

ATT:

Director
Quad Bikes Taskforce
Consumer Product Safety Branch
Australian Competition & Consumer Commission
GPO Box 3131
Canberra, ACT 2601

I write in reference to the proposed ATV Mandatory Safety Standards proposed by the ACCC.

I am an experienced motorcycle rider both on 2 and 4 wheels, a part time farmer, father of 3 kids, and a Honda Motorcycle dealership franchisee. I have firsthand experience with quads, and daily contact with repairing & selling quads, and those that own and use them. Most of these are farmers, and a fair percentage are dairy farmers. The humble quad bike has become such an essential part of their farming operation that we have to offer a loan quad, if they are to be without their quad for repairs for more than half a day!

I have taken a keen interest in the Worksafe and ACCC's handling of Quad bike safety and in particular fitment of ROPS. I have listened to many points of view from a wide variety of stake holders. The overwhelming feedback is that the quad bike itself is not the problem. Rather it is a combination of many factors to do with who is riding it, how it is ridden and what it is being used for. I feel that fitting a ROPS to the quad is only a band aid on an over exaggerated problem. Not only is a ROPS impractical for almost every operation the quad is used for, it has been proven, by much independent testing, to cause as many issues and injuries as it saves! I am definitely not against safety. I strongly feel that a helmet should be worn at all times, and rider training is very beneficial for inexperienced riders. The quad bike can definitely be a weapon, but ridden correctly and used wisely it is a very practical tool. All children should be kept off these bikes, and passengers also. If these few practical rider precautions were more widely implemented, I am confident there would be far fewer injuries. However if ROPS is to become mandatory, this will not only cause more issues as stated before, but will lull riders into a false sense of security that they are invincible.

As a flow on from the proposed Mandatory Safety Standards proposal, both Honda and Yamaha have reminded us that their long held stance of withdrawal from the market, if it is implemented, still stands. Now as a dealer I of course have a lot to lose in that respect, as our main business revolves around Quad Bikes. But I speak from a much deeper concern than my hip pocket, as a farmer and knowing how deeply this decision will affect agriculture in general, and more particularly dairy farmers. The ACCC have to be comfortable that their decision basically means that they are taking Quads away from them. Can you imagine the uproar? Can you imagine, how would you run a farm without one (or sometimes up to 6!)? Agriculture is a marginal operation at the best of times, surely you cannot expect them to have to purchase a side by side for 2-3 times the money, half the practicability, and higher maintenance costs? And for what gain? It has been recommended by 4 + coroners in the Final Recommendation that all of the rider related safety items (like training, licensing, helmets etc) be implemented. Coroners have not

recommended the utilization of ROPS, or suggested that ROPS would have saved lives if it were fitted. If the ACCC are ignoring Coroners, then what are Coroners there for?

Please reconsider this over-reaction to a problem that is being over-stated & over-publicized. People are injured doing many things, and accidents happen, you cannot always blame the quad for the injuries. Horses and Motorcycles are deadly too, there is no mention of these injuries in the media! And there are is no campaign to fit these with ROPS!

Please accept my objection to the Proposed Mandatory Fitment of ROPS on Quad Bikes.

Regards

David Forman

Manager Director

Peter Hill Honda,

Numurkah, Victoria.

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