

Director
Quad Bikes Taskforce
Consumer Product Safety Branch
Australian Competition & Consumer Commission
GPO Box 3131 Canberra, ACT 2601
qbtaskforce@accc.gov.au
31st May 2019

Dear Sir,

My name is Emily Cason and I am not an expert on Quad bikes and the mechanical workings. I don't know how to work out statics nor do I know how the government runs.

What I do know is that my son Sam at aged 11 went for a sleepover at a friend's house and never returned because it was okay for him to ride an adult-sized quad bike, unsupervised without any protective gear.

The result of this was ruled as an accident and my family told there was nothing we could do. Understandably this is not even close to being acceptable with me or my family.

My family consists of myself a mother who now must decide every time I start a conversation with someone new and the "how many kids" questions come up if I say 2 so I don't have to explain what happen so pretending Sam never existed. Or tell them 3 and explain what happened to my son you could imagine this ends the conversation in an awkward way fast. I am a mother who counts every Mother's Day, birthday, Christmas in years without Sam. I am a mother who lost her perfect firstborn son by having his skull smashed, chest crushed, leg broken and seeing all this in identifying his body after the accident. All because there was and still no protection around the use of a Quad bike something that has continually caused death and serves accidents.

The loss of Sam to his younger siblings Lilly and Zac took their childhood. Zac was 5 at the time of the accident he doesn't remember Sam at all which as a mother breaks my heart, he knows he has a older brother but will never know what it was like to have an older brother and will every now and then say something to me like "do you think if Sam was here he'd help me learn to kick a footy"? My husband Dean doesn't say much about losing Sam, what can you say? What would you say and feel if it was your son?

Lilly, I don't really know where to start with her, she was 8 when Sam died, and her big brother was her everything. Since his death as a mother trying to grieve I have also dealt with Lilly's severe depression, anxiety, school refusal, separation anxiety as Lilly felt that because Sam was not with me at the time of his accident if she was separated from me something would happen to her and she would end up dead too. After not being able to work for the last few years because of Lilly's mental health and hours and hours of therapy I saw hope that she was starting to get better this year but in the last two weeks has gone backward again. I am afraid that she is never going to have a great life with lots of experiences and career opportunities because losing Sam was too much for her to handle and I am constantly terrified she will one day decide she can't take it anymore and decided to join him.

There are families like this all over Australia all because Quad bikes for too long have flown under the radar as a dangerous machine. I wanted to write this letter to you to put a human feel to the cause. I am sure you have read report after report filled with recommendations and statics. This is what all this in the ends means, a family that can feel safe in the knowledge that this won't happen to them and if it does they are not told to suck it up, as I was it was just an accident, there will be consequences.

I have been trying to educate and promote awareness for 7 years now, though my Facebook page Fight for Sam, campaigning for quad bike safety, participating in various media interviews and public talks. I will continue until 1. Children 16 and under are completely banned from riding adult sized quads. 2. Helmets and appropriate safety gear are mandatory. 3. Quad bikes are made safer, there are so many qualified people doing such great work in this area.

Thank you for your time and I am more than happy to discuss this with you further if you feel the need to do this

Sincerely Emily Cason.