

Friday, 19 October 2012

Quad Bike safety summit must be followed by action

Today's summit on quad bike safety must be followed by action to make crush protection devices compulsory on new quad bikes to reduce the unacceptably high death rate from rollovers, the ACTU said today.

ACTU Assistant Secretary Michael Borowick said the summit had been a worthwhile exercise but that it was now time for the ACCC to act and make crush protection devices mandatory on all quad bikes sold in Australia.

Mr Borowick said that there had been 160 people killed in quad bike accidents since 2001.

"At least half of these deaths have occurred when a quad bike flipped over and crushed its rider," he said.

"Crush protection devices, such as rollbars, could have been installed at minimal cost and stopped these accidents becoming fatalities.

"We have enough evidence that crush protection devices can save lives, it is now time for the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission to act.

"There are about 220,000 quad bikes in use in Australia, and they are the single biggest cause of workplace fatalities on farms."

"They have inherent problems with stability, with some evidence indicating that they may roll over even on apparently flat terrain.

Similar roll-over protection devices that have been compulsory for tractors since 1992 have reduced fatalities by 80%, Mr Borowick said.

"We don't want to see quad bikes banned, but they must be made safer," Mr Borowick said.

"We cannot wait for more people to die and we cannot wait for more 'scientific research' about the effectiveness of crush protection devices. There is enough evidence now to show there is a cheap and effective solution that would save lives."

Media contact: Ben Ruse 0409 510 879