Statewide Plan

The *Statewide Plan for Improving Quad Bike Safety in Queensland 2016-2019* (the plan) sets out the Queensland Government’s commitment to reducing incidents involving quad bikes and providing a coordinated approach to improving quad bike safety.

The plan focuses on three key priorities:
- Community education and awareness about quad bike safety risks.
- Improving quad bike operator skill and safety.
- Government leadership in promoting quad bike safety.

The Quad Bike Interagency Group (Interagency Group), which consists of senior representatives from ten agencies with interests in quad bike safety, developed the plan and oversees its implementation.

Community education and awareness about quad bike safety risks

In June 2016, the Queensland Government launched the Ride ready website and quad bike safety awareness campaign, which focuses on training, wearing helmets, not allowing children on adult-sized quad bikes, and prohibiting passengers on single seat quad bikes. Since its inception, the Ride ready website has had over 64,000 page views, and almost one million views of its advertisements and case study films.

Quad bike safety advertisements have appeared in newspapers and industry publications as well as online and through social media in the period up to, and during, school holidays since 2016. In September and October 2017, advertisements on helmet use and children riding appropriately sized bikes were run. These advertisements ran again in December 2017.

In conjunction with the September Ride ready campaign launch, Workplace Health and Safety Queensland (WHSQ) held an online competition to encourage safe riding with five new quad bike helmets available to win. Winners were drawn at random at the close of the competition in October 2017.

Independent market research was conducted in October 2016 and again in October 2017 to check post-campaign attitudes and behaviours around training, helmet use, children riding appropriately sized bikes, and doubling of passengers. For the October 2017 round of research, 554 people were surveyed. The research findings were encouraging with positive attitudinal shifts in most categories.

The Quad Bike Industry Reference Group (QBIRG) has also been established to provide insight and advice to the government on key quad bike safety issues. Membership of the QBIRG includes representatives from the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries, James Cook University, AgForce Queensland, the quad bike tourism industry and recreational rider groups.

Winners of WHSQ’s Farm Safety Calendar Competition, where primary school children are encouraged to draw and colour a picture to illustrate one of four farm safety topics (quad bikes, motorbikes and machinery being one topic), were announced in September 2017. Parent and teacher resources were also made available to complement the competition. These resources and calendar order forms can be found on worksafe.qld.gov.au.

Thousands of mail outs with quad bike safety information and resources have been sent to quad bike dealers, registered training organisations, agricultural colleges, schools, community groups and farmers across Queensland. Quad bike safety also continues to be promoted at agricultural field days, events, industry forums and workshops, and through the QBIRG and Interagency Group networks and social media platforms.

Winning entry for March 2018 – Rhiannon Ryan, Cooyar State School (Grade 4).
Improving quad bike operator skill and safety

The Queensland Department of Transport and Main Roads (DTMR) has amended the Transport Operations (Road Use Management – Road Rules) Regulation 2009 (Road Rules) by introducing rules and penalties for not wearing a helmet while operating a quad bike or utility off-road vehicle (also known as a side by side vehicle) on a road or road-related area. These amendments reflect the existing rules and penalties for motorcycle riders not wearing a helmet. The amendments became effective on 1 February 2017.

Under the Road Rules, helmets worn by quad bike users must comply with either the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Standard 22.05 Motorcycle Helmet Safety Standard (UNECE 22.05) or the Australian/New Zealand Standard 1698:2006 Protective helmets for vehicle users (AS/NZ 1698:2006). All Australian State and Territory road safety jurisdictions now recognise helmets that meet the UNECE 22.05 as part of their road rules legislation. This recognition negates the need for a specific Australian Standard for quad bike helmets to be developed and has led to innovation in helmet design. There are now helmets on the market that address past concerns of the agricultural industry in relation to cost, flexibility for on and off road use, weight, ventilation, restricted vision and hearing and limited capability to attach radio devices for communication with co-workers.

In addition, DTMR has also amended the Road Rules to prohibit the carriage of passengers less than eight years of age on quad bikes and utility off-road vehicles, as well as any child regardless of age whose feet cannot reach the footrests or floor, or whose hands cannot reach any hand rail provided. These amendments also became effective on 1 February 2017.

Skills Impact, which is a Commonwealth-funded skills service organisation, has been engaged to conduct a review of the nationally-accredited units of competency for the operation of quad bikes and side by side vehicles (AHCMMOM212 Operate quad bikes and AHCMMOM211 Operate side by side utility vehicles). Public consultation, including with subject matter experts, occurred during late 2017. This consultation informed final drafts of the units, which were available for industry validation in February 2018. The project is due to wrap up mid-2018.

The Queensland Police Service (QPS) and the Office of Industrial Relations (OIR) have collaborated to develop a standard first response and investigations template to be used for quad bike and side by side vehicle incidents. Members of the QBIRG together with SafeWork NSW and WorkSafe Victoria were consulted during the process and have been provided with the template. Use of the template will ensure that important information is consistently captured by first responders, which can then be used to inform future safety campaigns.

The QPS and OIR also collaborated to design and deliver a first response training program to staff across Queensland.

The Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and WorkSafe New Zealand staff also participated in this training program which has been incorporated as a standard module for new recruits. The QPS further developed an internal quad bike investigator training module. The module was delivered to 40 newly trained QPS crash investigators in 2016 during its two week Basic Crash Investigation Course. The training module was also disseminated through the Australia New Zealand Policing Advisory Agency (ANZPAA) to all Australian and New Zealand Police Services.

During 2017, WHSQ has been monitoring quad bike and side by side vehicle compliance at agricultural shows and on agricultural properties as part of its ongoing workload, as well as engaging with dealers through the provision of the Ride ready campaign material.

Government leadership in promoting quad bike safety

The Office of Fair Trading has been working with its national counterpart, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC), to seek improvements in quad bike safety that are consistent with Queensland’s experience. The ACCC has formed a taskforce to consider options for improving quad bike vehicle safety under the Australian Consumer Law. The ACCC will determine whether to recommend a safety standard for quad bikes that may introduce a national quad bike safety rating system, prohibit unsafe design features or mandate design requirements, and require warnings or instructions be provided at the point of sale.

The ACCC Taskforce will work with the Quad Bike Interdepartmental Committee (IDC) to progress the project. The IDC is chaired by the Commonwealth Department of Jobs and Small Business and includes two other Commonwealth departments, Safe Work Australia, and work health and safety regulators represented by SafeWork NSW, WorkSafe Victoria and WorkSafe Tasmania. The ACCC released an issues paper for public consultation in late 2017.

The former Department of National Parks, Sports and Racing, removed 75 per cent of quad bikes from its fleet in the 2016–17 financial year and the remaining 25 per cent are scheduled to be removed in the 2017–18 financial year. Twenty-eight of the 31 replacement vehicles required to complete the 2017–18 phase out have already been delivered.

The Department of Agriculture Industry Development and Fisheries (DAIDF), formerly the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, have implemented best practice safety initiatives for contractors and workers using quad bikes, such as the use of appropriate personal protective equipment, training programs, risk assessments and engineering controls. These initiatives sit alongside DAIDF’s strategy of phasing out quad bikes and replacing them with other fit for purpose vehicles.
Future priorities

The Government's priorities for improving quad bike safety in 2018:

- Begin consultation with key stakeholders with a view to:
  - mandate the use of compliant helmets in workplaces while operating a quad bike or side by side vehicle
  - mandate quad bike and side by side vehicle training in workplaces
  - prohibit the carriage of passengers on single-seat quad bikes in workplaces
  - prohibit the carriage of children as passengers on quad bikes and side by side vehicles in workplaces.

- Work with Queensland Health to set up regular quad bike reporting and training opportunities for personnel recording data which will improve data capture.

- Develop case studies that promote good quad bike safety practices, including a case study targeted at tourism operators.

- Continue promotion of the Ride ready campaign through various events, networks and media.

- Ongoing compliance monitoring with a focus on quad bike and side by side vehicle retailers, and the use of quad bikes by workers.