



For Immediate Release

Contact:
(949) 727-3727, ext. 3091

**New Consumer Product Safety Commission Report
Shows Decline in ATV Injury Rate for Second Consecutive Year**

*ATV Industry Continues to Support State Legislation, Rider Training/Education,
and Parental Supervision as Keys to Further Improving ATV Safety*

Irvine, Calif., January 26, 2005 -- A report released today by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC 2003 Annual Report of ATV Deaths and Injuries) shows that while the number of four wheel all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) in use increased by 700,000 units between 2002 and 2003, the estimated injuries per 10,000 ATVs declined for the second year in a row. The report indicates that the ATV injury rate has declined 6.2% from 2001 to 2003.

At the same time, the popularity of ATVs continues to increase. The number of ATVs in use grew 13% in 2003 from 2002. Since 1998, the number of ATVs in use has doubled.

Although the overall number of injuries has increased, when the rising popularity of ATVs is taken into account, there has been no appreciable upward trend in injury risk during the six year time period since CPSC's new injury sample and methodology has been in place. As noted, the injury risk has in fact declined from 2001 to 2003.

Further, the report shows that the proportion of total ATV injuries sustained by riders under 16 has fallen from 37% in 1998 to 31% in 2003. The report also indicates that the risk of fatality per 10,000 ATVs has declined 21% from 1999 to 2002.

"The CPSC report confirms that the industry's commitment to rider education, parental supervision, and state legislation is working to bring down injury and fatality rates," said Tim Buche, president of the Specialty Vehicle Institute of America (SVIA). "Millions of Americans operate ATVs safely and responsibly every day. It's unfortunate that more than 92% of ATV-related fatalities involve one or more behaviors that the industry strongly and visibly warns against in its rider education programs, in all its literature, and on the vehicle itself. The industry's top priority is to continue to work with the CPSC, user groups, retail dealerships, and all others interested in promoting ATV safety to further reduce the number of accidents resulting from misuse of the product."

(more)

Buche went on to say that, “We want to ensure that the injury trend continues in this direction – down, so it’s more important than ever to get the word out that kids don’t belong on adult-sized ATVs, and that all riders need to follow the industry’s recommended guidelines for safe and responsible riding. The bottom line is, even one crash or injury is one too many.”

New public awareness campaign targets children/parents

The ATV industry continues to fund new education campaigns to promote ATV safety. Most recently, the industry provided funding to Weekly Reader for a nationwide education program, *Protect Yourself, Protect the Planet*, to promote ATV safety and environmental awareness. The program will include the distribution of 20,000 educational kits including a teacher’s guide, student activity booklet, parent take-home brochure, and classroom poster to middle schools and high schools in specific geographic areas with high ATV use across the country. The materials are designed to help educate families, students, teachers, and community leaders about ATV safety and how to be environmentally-responsible riders. The program will reach millions of children, parents and guardians, community leaders and others.

Industry continues to promote state legislation to enforce ATV safety

Since 1986, the ATV industry has also promoted model state legislation that addresses vehicle misuse and restricts the operation of adult-sized ATVs to persons aged 16 and older. Following are the primary safety components of the industry’s Model ATV Safety Legislation:

1. Requires protective gear: All ATV riders are required to wear eye protection and an approved safety helmet.
2. Prohibits passengers: The carrying of passengers is not allowed in any circumstance.
3. Codifies operator age restrictions: No one under age 16 may operate an adult-sized ATV (engine capacity greater than 90cc) on public land. Youth-size ATVs (engine capacity 70cc up to and including 90cc) may be operated on public land only by those aged 12 and older.
4. Requires adult supervision: Persons under age 16 must be under continuous adult supervision while operating an ATV on public land.
5. Promotes education: States must implement a comprehensive ATV safety education and training program, which provides for the hands-on training of ATV operators.
6. Establishes safety certification: All persons operating an ATV on public land must have a safety certificate.
7. Prohibits ATV operation on public roads.

There are approximately 20 states with comprehensive ATV legislation and approximately 20 with minimal ATV legislation. The industry will continue to focus on those states that have inadequate or no ATV safety legislation.

About SVIA

Since 1983, the Specialty Vehicle Institute of America[®] (SVIA) has promoted the safe and responsible use of All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) through rider training programs, public awareness campaigns, and state legislation. SVIA also serves as a resource for ATV research, statistics, and vehicle standards. SVIA, based in Irvine, California, is a not-for-profit trade association sponsored by AlphaSports, Arctic Cat, Bombardier, Bush Hog, Honda, John Deere, Kawasaki, Suzuki and Yamaha. For membership information, call (949) 727-3727; for safety information or to enroll in an *ATV RiderCourse*SM, call (800) 887-2887 or visit www.atvsafety.org.