

22 July 2009

When is an ATV an All-Terrain Vehicle?

The term 'All-Terrain Vehicle' or ATV is a misleading name for four-wheel motorbikes. Regardless of their title, ATVs are not suitable for all terrains and they are not suitable for all operators, all work tasks, or all conditions.

Approximately ten people die in four-wheel motorbike incidents on Australian farms every year and many more people are injured.

The main cause of severe injury and death are crush injury and asphyxia associated with four-wheel motorbike roll-over, and head and brain injury.

In order to reduce such statistics, the following options can be considered:

- Choose the right machine for the job – there are a range of small utility vehicles (mules etc) that have safety features that provide protection for riders and passengers in the event of a roll-over or collision, including roll-bars and seatbelts.
- Maintenance – keep the machine well maintained, conduct a safety check regularly and check the tyre pressures regularly.
- Attachments and overloading – do not use attachments that may interfere with operator control, do not modify the wheels and do not overload.
- Personal protective equipment – always wear an approved helmet when riding as well work boots.

Tony Hiscock, Chairman of Farmsafe WA Alliance stresses to farmers that “the emotional and financial costs of fatalities and injuries on four-wheel motorbikes is immeasurable.”

“Many of these deaths are preventable, especially considering many of the fatalities are children, both as riders and passengers.”

Media contact: Michelle Taylor – 08 9359 4114