



## TASMANIAN FARMERS & GRAZIERS ASSOCIATION

Consumer, Building and Occupational Services  
Department of Justice  
Rosny Park  
Tasmania 7018

Via email: [cbosinfo@justice.tas.gov.au](mailto:cbosinfo@justice.tas.gov.au)

### **TFGA Submission – Quad Bike Safety**

The Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association (TFGA) is the leading representative body for Tasmanian primary producers. TFGA members are responsible for generating approximately 80% of the value created by the Tasmanian agricultural sector.

Agriculture is one of the key pillars of the economy and, with the current level of support from government, are well positioned to further capitalise on the stature of Tasmania agriculture.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics estimates that Tasmania's Gross State Product for 2014-15 was \$25.42 billion. Agriculture, forestry and fishing in 2014-15 was Tasmania's largest industry representing 9.6% (\$2.29B) of Tasmania's total gross value added.

The TFGA is grateful for the opportunity to make comment to the Issues Paper *Quad Bike Safety in Tasmania*.

### **Increasing rider awareness of risks**

It is essential for the safety of a rider to be aware of all risks and hazards that come with quad bike operation. The TFGA strongly encourages the following:

- Workplaces to have defined quad bike safety policies and procedures that are supplied to quad bike operators during induction and the necessary training.
- Risk analysis of tasks where quad bikes are to be operated is encouraged.
- Quad bike retailers should provide adequate information about the risks and hazards of quad bike use, as well as how to use the bike safely.
- Quad bike retailers should highlight the importance of training and appropriate maintenance of vehicles.
- The safe use of quad bikes, risks and hazards should be a prominent feature at forums and gatherings continuously.

## **Improving rider skills**

The TFGA believes that quad bike riders should be sufficiently trained in the operation of quad bikes. The TFGA makes the following comments:

- Quad bike riders in the workplace should be trained. This training should be documented and regularly reviewed.
- Adequate supervision should be essential when quad bikes are used for on-farm tasks.
- Any breaches of quad bike training, safety measures or policies should be documented and a mitigation report should be written describing preventative measures.
- There is training readily available in the state; however, these training providers should be monitored and audited so as to maintain the quality of the service.
- A main barrier in Tasmania for operators to partake in training courses is the accessibility of affordable training in remote areas, this is especially prevalent in places such as King and Flinders Island.

## **Greater rider protection**

Every workplace should prioritise occupational health and safety. This is all-inclusive from workers in the field to those in the office. In regards to quad bike safety, all workplaces should constantly look for ways to mitigate any risks or hazards that workers may face. The TFGA makes the following comments:

- Quad bikes should be maintained and checked regularly to maximise performance, limiting safety hazards. These maintenance and safety checks should be recorded.
- Quad bikes should not be ridden by anyone who has not been adequately trained and informed of the risks and hazards in operating a quad bike.
- No passengers should be carried.
- The operating manual of the quad bike should be followed to maximise safe operations i.e. Limitations of the bike, loading things onto the bike, attachments to the bike and any modifications to the bike.
- Education of importance and encouragement of wearing helmets should be mandatory in a safe workplace. This is not difficult to achieve i.e. Long accepted requirement in some industries to wear safety/hard hats and consequences where safety is breached.
- A portion of TFGA members have fitted rollover protection to their quad bikes. Those that haven't state that barriers for them include the cost of installing or the increase in limitation of the bike.

## **Government-led action**

The TFGA believes that the government should assist farmers where applicable, including areas that maximise workplace health and safety. The TFGA makes the following comments on government-led action:

- The TFGA strongly requests the government to continually fund the Safe Farming Tasmania program.
- The TFGA supports the state governments offer of funding rebates to assist farmers in the safe operation of quad bikes.

- As previously stated every work place should prioritise occupational health and safety at all times in the operation of a business. However, the culture of the farm influences this prioritisation. The government can assist here by helping farmers to implement correct practice and policy.
- The TFGA supports the development of an Australian Standard for quad bike design.
- The TFGA believes that a nationally recognised star-rating system, similar to other consumer items, would assist in determining and deciding what is the safest, best quality and most suitable quad bike available for on-farm use
- The Safe Farming Tasmania Reference Group, of which the TFGA is a member, noted that the Victorian government have developed and implemented a rebate scheme designed to encourage farmers to fit rollover protection to their quadbikes or consider an alternative vehicle. The TFGA and Safe Farming Tasmania strongly agree that a similar scheme should be introduced in Tasmania, this would be well received.

The Farming Safely in Tasmania guide that aids in the development of a safety management system for rural businesses, has a section on quad bike safety. In this section of the guide, training information as well as supporting video clips are available on an accompanying USB. This is a document that is currently widely available to workplaces that can assist employers and workers with basic quad bike training. This is an example of government input working in conjunction with WorkSafe Tasmania.

**The TFGA recognises the difference in use of quad bikes from property to property; however, all quad bikes should be used safely so as to decrease risks, mitigate hazards and ultimately limit incidents. The TFGA believes that quad bike operators should be adequately trained and informed to ultimately carry out best practice. An Australian standard of quad bike design and helmet should be established to increase levels of safety on-farm.**

**Every workplace should prioritise occupational health and safety at all times and thus the government needs to assist the industry in improving and maintaining an acceptable safety standard.**

Please contact the TFGA if you require any further information.

Yours sincerely,



**Peter Skillern**  
Chief Executive Officer  
28<sup>th</sup> February 2017