



# **SURF LIFE SAVING AUSTRALIA**

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

### **All Terrain Vehicles**

**POLICY  
NUMBER  
4.5  
JULY  
2007**

#### **SCOPE**

All State and Club Lifesaving, Sport and Event operations that employ the use of All Terrain Vehicles (ATV) to assist in the delivery of the operations must ensure the equipment, operators and use of the ATV comply with SLSA ATV Operating Procedures

#### **BACKGROUND**

All Terrain Vehicles (ATV) have become an important piece of equipment used by surf lifesavers in maintaining efficient and effective water safety, surveillance and search and rescue operations. The use of ATV's was largely by 4WD vehicles however, design and cost improvements now provide for a range of powered mobile vehicles to be operated on and around the beach environment.

For the use of ATV's a number of hazards to members and the public are identified and must be controlled or reduced to acceptable levels. Adherence to this policy and associated operating procedures will assist to maintain a safe operating environment.

#### **RESPONSIBILITY**

The Club Lifesaving Directors/Officers are responsible for the implementation and compliance to this policy.

SLSA and State Centres are responsible for validating compliance to this policy and associated operating guidelines.

#### **REVIEW**

This policy is to be reviewed by SLSA in a period not exceeding 24 months or if approved ATV equipment is modified or added to the list.

#### **GENERAL CONDITIONS**

Clubs may only purchase and operate ATV equipment that has been approved by SLSA and is maintained on the approved supplier lists.

### **SLSA ATV Operating Procedures**

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

All Terrain Vehicles (ATV's) enable suitably qualified surf lifesavers to be more mobile and capable of quickly responding to emergencies both inside and outside the patrol area.

The following information gives advice on the safe use of all-terrain vehicles (ATV's).

It covers the two main groups:

1. Sit-astride machines with handlebars where the rider uses body movements to help control the machine.
2. Sit-in machines, usually with a steering wheel, where the driver sits in a conventional seat and there is generally seating for one or more passengers.

## **2. DEFINITIONS**

The procedures in this document govern the use of All Terrain Vehicles (ATV's) for surf lifesaving purposes, including:

- 4WD Vehicles (cars and light utility vehicles)
- 2WD & 4WD Bikes
- All Terrain Vehicles (i.e. Gators, Rhinos, Polaris)
- Other vehicles that may be used in a lifesaving support role, however, not including tractors or other vehicles used solely to take equipment on and off the beach.

## **3. DRIVER QUALIFICATIONS**

Essential

Operators shall be 17 years of age and hold a current and proficient:

- Driver's License (Provisional or Open)
- Award Holder
- Four Wheel Drive Vehicle/ATV Operators Induction appropriate to the vehicle being operated (Refer Section 14)

Desirable:

- Senior First Aid Certificate
- Advanced Resuscitation Certificate
- Advanced Driving course appropriate for 4WD/ATV vehicles

## **4. EQUIPMENT**

The vehicle shall carry the following lifesaving equipment:

- First Aid Kit
- Oxygen Equipment
- Rescue Board
- Rescue Tube
- Communications / radio equipment applicable to the area of operations (i.e. handheld radio or base unit mounted to the vehicle)

Additional equipment that may be considered depending on vehicle and local requirements:

- Stretcher
- Flippers
- Defibrillator
- Blanket
- Loud Hailer / PA System
- Stinger Kit in high risk periods (North Queensland beaches)

Any modifications including roll bars, carry racks and storage containers must adhere to manufacturers guidelines and carried out in consultation with the manufacturer or dealer.

#### 4.1 MOUNTED EQUIPMENT

When selecting mounted equipment, make sure it is within the manufacturer's approved weight limit, with a low centre of gravity, and controls which are easy to operate but do not create a hazard. Where equipment is added to one end of the machine, add ballast at the other end to maintain stability.

Loads carried on racks must be secured, eg with ratchet straps, and be evenly balanced between the front and the rear, except where they are deliberately altered to aid stability when going up or down a slope.

Only tow a load from the hitch point. Loads towed from other points such as the rear rack have caused sudden rear overturning even on slight slopes or with slight acceleration. Ropes or chains should not be used to drag a load where they can become caught on a wheel. This might lead to entanglement with the brake cable, causing unexpected braking.

Roller bars, lap straps and weather cabs: -

- Roll bars are not recommended for sit-astride ATV's. Research has shown that they are more likely to increase injuries by obstructing the rider either when thrown off or jumping off during an overturn. This causes the rider to fall to the ground alongside the ATV and increase the likelihood of injury.

- Lap straps should not be fitted to sit astride ATV's as they prevent active riding and would be lethal without a full cab or roll cage.

- For sit in ATV's (eg Yamaha Rhino) seatbelts must be worn where they are fitted.

Weather cabs restrict a rider's ability to jump clear in an overturn. The rider is likely to be crushed within the cab unless it is strong enough to stand the forces involved. Carefully assess the risks for your particular conditions of use before fitting any such structure and consult the manufacturer for information.

### 5. PERSONAL PROTECTIVE CLOTHING

Operators shall at all times wear the following Personal Protective Equipment whilst operating an ATV:

- Helmet – if required by local/state law
- For Sit Astride ATVs - Enclosed shoes with hard sole, sand shoes would be appropriate
- Minimum of a shirt (Patrol shirt during patrol duties)
- Minimum of shorts (Patrol shorts during patrol duties)
- Protective, 100% UV, eyewear

## **6. SPEED, LIGHTS AND REVERSING BEEPER**

ATV's shall not exceed 20km/hr under normal operating conditions.

The speed limit in heavily populated areas and between the red and yellow flags is 5km/hr. Headlights and Hazard Lights shall be "on" at all times whilst the vehicle is operating.

An amber flashing light, with 360 degree visibility to beach users, shall be fitted to the vehicle and "on" whilst the vehicle is operating.

An audible reversing beeper shall be fitted to all ATV's that have a reverse function.

## **7. COLOUR & SIGNAGE**

### **Colour Scheme**

The preferred colour scheme for ATV's shall be red or yellow.

Identification shall be placed on the vehicles in the form of the words "Surf Rescue" (150mm) on the front, sides and rear of the vehicle. Writing should be red in colour (or yellow where an ATV is red in colour).

### **Signage**

For any vehicle that comes with labels containing important safety information, the labels shall be considered as permanent parts of the vehicle. If a label comes off or is hard to read, contact the dealer of that equipment for a replacement.

Sponsorship signage shall not interfere with the visibility of identification and safety information.

## **8. MAINTENANCE**

Maintenance shall be carried out in accordance with manufacturer's instructions, although, more regular maintenance will be needed to combat the harsh conditions of operating in a beach environment. The condition of the equipment also reflects and affects the image of the association and the operators shall ensure the vehicle is in good condition at all times.

### **Tyre Pressures**

Tyre pressures shall be checked daily. Use of a gauge that is designed for accurately measuring and displaying low pressures shall be used.

Tyre pressures shall be within the specification and operating conditions recommended by the manufacturer.

### **Brakes and Throttle**

Check that the brakes give a safe straight stop and that the throttle operates smoothly in all steering positions. Brakes other than disc brakes can have a relatively short life unless regularly and effectively maintained.

## **9. FUEL AND OIL**

Fuel shall be used in accordance with the manufacturer's guidelines and shall be stored in an appropriate container in a suitable location. Legislation Regulations and Codes of Practice (Australian Standards, Local Authorities, etc) must be complied with.

ATV's shall not carry extra fuel. All re-fuelling must be done in an appropriate location off the beach.

Fuel levels should be checked at pre-operation and post-operation. Fuel tank should be filled prior to use. Refuelling should occur in a designated refuelling area away from a beach environment. Manufacturers guidelines and Material Safety Data Sheets shall always be followed when using all types of fuel. The following safety guidelines shall be adhered to:

- Never dispense fuel near open flame or while anyone is smoking or operating a mobile phone or radio in the vicinity.
- Always store fuel in appropriate storage facility with fire protection strategies.
- Always have a fire extinguisher available when dispensing fuel.
- Always clean up spills, in particular any fuel spilt into the vehicle.
- Never add fuel to oil always oil to fuel.

## **10. PASSENGERS**

NEVER carry a passenger on a sit-astride ATV. The long seat is for operators to shift their body weight backwards and forwards for different slope conditions NOT for carrying passengers. SLSA prohibits the carrying of passengers except where a machine is suitable for that purpose eg two designated seats or where approved and specified by the manufacturer.

Passengers may not travel on any equipment/trailer that is being towed behind an ATV. Extra movement can make the machine unstable.

Only appropriately trained/inducted personnel or suitably qualified patrol members should be carried as passengers in a sit in ATV (in an emergency a patient may be transported in the sit in ATV).

## **11. ROADWAY AND BEACH USAGE**

Legislative requirements and road rules must be complied with at all times when the vehicle is driven on a roadway and/or beach. Permits will also be required from the Police to operate on the road.

A permit will be required from the local authority to operate the vehicle on the beach.

## **12. ACCIDENT REPORTING**

All accidents must be reported to the appropriate officer of the Surf Life Saving Club or Service (President, Club Captain, Transport Officer, and Supervisor) immediately following the accident.

All information must be obtained at the scene of the accident if possible including the names and addresses of people involved, vehicle types and registration, photographs and/or diagrams of the incident.

Police must be notified in the event of a major accident (involving significant damage to the vehicle or property >\$1000), multiple vehicle collision or the injury of a person.

Insurance guidelines which apply to the vehicles, property and/or persons should be complied with and the necessary claims lodged.

### **13. VEHICLE SPECIFICATIONS**

The minimum engine size for lifesaving operations is 400 cc (cubic centimetres) for sit astride ATVs.

The ATV should also be able to operate in Four Wheel Drive (4WD) to allow greater traction in sand.

### **14. INDUCTION TRAINING REQUIREMENTS**

All active ATV operators must complete an ATV Operators Induction Course in accordance with the below guidelines. This operator's induction is necessary to:

- Ensure ongoing competency of members in their field of training and activities
- Maintain the standards of knowledge and expertise of ATV operators
- Satisfy legal and statutory requirements
- Reinforce and maintain our service commitment to the bathing and beach-going community

#### **14.1 Minimum Induction Requirements:**

To operate an ATV, members must successfully comply with and/or complete the following:

- The applicant must be a minimum of 17 years old on day of induction
- Hold a current and valid state Driver's License (not Learners permit)
- Be a current member of an affiliated SLSC
- Are competent in ATV operations (completed the SLSA ATV Operators questionnaire, assessed practical skills by state approved person)
- ATV operator to be entered into Proficiency Book/or Card. (SurfGuard does not yet allow electronic record)
- ATV Operator to comply with additional State/Territory requirements

All existing and new operators must successfully complete the ATV Operators Induction prior to operating an ATV.

State Directors/Chairperson of Lifesaving may at their discretion require additional competency assessment in cases where there is doubt of a member's competency. Member may be requested at any time during the season to complete an additional proficiency check by an authorised state official.

A member who fails a proficiency check at any time during the season is deemed to be non-proficient until such time as proficiency is successfully completed.

Each State/Territory will be responsible for prescribing the appointment of Facilitators for the operator's induction any subsequent proficiency assessment/check.

## **15. PRE-OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES**

General Safety Principles

Pre-Operational Checks

- Always check the daily logbook prior to daily use.
- Check fuel levels and fill up if required;
- Check tyre inflation is correct;
- Check steering functions is normal;
- Check rescue equipment is sound and fastened safely;
- Check that flashing beacon, reversing beacon and headlights are functional
- Complete last visual check
- Pre-operational checklists must be completed and signed by the Patrol Captain (or their Vice) prior to the ATV undertaking operational duties