This included all tractors down to a weight of 560 kgs. This was an opportunity missed; the weight limit should have been much less and so would have included quad bikes in the legislation.

According to Safe Work Australia, the number of tractor roll over deaths declined by 72% from 40 to 17 when comparing the period 1989-1992 to 2004-2007. I suspect if that analysis was done today, the figure would be much less.

I would suggest that ROP's are made compulsory on all new quad bikes as of the 1st of January 2020, with a time period until the 1st of January 2023 for all existing quad bikes to be retro fitted. The government subsidy for the fitting of ROP's, to old and new quad bikes should be maintained.

I would also suggest, that the next government introduces uniform industrial manslaughter laws, (as has been put forward) to strengthen work place safety. Anyone who allows children under 16 and passengers on quad bikes, could well find themselves on a manslaughter charge if things go wrong.