

NO HELMET, NO QUAD BIKE: CORONER SPEAKS

» Inquest suggests raft of changes for quad bikes use after deaths of nine Queenslanders

■ Pamela Frost

A QUEENSLAND Coroner has recommended the State Government introduce a licensing scheme for quad

bike riders and stricter helmet guidelines following the death of several Queenslanders, including the South Burnett's Zoe McInnes.

Ms McInnes was among nine people whose deaths on quad bikes formed part of a coronial investigation. Ms McInnes, 28, died in hospital in June 2013, four

days after falling off a quad bike on her property at Dulong.

She was returning home from her brother's engagement party when she

fell off the right side of her bike and hit her head.

She wasn't wearing a helmet, the inquest found late last year. At that inquest, Deputy State

Coroner John Lock said her injuries could have been survivable if she had been wearing a helmet.

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Mr Lock handed down his findings from the second phase of the inquest on Monday and recommended helmet use on quad bikes and side-by-side vehicles be made compulsory on roads and road-related areas.

Mr Lock also recommended that Australian-standard quad

bike-specific helmets be introduced that would also meet the needs of the agricultural community.

"There is currently no requirement to wear a helmet for non-work purposes whilst driving a quad bike or SSV (side-by-side vehicle) in Queensland," he said.

A side-by-side vehicle seats two to six people

based on a quad bike model and has a bucket seating arrangement, steering wheel, seatbelts and a rollover protection system.

These recommendations were on a list of 15 Mr Lock handed down. Others included not allowing children to use adult-sized quad bikes and introducing a licensing scheme for quad bike riders, who would also

have to undergo training.

Mr Lock said the majority of deaths on quad bikes occurred in two age groups: 10-18 years old and people aged over 50.

He said quad bikes had become an essential piece of equipment on many farms but evidence during the inquest raised questions about their safety.

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