



Australian Government

Comcare

# QUAD BIKES—PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

This information sheet provides an overview for persons conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) and workers on the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) that should be worn when operating a quad bike.

## WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

Although PPE is necessary when operating a quad bike, it is also considered to be the least effective risk control measure (based on the hierarchy of controls<sup>1</sup>). As such, it is important for PCBUs and workers to focus on more effective risk control measures such as elimination of quad bike use, use of alternative vehicles (for example, weed spraying and carrying/towing loads are not suitable activities for quads) and engineering through the fitting of crush protection devices (CPDs). These approaches can then be supplemented by administrative controls, task-specific training, safe work practices and the use of PPE when using quad bikes in the workplace.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Quad bikes, like motorcycles, require the use of PPE. Although wearing appropriate PPE will not prevent or reduce the likelihood of an incident such as a rollover or a collision with an obstacle, it can significantly reduce the risk of severe injury or death as a result. For example, helmets reduce the chance of death from head injury by over 40 per cent.

## WHAT DO I NEED TO CONSIDER?

The following PPE should be worn at all times when operating a quad bike<sup>2</sup>:

PPE	INFORMATION TO CONSIDER
Helmet	<p>A helmet which meets an appropriate standard should always be worn when operating a quad bike regardless of the operating environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Ensure the helmet is the most appropriate for the situation, the weather conditions and the task being undertaken, and that it meets an Australian Standard or international equivalent. For example, some helmets offer increased ventilation which is more important at low speeds, while others offer full-face protection.</li><li>&gt; Helmets with Australian Standard 1698:2006 also meet the requirements for on-road use.</li><li>&gt; Ensure the helmet is well fitted, securely fastened, provides good, all-round visibility and is maintained in good condition. A poor fitting or loose helmet may become dislodged in an incident and then offer no protection.</li></ul>

<sup>1</sup> Regulation 36, Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011

<sup>2</sup> Regulations 44-48, Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011



PPE	INFORMATION TO CONSIDER
Eye protection	<p>Eye protection, including face shields and goggles, are recommended to prevent eye injuries when using quad bikes. Sunglasses can be used but are unlikely to provide adequate physical protection alone.</p> <p>Suitable types of eye protection include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; helmets fitted with visors (check visibility of tinted visors in low light conditions)</li> <li>&gt; riding goggles which are well ventilated and securely fastened.</li> </ul>
Gloves	<p>Gloves provide protection from abrasions and help to keep hands from fatiguing due to cold. However, 'riggers gloves' that may become slippery when wet are not advisable for use with quad bikes.</p>
Footwear	<p>Sturdy footwear is recommended, preferably boots that come up past the ankle with strong uppers. Heels on footwear will also prevent feet from slipping off the foot decks.</p>
Clothing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Arms and legs should be covered to reduce abrasions to the body and UV exposure.</li> <li>&gt; Trousers should be close-fitting and in good condition.</li> <li>&gt; High-visibility vests are recommended for use, particularly when quad bikes cross public roads or are used at dawn, dusk or night.</li> <li>&gt; Be aware of potential dehydration when selecting PPE.</li> </ul>
Hearing protection	<p>If the vehicle operation is rated above 85 decibels, hearing protection should be used. A risk assessment as to the suitability of task-based hearing protection should follow.</p>
UV protection	<p>UV protection is recommended as helmets may not protect the exposed face or back of neck from UV rays.</p>

### NEXT STEPS

- > PCBUs should consult with workers and health and safety representatives (HSRs) on the most appropriate PPE to use when operating quad bikes. Those who operate quad bikes are best positioned to provide valuable information concerning any physical or psychosocial hazards that may need to be addressed.
- > PCBUs should undertake a risk assessment and implement higher level, more effective risk controls in addition to PPE. Organisations should strive to eliminate quad bike risk wherever feasible and/or otherwise retro-fit CPDs to all quad bikes in the fleet. CPDs are an engineering control that offers a higher level of risk control which is supplemented by administrative controls and use of PPE.
- > PCBUs are required to mandate the use of helmets within their policy framework and to have a program of monitoring rider compliance in place.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

Contact Comcare:

- > Quad Bike portal under Safety & Prevention > Health & safety topics at [www.comcare.gov.au](http://www.comcare.gov.au)
- > Telephone: 1300 366 979
- > Email: [WHS.help@comcare.gov.au](mailto:WHS.help@comcare.gov.au)