
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

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Ministry of Forests Lands and
Natural Resource Operations

Off-road Vehicle Act

What is an off-road vehicle?

- An off-road vehicle (ORV) includes snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles (or “quads”), off-road motorcycles, side-by-sides (i.e. rhino, argo, razors) and dual purpose on-highway vehicles such as jeeps, trucks, and SUVs.
- ORVs are used for work, leisure and commuting purposes.
- Sectors that rely on ORVs include forestry, farming, ranching and sport/tourism.

Is the ORV Act now the law?

- The ORV Act is being implemented in stages and started on November 17, 2014 with voluntary registration.
- November 2015 is targeted to bring in the rest of the ORV Act provisions and the regulations for mandatory registration and safety.

Why has registration and safety regulations been delayed from June 2015 to November 2015?

- In response to stakeholder feedback, government will be introducing a sticker option as an alternative to a metal plate. The additional time is necessary to provide a sticker and develop supporting regulations.
- The extra time also provides additional time for off-road users to prepare for the mandatory registration, while the regulatory details are finalized on both registration and safety.

Will the ORV Act apply to other vehicles such as jeeps and trucks, currently used off-road on Crown land?

- The Act is designed to address the constantly changing types of vehicles being manufactured to be used off-road on Crown land and this includes jeeps and trucks.
- Stakeholders pointed out that safety laws need to apply to all types of ORVs including jeeps and trucks to ensure vehicles used off-road follow the laws such as use of seatbelts and lights.
- However, if a truck is registered and licensed under the *Motor Vehicle Act* (displaying a number plate and valid/current decal) already, it will be deemed to be in compliance under the ORV Act once registration is mandatory when riding on Crown land.

Where will the ORV Act apply? Will it be just on Crown land or on private land as well?

- For the most part, the Act will apply only to Crown land (which includes resource roads on Crown land), and private land will be exempt.
- There are some exceptions, however, where certain private lands can be designated under regulation. This might include certain greenbelts or regional and municipal parks at the request of local government.

Why are registration and a number plate or sticker important?

- Modernizing the registration scheme will help enforcement officers better identify irresponsible ORV riders that endanger others, damage the environment or harm animals.
- In addition, it will help enforcement officers track stolen vehicles since ICBC's registration data would be available to officers 24/7.

When will registration be mandatory on Crown land?

- Mandatory registration is targeted for November 1, 2015.
- Owners have the option of voluntarily registering their ORVs through an ICBC broker; however, it will not be mandatory to do so until November 2015.

What is the registration fee set at and will it be payable every year or only once?

- The combined number plate (or sticker) and registration fee is a one-time fee of \$48.
- ORV owners will only be required to register their ORV once. The registration and number plate (or sticker) will be valid as long as the same person owns the vehicle.
- ORVs transferred to a new owner will be required to register the transfer with ICBC and a one-time \$28 fee will apply at that time. An additional \$18 will apply if a replacement number plate or sticker is required.
- Snowmobile owners who have already registered their vehicles under the Motor Vehicle (All Terrain) Act will be eligible for refund, up until November 16, 2015, for the amount they had already paid – this will be \$5 for transfers and \$10 for registration.

How will the snowmobile refund program work?

- Current snowmobile owners that have registered or transferred their vehicle under the previous regime will be eligible for a refund, up until November 16, 2015, when they register under the ORV Act. The refund can be applied to the new registration under the ORV Act.
- Allowing a refund to be applied ensures fairness with those who have already paid a fee and are being asked to re-register.

Why does a snowmobile registered under the Motor Vehicle (All Terrain) Act need to be re-registered under the ORV Act?

- Transitioning from a manual snowmobile registry to a database registry -- the same as on-highway vehicles -- will ensure that enforcement officers have 24/7 access to the registration information to better identify irresponsible ORV riders and to track down stolen vehicles.

How will out-of-province unregistered owners of ORVs be treated?

- ORV owners from other jurisdictions that are not registered and do not display a number plate, or sticker will be required to register with ICBC if the ORV is used or operated on Crown land or prescribed private lands.
- ORVs that already have valid registration and have met plate/sticker requirements from their home jurisdiction would not need to register.
- For example, Alberta owners are already required to be registered and display a plate in Alberta so they would not need to register again in B.C. However, in Saskatchewan, snowmobiles are registered but not ATVs. ATVs from Saskatchewan would be required to be registered in B.C. but if, in the future, Saskatchewan requires ATVs to be registered then a resident of Saskatchewan with a registered ORV would not need to also register in B.C.

What happens when an out of province resident that is registered in B.C. returns to their home jurisdiction with a B.C. plate or sticker?

- B.C. will not require the surrender of the number plate or sticker. ORV owners will, however, need to comply with the registration requirements of the jurisdiction where the ORV is operated.

What information do I need to bring to the broker to register my ORV?

- Information can vary depending on whether your ORV is new, used or being imported from another country
- For a detailed list of information for each of these scenarios, visit the ICBC website at: <http://www.icbc.com/vehicle-registration/specialty-vehicles/Pages/Off-road-vehicles.aspx>
- If you're uncertain on what documents you need to register your ORV, contact your local ICBC Autoplan broker who can help figure out which documents fit your situation best.

Under what circumstances do I need registration, licensing or insurance for my ORV?

- Registration
 - On November 1, 2015, ORV owners will need to register their ORV if it will be used on Crown land, including resource roads.
 - ORV owners not already registered will be required to register their ORV if obtaining a licence to operate on or across a highway.
 - If an ORV has been previously registered and licensed for on-highway operation, the registration and the licence plate will be deemed to be in compliance with the ORV Act when the ORV is used on Crown land.
 - All new owners of an ORV previously registered under the ORV Act will be required to register the transfer of ownership with ICBC within 10 days of purchase.
- Annual vehicle licence – This only applies to ORV riders who choose to access public road/highway crossings or for authorized operation along portions of the right of way. ORV riders that operate only on Crown land will only need registration and the associated number plate. Licensed ORVs can be used to:
 - Operate across a highway (without having to obtain an operation permit from the local police) if the crossing is controlled by stop sign or traffic light;
 - Load or unload in a parking lot (without an operation permit); and
 - Operate on any highway anywhere else local police authorize through an operation permit.
- Insurance – On public roads and highways, Basic insurance continues to be a requirement for all motorists; ORV riders who opt for incidental access to highways will require ICBC's Basic insurance. On Forest Service Roads, \$200,000 in third party liability insurance continues to be a requirement. On all other Crown land, liability insurance is voluntary but recommended.
- Driver's Licence – On public roads and highways, a valid driver's licence continues to be a requirement for all motorists; a driver's licence is also required to operate an ORV on a forest service road.
- Police-issued Operation permit – an operation permit, issued free of charge by police, may be required as a condition of highway operation. Operation permits are not required for highway crossings controlled by a stop sign or traffic light or when loading and unloading an ORV from another vehicle in a parking lot. In all other circumstances, an operation permit is required for on-highway operation. Operation permits must be obtained from the police department/detachment nearest where an ORV will be operated (or from any RCMP detachment along the Gold Rush Snowmobile Trail for operation on the Trail). For more information on operation permits, please refer to the following ICBC document: <http://www.icbc.com/vehicle-registration/specialty-vehicles/Documents/operation-permit.pdf>. Additional information may also be obtained from the police department/detachment nearest the location you plan to operate.

For more information on the registration, licensing or insurance requirements, please visit your local ICBC Autoplan broker.

What does ICBC Basic insurance include?

- For information on specific insurance packages, please contact an ICBC Autoplan broker.

How do I know if a road is a highway or a Forest Service Road?

- Paved public roads within communities and highways are subject to the Motor Vehicle Act. Although some gravel roads are also highways, the majority of gravel roads are typically Forest Service Roads or other types of resource roads on Crown land.
- If you plan to travel on Crown land and access resource roads, you are encouraged to contact your local FLNR district office to confirm the status of the road.

What size will the number plate or sticker be?

- It will be 5" x 8", the same size as existing plates on-highway motorcycles and registered snowmobiles.
- The sticker will be of similar size, with exact dimensions to be announced soon.

Will I be able to remove the sticker easily if I sell my vehicle?

- The stickers will be printed on material chosen to survive a range of temperatures and conditions they will be exposed to.
- Not unlike validation decals for car insurance, the stickers will not be easy to remove if attached directly on the ORV and may be unusable for display on another vehicle upon transfer.
- Owners choosing the sticker option should be aware that if they later wish to sell their ORV, the stickers will have to be taken off first.
- Since registration number plates are easily removed without damaging a vehicle paint-job upon transfer of ownership, a number plate continues to be preferred option for most ORV owners

Where do I mount the number plate or sticker to comply with the ORV Act regulations?

- When registration becomes mandatory, the regulations will clearly indicate where the number plate or sticker must be mounted.
- During the voluntary registration period, the plate or sticker does not have to be mounted to use an ORV on Crown land.
- In addition, if you have ORV Act registration and a number plate, it may be used for highways crossings if the ORV is also licensed and insured under the Motor Vehicle Act. In that circumstance, the number plate must be on the rear of the ORV.

What do I specifically need for highway crossings and how will that work between now and November 1, 2015?

- Under the Motor Vehicle Act (MVA), it is mandatory for the driver and the ORV to be licensed, to display a number plate (or sticker), and have Basic insurance as evidenced by a valid insurance decal while on a highway (except while exempt as an industrial utility vehicle under MVA s. 3.1).
- Authorized ORV highway use is limited to incidental travel directly across a highway at a controlled crossing (traffic light or stop sign), loading or unloading from another vehicle in a parking lot, or travel on any highway anywhere local police authorize within the limits set out in an MV1815 *Operation Permit*. Under the new MVA regulations, these permits can be issued for a term of up to two years.
- Law enforcement may continue to exercise discretion as set out in regulation to issue permits for operation within their areas of jurisdiction. Permits can be issued to both snowmobiles and also wheeled ORVs.
- An ORV operating on or across a highway can display a Restricted number plate, the new ORV number plate (or sticker), or no number plate at all if exempted as an industrial utility vehicle. Contact your ICBC insurance broker for specific information on which option is most appropriate for your individual needs.

What are the rules regarding Provincial Sales Tax and ORV registration?

- For detailed information on Provincial Sales Tax see the Ministry of Finance notice located at: http://www.sbr.gov.bc.ca/documents_library/notices/notice_2013-011.pdf