



For Immediate Release

Contact

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SVIA Responds to Wall Street Journal Article on ATVs

IRVINE, Calif., Feb. 11, 2004 – In response to an article that ran in the Wall St. Journal on Feb. 10, 2004, the Specialty Vehicle Institute of America (SVIA) submitted the following “Letter to the Editor:”

“Letter to the Editor,” Wall Street Journal

A united ATV industry puts safety first

Your Feb. 10 front page article on all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) highlights some of the challenges faced by a high-growth industry seeking to protect its customers – often from their own behaviors. In fact, more than 92% of all accidents involve one or more user behaviors that are strongly and visibly “warned against” by the industry in dealerships, in product literature, in public awareness messages, through rider training, and on the vehicle itself. These risky behaviors include riding without a helmet, riding with a passenger, children riding adult-sized ATVs, riding on public roads, riding under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, and riding at excessive speed. That’s why the industry so strongly supports state legislation – because only *states* have the legislative and enforcement power to regulate *consumer use* of products. The federal government can’t do that. The United States Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) can’t do that.

Based on the actions of a few dealers with their own state legislative agenda, the article mischaracterizes the industry as being divided. This is simply not true. The major U.S. distributors and manufacturers of ATVs have, for more than two decades, made unprecedented and unified efforts to promote the safe and responsible use of ATVs and to deter parents from allowing their children to use adult-size ATVs. Indeed, the Industry’s Model State Legislation has served as the basis for many existing state ATV safety laws. The article also failed to mention that the major ATV manufacturers, through the ATV Safety Institute (ASI) or their own dealers, offer free training to all purchasers of new ATVs and their

eligible family members. In fact, most manufacturers offer a \$100 cash incentive to first-time purchasers who take training. More than 510,000 riders have taken the ASI RiderCourse since 1988. In any given week, 200-300 training classes are conducted nationwide by one of 1,800 licensed ASI Instructors.

In the United States, sales of new ATVs have increased steadily since 1991. Sales figures for 2002 were 5.6% over those of 2001. Even with this dramatic growth, the CPSC data showed a 5% decline in the injury rate from 2001 to 2002. But even one injury is one injury too many. The safe and responsible use of ATVs remains the top priority of the ATV industry, and the industry will continue to enhance its multi-tiered efforts aimed at further reducing the number of accidents and injuries caused by improper use of ATVs.

ATV owners, prospective ATV purchasers, and other interested consumers are encouraged to visit the ATV Safety Institute's website (www.atvsafety.org) or call toll-free for training information, (800) 887-2887.

Sincerely,

Tom Yager
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ASI

The All-Terrain Vehicle Safety Institute® (ASI), a not-for-profit division of the Specialty Vehicle Institute of America® (SVIA), was formed in 1988 to implement an expanded national program of all-terrain vehicle (ATV) safety education and awareness. ASI's primary goal is to promote the safe and responsible use of ATVs, thereby reducing accidents and injuries that may result from improper ATV operation by the rider. For safety information or to enroll in an ATV *RiderCourse*SM, call (800) 887-2887 or visit www.atvsafety.org.

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, 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.