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STATE DEVELOPMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND WORKS COMMITTEE

Mr JJ McDonald MP—Chair
Ms JM Bush MP
Mr TA James MP
Mr D Kempton MP
Mr SR King MP
Mr BJ Mellish MP

Staff present:

Ms S Galbraith—Committee Secretary
Ms R Duncan—Assistant Committee Secretary

PUBLIC HEARING—INQUIRY INTO E-MOBILITY SAFETY AND USE IN QUEENSLAND

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

Wednesday, 23 July 2025

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WEDNESDAY, 23 JULY 2025

The committee met at 10.03 am.

CHAIR: Good morning. I declare open this public hearing of the inquiry into e-mobility safety and use in Queensland. I am Jim McDonald. I am the member for Lockyer and the chair of the committee. With me here today are: Ms Jonty Bush, the member for Cooper and deputy chair; Mr Terry James, the member for Mulgrave; Mr David Kempton, the member for Cook; Mr Shane King, the member for Kurwongbah; and Mr Bart Mellish, the member for Aspley.

The purpose of today's hearing is to assist the committee with its examination of e-mobility safety and use in Queensland. This hearing is a proceeding of the Queensland parliament and is subject to the parliament's standing rules and orders. Only the committee and invited witnesses may participate in the proceedings. Witnesses are not required to give evidence under oath or affirmation but I remind witnesses that intentionally misleading the committee is a serious offence. I also remind members of the public that they may be excluded from the hearing at the discretion of the committee.

These proceedings are being recorded by parliamentary reporters. Media may be present and are subject to the committee's media rules and the chair's direction at all times. You may be filmed or photographed during the proceedings and images may also appear on the parliament's website and social media pages. Please turn your mobile phones off or to silent mode.

Today, we will be hearing from invited witnesses and then at the end of today's proceedings we will have about 30 minutes to hear from anyone in the audience who has registered to share their views with the committee. Speaking opportunities are limited so we ask that each participant keep their contributions to around three minutes, except for the planned witnesses at the table. I would like welcome everybody. It is great to see so many people here. It is wonderful to bring a piece of parliament to regional Queensland and to the Gold Coast today.

SUHARTO, Mr Sonny, Acting Coordinator, Road Safety, Infrastructure Gold Coast, City of Gold Coast

WISE, Mrs Renee, Manager, Transport Operations, Infrastructure Gold Coast, City of Gold Coast

CHAIR: Would you like to make an opening statement before we start our questions?

Mrs Wise: Firstly, I would like to do an acknowledgement of country. We acknowledge and pay respects to the traditional Aboriginal people of these lands and waters and we acknowledge all their descendants. We also acknowledge the many Aboriginal people from other regions as well as Torres Strait and South Sea Islander peoples who now live in the local area and have made an important contribution to the community.

I thank the committee for inviting the City of Gold Coast to be a witness at today's public hearing. Our statement today is largely based on the contents of our submission. In this regard, in preparing our submission we consulted with the city's councillors, reviewed correspondence and complaints from residents and visitors, and analysed available crash data. We also sought advice from various sections within the city, including subject matter experts specialising in transport operations, transport planning, local laws and compliance, and officers responsible for the operation of our beaches, parks and waste collection.

At this point, I acknowledge the informal Gold Coast e-bike and e-scooter working group that was established in 2022, which includes representatives from the city, the Department of Transport and Main Roads, the Queensland police, Gold Coast Health and the Royal Automobile Club of Queensland. This group has assisted the city with education and communication initiatives, including e-mobility road safety pop-up events located along the city's Oceanway and provided support at various other community events. I also acknowledge the efforts of the Queensland Police Service on the Gold Coast in undertaking e-mobility enforcement and the assistance they have provided the city in undertaking community education. I will now hand over to my colleague, Sonny Suharto, who will talk to our submission in further detail.

Mr Suharto: Current Commonwealth standards, rules and enforcement processes for vehicle importation have enabled the import and sale of noncompliant e-mobility devices to the Australian market. Within the Gold Coast, this has led to the sale and rapid influx of devices where consumers are not fully aware of the differences between compliant and noncompliant devices. Significant safety concerns about excessive speed, lack of enforcement, unsafe rider behaviour, poor attitudes towards safety and a disregard of other road or path users have been expressed by residents and visitors. This is also demonstrated by the rise in hospital admissions resulting from e-mobility crashes and reported PMD and e-bike crashes. The city's local laws are ineffective in enforcing noncompliant or illegal devices and QPS efforts in enforcement are acknowledged and appreciated. The city advocates for reform of the importation and enforcement processes for e-mobility devices.

In terms of suggested areas of investigation of this matter, the city supports the inquiry to advocate for: reform of Commonwealth legislation relating to the importation and enforcement processes for PMDs and e-bikes; mandated compliance with EN15194 or the equivalent Australian Standard prior to sale; buyback initiatives and incentives for noncompliant e-mobility devices; e-mobility device certification and labelling where all imported devices are to carry visible certification labels indicating compliance and a national registry of approved e-mobility devices; and public education and retailer accountability where a national awareness campaign on legal device requirements is developed and retailers are accountable for selling only compliant devices.

With regard to regulatory frameworks, current road rules for e-mobility devices are inconsistent and difficult for community members to understand. There is confusion over what constitutes a compliant device, what speed limits apply, who can ride the different devices and where the different e-mobility devices can be ridden. The city advocates for the development of credible e-mobility road rules and penalties that can be tangibly enforced. The QPS needs to be a part of the development process of those rules.

Where does e-mobility sit within the transport system? Active travel infrastructure on the Gold Coast is not designed to fully separate e-mobility from cyclists and pedestrians. The city's pathways have not been designed for the volume, speed, weight and acceleration of e-mobility devices.

Suggested areas of investigation include: reform state legislation and guidance in relation to active travel and mobility; define active travel and e-mobility distinctly; define suitable infrastructure for both active travel and e-mobility; allow local governments to sign a default speed limit for PMDs on pathways to improve compliance and awareness with a default system, which includes e-bikes; apply consistent rules for e-bikes and PMDs, particularly in relation to speed limits; and reassess the appropriateness of the minimum age for the use of legal PMDs and e-bikes. In terms of local enforcement, clarify roles and responsibilities and appropriately define roles for state and local governments to enforce e-mobility effectively.

In terms of enforcement approaches, the current enforcement approaches and powers are ineffective in addressing high-risk e-mobility use in illegal devices. Local laws are insufficient, enforcement powers are limited and operational challenges persist. A coordinated approach involving legislative reform, technological support and shared responsibilities is essential to improve safety and compliance in the use of e-mobility devices.

Suggested areas of investigation are for the Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act to include: a requirement that e-bikes and PMDs to be used outside of a private property or in a public place require registration or a permit of some kind to assist in establishing who is a responsible person and enable action to be taken where the user is not complying with relevant conditions; specific regulation around e-bike and PMD use; and prescribe offences that relate specifically to speed on a footpath and on a road so that the QPS are more easily able to regulate those offences; offences where the impact of e-bike and PMD use on members of the public can be prescribed; calls up the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 where a PMD user causes anxiety or an issue to another person in a similar way to public nuisance; and the prescription of particular areas, for example, a park or areas within a park, council property and bathing reserves that prescribes that the use of a motorised or electric device including an e-bike, e-scooter or other e-powered device is prohibited so QPS officers can more easily enforce.

Enforcement tools and technology include: investigate automated enforcement technology, for example, number-plate recognition; investigate registration systems to link e-mobility devices to owners; and investigate CCTV and smart surveillance to identify and report e-mobility offences.

In terms of broad stakeholder perspectives, there is inconsistent speed management and confusion among the community about speed limits for the different e-mobility devices. To compound this, there are limited options available to local governments to sign speed limits on paths. To reform

the e-mobility speed framework to include PMDs and e-bikes requires credible road rules and penalties; updated guidance for applying speed limits on footpaths, including signage standards; a robust approvals process; and credible enforcement by the QPS.

In addition, there is confusion around rules within Queensland and New South Wales, especially in the population on the southern Gold Coast. For example, in New South Wales you can ride a bicycle, PMD or other device on the road only but in Queensland you can only ride on the footpath. To that end, we have developed an e-bike and personal mobility device brochure for Queensland and New South Wales, which we would like to submit as part of today's inquiry. Thank you very much, committee.

CHAIR: Leave is granted. We look forward to getting a copy of that.

Mr MELLISH: Thank you for appearing today. Sonny, following on from what you mentioned in your opening contribution in terms of the types of imported vehicles—e-bikes and e-scooters—has there been a noticeable change in the types of vehicles on the footpaths and roads since 2021?

Mr Suharto: We were invited by QPS to go to Miami State High School to attend a presentation on their behalf and we noticed that there were hundreds of e-bikes and other e-mobility devices, including electric scooters that looked like mopeds and that kind of thing. There is quite a visible presence of those devices on our road network.

Mr KEMPTON: I would like to commend you on your submission. Most submissions we have had so far have been very comprehensive, which makes our job easy. There is a lot of data going around. Would you support the centralisation of that data so that we could have a meaningful response over time to the issues that do arise? It is pretty fragmented as it stands. What do you think about that?

Mr Suharto: That would definitely help. Within the crash data, e-bikes are currently grouped with bicycles, and it takes a fair bit of work to look through the crash data to isolate the crashes that involved e-bikes. Yes, a consolidated data repository or group would be very beneficial for us not just for crash data but also for hospitalisation data and perhaps the views of the community as well. That would give us a clearer understanding of how the community perceives these devices in different parts of the network in Queensland.

Mr KING: Sonny, I was going to ask about specific design elements or standards but you went through that in great detail, so I was wondering if you could flesh a few out. We heard yesterday from the hire companies about how they are able to geofence these devices so they are speed limited in certain areas and actually cannot go in other areas. At Neighbourhood Watch meetings and the like in my area I hear from residents that kids are whizzing past. I am not defending that behaviour because they should be letting people know when they are doing that. There is no way to tell how fast these things are going. As a design rule, a speedometer could be fitted to them so people actually know what speed they are going or there could be electronic controlling. I just wanted your thoughts on that. You mentioned that, under the TO(RUM) Act, there could be some sort of registration or permit for them. I suppose that is a federal thing, but I just want your thoughts on their having to meet certain Australian design rules and having a compliance plate so they can be registered. I am just after your thoughts on those two topics, please.

Mr Suharto: In terms of the speed, a speedometer would definitely be welcome if they are not built into the device already. Could you repeat the second part again, please?

Mr KING: To be registered, they would have to have a compliance plate of some sort and meet Australian design regulations. We understand that a lot of them do not. I looked at eBay the other day and I could buy a wheel and a battery for my pushbike which are over the rating and it would not have a compliance plate. I am just wondering what your thoughts are on that.

Mr Suharto: We would definitely support having the correct compliance plates on an e-bike or e-scooter, for sure. Where we talk about registration, we mean registration of the device. It would have a numberplate, or something like that, so if an offence were committed and recorded the registration would tie it back to the owner. That is where we were coming from with that comment.

Mr KING: To register a vehicle it has to have some form of ID on it, which a compliance plate would provide.

Mr Suharto: It needs to have that, yes. I understand.

Mr JAMES: I would like to reiterate what the member for Cook said: it is a fantastic report that you have submitted. There are a lot of commonalities with what we have been hearing so far. The area of compliance and regulation seems to be a big one as well as crossing different jurisdictions—be it state, federal or local areas. Would you support all these powers being devolved to council by-law officers to look after all of the areas? We know that the police resources are stretched. Instead of having them running around and chasing e-bikes in different areas and through parks as opposed to doing what they do best, it would probably be better devolved with the council by-law officers. Can you comment on that?

Mr Suharto: I will refer to Renee for that one.

Mrs Wise: From the internal stakeholder engagement that we have done within the city with our compliance officers, our local laws officers and also our elected representatives, I can say they would not be supportive of passing those powers on to the city.

Mr JAMES: Is there any reason for that?

Mrs Wise: It comes down to the powers of our officers. If you do not comply with a local laws officer the consequence is somewhat limited, whereas if you do not comply with a QPS officer the escalation point is you get arrested. We just do not have that same power in the eyes of the community, I guess.

Mr JAMES: That is why I was suggesting devolving special powers to the by-law officers and the police could be called in if there is a very tricky situation.

Mrs Wise: The internal feedback is we would not support that.

Ms BUSH: Thanks, Renee and Sonny, for coming here today. I thank everyone for coming along and giving up their morning for what is a really important issue. I am optimistic that we will find some solutions. Thank you for your submission. I want to talk to you about infrastructure. Amongst other things, councils are responsible for infrastructure and making sure that infrastructure meets the changing needs of their community. You have mentioned that the city was not built at a time when these items were around, so the infrastructure is not keeping up.

What percentage of your transport budget do you allocate to bike paths and to shared paths so you can modernise your infrastructure? What changes do you think need to be made to make it safer for everyone to walk around and cycle safely? What additional support might you need from the state government to help you deliver on those priorities for your constituents?

Mrs Wise: I will have to take that on notice in relation to the costs. I do not know the dollar value off the top of my head at this point in time. In relation to designing the infrastructure, we have looked at the Oceanway on the Gold Coast, which is very popular. It is quite wide. There is a mix of different users: we have people with prams and dogs and we have these e-mobility devices now. We have investigated a couple of projects that would separate the faster devices. Given the nature of the Gold Coast foreshore areas, the problem we have is there is a lot of mixed uses and we have a lot of cross-movement demands as well—people accessing the beach and people going from barbecues to picnic tables to playgrounds and things like that. When you separate these devices, the research shows that they actually go faster.

If you put a corridor through our foreshore for these devices, they will go faster and then we will actually be creating a bigger safety issue because we will have people crossing between those faster devices. When they are mixing with everybody on the Oceanway, they have to go a bit slower by nature because they themselves are getting out of the way and moving in amongst the other users. We have looked into it. What we would ask for is more design guidance from the state and more research into best practice as far as designing for these devices is concerned.

Ms BUSH: That really makes sense to me. In that example, you are right and I can see how that would happen, and I can see how other local governments have created slow lanes and fast lanes. The environment is there to do work in. What I am hearing from you is you need a bit more guidance from the state. Is funding a barrier for you, or are you comfortable that you could roll out changes within the budget that you have?

Mrs Wise: Additional funding is always welcomed. We do have a healthy capital works program, particularly to commit to some of the smaller councils. I think it is around the guidance. Once we are given what the best practice is, what we should be doing, we will start to incorporate that into our capital projects.

Ms BUSH: You could also fund enforcement officers in a fast lane.

Mrs Wise: Yes.

Ms BUSH: Have you considered what a full comprehensive budget would look like to find a solution for your people?

Mrs Wise: Not at this point in time.

Ms BUSH: Thank you.

CHAIR: I recognise our colleague Hermann Vorster, the member for Burleigh, is here, and Laura Gerber's office is represented here today too. Laura is up in Cairns and Townsville promoting some other things. Thank you, again, for being here.

As has been said, the submission that you have made is very good. The Gold Coast is obviously a leader in dealing with these issues. Can you tell the committee some things that other councils across the state could learn from the City of Gold Coast and the changes you have made to local laws, particularly around these higher speed PMDs?

Mr Suharto: Education and communication are the key things that we have come away with. These are the things that we can actually control. To that end, we put together an informal Gold Coast e-mobility working group, and that has enabled a lot of collaboration between different state departments and the council. Live examples of that include the road safety pop-ups, which have a core focus on e-mobility. They have been quite successful. We invite along the local councillors, representatives from Transport and Main Roads and also QPS. We get a lot of cooperation from the local police here attending those events, which is fantastic.

To that end, we have also produced a lot of communication documentation in hard copy and we also spread that through our social media outlets, which have been quite successful and have a lot of reach. In terms of learning about the issues that we have in our community, they might be different from other councils but they should be known by them. For example, hired bike schemes in Brisbane might be run differently from the way they are on the Gold Coast and have different outcomes, but they are things that we have been able to excel at and can provide different perspectives and information on to other councils.

CHAIR: Thank you, Sonny. It is key to have the voice of experience bring all of those stakeholders together and share the responses. I appreciate that. It is a cultural change that we need.

Ms BUSH: I am also interested in waste recovery. We heard yesterday from the Fire Department how these batteries can explode or catch alight quite quickly and how important it is to keep batteries out of our waste disposal or recovery scheme. Do you have examples of how that is affecting council? Have there been any adverse impacts? Do you know what a good battery recovery scheme would look like for council?

Mr Suharto: I have talked with our waste recycling operations people and, at this stage, batteries related to e-mobility devices have not been a major issue. Perhaps when those batteries are towards their end of life more incidents may occur. There may have been reported fires and that kind of thing in Southport. What they do experience, though, is incidents from smaller batteries such as vape devices and the like. The waste management and recycling people would like guidance from the state government and to collaborate with the state government to work out the best way forward for this.

Ms BUSH: So it is not something you have developed. You are dealing with it on a small scale with vapes, but to scale that up you would need a bit of guidance, a bit of support and maybe some budgetary assistance from the state?

Mr Suharto: That would be right, and then also perhaps learning from other jurisdictions within the country or within Queensland to understand what their experience has been like.

Ms BUSH: Has council undertaken any modelling around where it might get to and at what time you might need to start doing that collaboration and putting a bit of a policy or a program in place?

Mr Suharto: Not at this time.

Ms BUSH: Thank you.

CHAIR: The RACQ yesterday gave us a clear proposition. They said that anything that can operate above 25 kilometres an hour should not be considered an e-mobility or e-device and should be either classified as illegal or made a motorbike. What do you think about that proposition?

Mr Suharto: That tends to contribute towards better outcomes in the future, I would say. In terms of some of the incidents that we have read about with the illegal devices—for example, big dirt bikes being ridden on footpaths and colliding into vehicles—I go back to your comment there, Jim, I think that is a good idea.

Mr KING: In your submission, you mentioned using the light rail corridor for e-scooters. Could you flesh that out a bit to see what regulations would need to change? Could you take that on notice?

Mr Suharto: Yes.

CHAIR: There are two questions taken on notice today—one is about the infrastructure costs and the second one is that final question. If you could respond to those questions to the secretariat by Tuesday, 12 August, that would be great. Thank you for appearing today and the information you have provided to the committee.

JONES, Mr Paul, Research Officer, Gold Coast North Chamber of Commerce and Industry

CHAIR: Welcome. I invite you to make a brief opening statement before the committee has some questions for you.

Mr Jones: Good morning, Chair, and members of the committee. I am standing in for the secretary, Mr Gary Mays, who is unable to attend due to medical commitments. We appreciate the opportunity to contribute to this inquiry because a business community needs safe public spaces to support commerce and tourism. Tourists and residents must have constant and clear rules across Queensland.

Let me start with a blunt truth: we are behind the curve. E-mobility is not a trend; it is a transport revolution. They bring clear benefits—reduced emissions, better access to transport, economic opportunity—but the risks have grown faster than our laws. There is a growing concern from health professionals about the increase in preventable injuries and trauma involving e-scooters, especially on the Gold Coast. The current rate of growth, combined with loopholes in the legislation, has created a public safety crisis. Emergency services, especially on the Gold Coast, are feeling the strain and it is not just riders at risk. All pedestrians—including children, the elderly and people with disabilities—are navigating increasingly dangerous public spaces.

We support the current e-mobility framework, but we call for critical enhancement to ensure public safety, regulatory accountability and community confidence. The core of the problem is 21st century vehicles regulated by 20th century laws. High-powered, throttle only stealth bikes are entering the market disguised as e-bikes. They look like motorbikes, are fast, are unregistered, are often throttle only and are completely unaccountable. They exploit the gap between Commonwealth import laws and Queensland usage laws. The current law treats powerful devices as bicycles, despite their higher speed, greater weight and motorbike appearance.

There is no training, licence or awareness courses. There is no national battery safety consistency. There is weak retail accountability and confused enforcement on-the-ground. We support the introduction of serious penalties for unsafe riding or modifications. Our position is that safety must come first and regulations must catch up. The time to act is now. We have six practical suggestions for your consideration.

The first is implementing a tiered licensing system. All noncompliant, high-powered, high-speed e-mobility devices should be deemed motorbikes under Queensland law, requiring registration and motorcycle licensing. For the legal e-devices we propose online safety permit tests for those aged 12 to 17 and the issuing of e-mobility licences with photo and unique ID numbers.

The second is mandatory safety gear. Standard helmets are no longer enough. Young riders often wear dark gear, making them nearly invisible at night. We propose high-face, reflective helmets, not black, and mandatory safety vests—mandatory.

The third is in terms of retail accountability. We support a state-led compliance awareness program to assist retailers in understanding and enforcing rules on device imports and sales. Retailers should record the device and the purchaser's details on a government register. A helmet and vest should be included in the point-of-sale price, and they should sell only compliant devices with tamper-proof ID plates.

The fourth is safe infrastructure. Infrastructure investment is urgently needed to make roads and public spaces safer. We need dedicated e-mobility lanes, scooter parking hubs to avoid footpath clutter and better lighting on active transport routes. In terms of footpaths and shared walkways, we support the banning of e-scooters and e-bikes on footpaths and shared pedestrian paths but only if safer alternatives are created, including protected bike e-mobility lanes. There should be: shared low-speed local roads of 30 kilometres and under; transit station parking; and geofence retail precincts with staged implementation.

Infrastructure and policy must evolve together. Any ban should be accompanied by bold investment in transport design, constant signage, education and enforcement. In terms of shopping centres and retail precincts, we support a ban on riding inside shopping centres and riding on footpaths outside shops and restaurants. We also support: dismount zones; designated e-mobility parking; geofence, low-speed corridors; and wayfinding tools and signage. E-mobility and retail can coexist in the future but it needs rules, infrastructure and communication. Instead of banning them entirely, councils and business groups should continue to create safe, predictable and courteous alternate solutions to control or restrict behaviour of these devices.

The fifth relates to a battery fire risk. Lithium ion battery safety is crucial. We support: mandatory battery safety standards; storage and charging guidelines for apartments and homes; and public transport fire risk reviews.

The sixth is we need education and awareness. We support beginning safety education from the age of 12, including school-based road safety programs, as well as public campaigns and social media on speeding, mobile phone use, battery hazards and dangerous driving. We propose a Gold Coast north e-mobility safety forum to meet quarterly with council, police, fire, ambulance, transport and education representatives.

My final message to the committee is that this is not a wish list; it is a road map. It is how we together can reduce injuries, empower enforcement and protect public spaces. Queensland can lead the nation before another tragedy strikes. With the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games ahead, now is the moment to show leadership. Let's act now. Thank you. I welcome questions.

Mr MELLISH: Thank you for your submission and for appearing today. In your submission you propose a wideranging public education campaign. What messages would you say need to be prioritised in a campaign like that?

Mr Jones: I have to be truthful. I have only just recently worked with the chamber of commerce but I can tell you that the people I have come across are great people. They are very motivated and they want to do the best for the community. They put on a lot of programs. They are community-minded. They are happy to get out to talk to the community, and they are very proactive with the businesspeople.

Mr MELLISH: You mentioned school-based training in your submission as an option. Is that something you would be keen to pursue as well?

Mr Jones: Yes, it is very important that they start very young at school-based training. We have got a great education department, and there are a lot of people there who know a lot more than us. Hopefully, they will take it on board and continue the education programs they are doing. The 12-year-olds have just started high school and it is very important that the training starts young.

Mr KEMPTON: Thanks for your very succinct submission. From the perspective of a chamber of commerce—and given there is no user-pays proposal and there are infrastructure costs, compliance enforcement costs, parking stations and so on, and you mentioned that the benefits are mainly health and lifestyle but also economic opportunity—has any work been done on the actual economic benefits that have arisen to date at all to balance against the costs of providing the infrastructure?

Mr Jones: I could comment individually but could that be referred onto the secretary for further address?

CHAIR: Yes. What you are saying is that you do not want to speak on that on behalf of the chamber of commerce.

Mr Jones: I could give my opinion but I think it is best coming from the secretary of the chamber.

CHAIR: I am happy for you to take that on notice and send it to the secretariat.

Mr Jones: I am sure they are on top of all of those points.

Mr KING: Thanks for coming in today. I was very interested when you mentioned geofencing. I know the hire companies use that. In a perfect world, every machine would be able to be geofenced, and maybe that is where we are going with the compliance that you are mentioning. I had a question from left field and it is a bit like 'be careful what you wish for'. Once again, in my Neighbourhood Watch meetings in my area I hear that these things come upon people very quickly as they are walking their dogs and walking on the paths and they frighten people. I am thinking of the ability for them to make a noise, and I know they have a bell and that is an education process in itself—so something that makes a noise if it senses a proximity. That is why I say 'be careful what you wish for' because it could create another problem of noise pollution. What are your thoughts on that?

Mr Jones: Basically, I do not know too much about geofencing. However, from just reading information about it, it is good for small areas and communities. I found that there is not one model for every area. There are hubs around the place and there are zones. There could be tourist zones and there could be retail zones. All these zones are different. When people are walking their dogs et cetera, it is unpredictable what their dogs can do if you are on a pushbike behind them. A lot of pedestrians are partly deaf, some are talking or they have dogs which are unpredictable. I do not know what the right solution is for these paths. Geofencing will not work on that situation, for sure.

Mr KING: From our understanding so far, the device itself has to be modified to accept the geofencing area. For the illegal ones, it is a matter of compliance to make sure that when they come in they are then compliant.

Mr Jones: The council are trying some geofencing down the coast and for business and the shop owners to get together to consult and work out whether it is suitable for their zone.

Mr JAMES: From what we are hearing, the biggest issues are coming from the noncompliant or the illegal e-scooters, not so much from the commercial hire ones. You are suggesting some serious penalties. What do you think we should do with these illegal or noncompliant ones? Should we confiscate them, for example?

Mr Jones: Destroy them! First off, these bikes cost a lot of money. I think it is a question that is above my pay scale. Personally I think they could be confiscated, resold or—it is a very hard question. I do not have the answer to it. They should be confiscated and dealt with. That is a matter for the police and the other departments. Main Roads and Transport might have better ideas and systems in place. There has been the suggestion to use high penalties for speeding and unruly conduct and the machine should be confiscated, depending on the circumstances I am afraid.

CHAIR: Thanks, Paul. We do have the police here and in the open session if there is enough time we might be able to hear from them about that. As I explained to the officers earlier, we do have the police coming to speak to us later in August as well about some of these things.

Ms BUSH: Thank you, Paul, for your submission. I agree with you. They are very practical solutions and seem to have a lot of support from your peers here this morning, so well done on that. Paul, you do strike me as someone who is well connected to your local community. I was keen to hear from you about what is actually happening. What is the vibe on the ground? Yesterday we heard that people see a place for these devices, bikes or scooters, but there has been a loss of confidence from people when they have encountered them on the road and they are doing the wrong thing. These are electric bikes. They are quiet. They come up on you quickly. You do not know they are there or someone might be using them or behaving in a bad way. That has eroded the confidence of people to see these things. I am keen to hear from you. What is happening here?

Mr Jones: If I can go back, pushbikes have been around with kids. Kids have loved pushbikes over the last few years and now they love these e-bikes. If we ban them from walkways and whatever, we have to give them some alternatives. The alternatives are—the chamber are quite happy to talk to shops and talk to council to get some solutions. Bikes, people and dogs do not go together on the footpath. The information from the community—and I have my coffee at five o'clock in the morning and I talk to the community and I see it. There is always something that is going to happen with bikes; a tragedy is waiting. The people are talking about it, but I think it has got to the stage now that we have to do something about it because they are starting to be afraid to even walk on these tracks now because of incidents and high-powered devices. The shop owners are also around the place. There are bikes on the road and in the car they are hooning, and there is not a clear message there. We have to send a message through education and other ways. The shops are happy to talk to people at seminars and all of that.

Ms BUSH: It sounds to me what you are saying is—and I do not want to put words in your mouth—it is almost an issue of leadership. Retailers sell these products and they do not follow up. There are actually rules that prevent speeding, but they are not enforced. There is a need for more infrastructure, but no-one is really clear about what that should look like. Is there a role for leadership and who should be coordinating? Who do you think is best placed to be coordinating that response for Queensland?

Mr Jones: For Queensland there is a lot of major players. We have the education department, the transport and main roads department, the police department and the council. Everyone should get together somehow and talk. It is all piecemeal at the moment. We should somehow get together and put our thoughts together. Basically, they are the experts; we rely on them and we trust them. We have a very good council area down here and they want to manage the zones in their area. Leadership has to give the council a lot more autonomy and support them in their tasks.

CHAIR: Thank you very much. Unfortunately, the time for this session has now expired. Thank you for your submission. I was going to ask you a question about your training, but I will go over the submission again because it was unique to your submission to see tiered training. Well done on that submission. Unfortunately, the time has expired. There is a question that you agreed to take on notice regarding the research into the economic benefits, which the member for Cook asked you. If you could get the response to that question back to our secretariat by Tuesday, 12 August that would be great. Thank you for your contribution today. I would now like to welcome our next witnesses.

KEATS, Mr Brendon, Director and Co-founder, Ampd Bros

SULLIVAN, Mr Paul, Head of Product, Ampd Bros

CHAIR: Good morning. Would you like to make a brief opening statement before the committee has questions for you?

Mr Sullivan: Thank you to the chair and members of the committee for the opportunity to speak today. I am here representing Ampd Bros Electric Bikes as Head of Product. Personally, I have close to a decade of experience in this industry dealing with electric scooters, skateboards, unicycles and now focusing on e-bikes in my current role. I welcome this inquiry and the opportunity to contribute to a more modern, practical and safe regulatory environment for electric bikes in our state.

To begin, I would like to clarify what we mean when we talk about electric bikes. In most cases this refers to one of two categories, e-bikes or electric motorcycles, and the distinction between the two is significant. Electric motorcycles are similar in appearance and performance to petrol powered motorbikes. They feature high output motors, high top speeds and are only legal for use on private property. The only exception to this is when they are ADR compliant, registered for road use and operated by a licensed rider.

In contrast, e-bikes resemble traditional pushbikes with a small electric motor that assists the rider while pedalling. They have far lower power and top speeds compared to electric motorcycles and can be used without a licence or registration. This is the category that I will be speaking about today. E-bikes are already delivering wideranging benefits. They reduce traffic and emissions, lower transport costs, and improve access to jobs and services while promoting health and wellbeing. They are particularly helpful for older adults, students, regional communities and people without access to a car or a licence. They also support industry with local employment in retail, servicing, tourism and active recreation.

The current Queensland regulations around e-bikes, specifically the 250-watt motor limit and the 25 kilometre per hour speed cap, are outdated, inconsistent and increasingly unhelpful to public safety and consumer expectations when considering this modern transportation option. First of all, we will start with the 250-watt power limit. This rule is based on legacy European legislation from decades ago, designed for flat cities in cooler climates, not the long distances, hilly terrain and hot conditions we face here in Queensland. A 250-watt motor is often not sufficient to support heavier rider weights, older people or those with mobility or fitness limitations, especially when climbing hills, riding into the wind or carrying cargo.

Politically, limiting motor power does not improve safety. Motor wattage only determines how much assistance the motor can provide, not how fast the bike can go. In fact, with gearing or modification, a 250-watt motor can technically reach extreme speeds, even over 100 kilometres per hour, although this is rare and typically outside standard use. A higher powered e-bike can actually be safer in real-world use because it gives the riders the extra support they need to merge into traffic, get through intersections or complete longer commutes without overexertion. This is crucial for Queenslanders wishing to arrive at work not soaked in sweat during hotter months.

The real issue here is speed, not power; and speed can be regulated directly, clearly and effectively, unlike motor wattage, which is difficult to measure in the field and nearly impossible to enforce reliably. It is also worth noting that this 250-watt restriction only applies to e-bikes. Other mobility devices like e-scooters and electric skateboards regularly exceed 250 watts and are still permitted. This creates a regulatory inconsistency that is not backed by logic or evidence.

Now I will address the speed limit. The current 25 kilometre an hour speed cap makes sense when using it on shared paths, but it is poorly suited to road conditions where cars are moving at 50 to 60 kilometres per hour. This speed mismatch places riders in danger, discourages e-bike use and undermines confidence, particularly for new or vulnerable users. It also makes no sense when you consider that a typical road cyclist on a standard pushbike can easily ride at 35 to 55 kilometres an hour and beyond, effectively penalising e-bike riders, some of whom may be less physically able, for choosing a form of transport that is otherwise safer, more stable and more inclusive.

Our recommendations are as follows: increase the allowable motor power to 500, 750 or maybe even 1,000 watts so riders of all abilities can ride safely and effectively; raise the maximum speed cap from 25 kilometres per hour to 35, which aligns more with international best practices, similar to the US class 3 e-bike standard. We would also like to introduce context-sensitive speed rules such as enforcing lower speed limits on shared pedestrian paths and malls—pretty much the same 12

kilometre an hour limit that is already in place on footpaths—and then allowing higher speed limits of possibly up to 35 kilometres an hour on roads, dedicated cyclepaths and lanes where riders must keep pace with other traffic to stay safe. Finally, enforce regulations based on speed and reducing dangerous rider behaviour, not arbitrary motor wattage.

This is not a push for deregulation; it is a push for modern, enforceable and evidence-based regulation that actually improves safety for riders, motorists and pedestrians alike. We believe Queensland has a real opportunity to update its e-bike rules to reflect today's transport needs, technology and rider diversity. Doing so will encourage safer use, broader access and greater adoption, all while helping reduce traffic, emissions and pressure on public infrastructure. Thank you for your time and I will take your questions.

CHAIR: Thank you very much for your submission and your information for the committee. There was a lot of clarity in that.

Mr MELLISH: Thanks for your submission and appearing before the committee today. You mentioned that 250-watt limit. At the moment you can purchase on your website e-bikes that have a wattage well in excess of 250 watts with detailed instructions on your website on how to get around the 250-watt limit. This includes things like this, and I will read from one of them—

Feel the surge of adrenaline as the insane levels of torque propel you forward, conquering every obstacle in your path. Pedal Assist is standard, but with our Off Road Throttle Kit, you can cruise effortlessly with minimal effort.

So you are selling these bikes and you selling the kits to effectively unlock them and make them illegal on the roads. What responsibility do you have to abide by the law and to stop helping people who are buying your bikes from making them into illegal products on the roads?

Mr Sullivan: Pretty much the ability to derestrict a bike is for the purposes of use on private property. We do sell a lot of them for people using them on private property.

Mr MELLISH: These are not bikes, these are e-bikes with road tyres. Who is using those on private property?

Mr Sullivan: A lot of people. All of our bikes come restricted to 250 watts, 25 kilometres per hour, and are powered by pedal assist only.

Mr MELLISH: But you are also selling a kit to derestrict them from 250 watts. You are selling the bike to the legal limit, but then you are selling the means to make them illegal at the same time, with a nod and a wink to people to say, 'Hey, we know it's limited to 250 watts, but here is how you can break the law.'

Mr Sullivan: Yes, well, that would also apply for New South Wales where they now have motor wattage of 500. When we sell into New South Wales it gives those customers the option to increase their motor wattage to what is allowed for their state.

Mr MELLISH: So it is okay to break the law in Queensland because New South Wales can 500 watts?

Mr Sullivan: No, I am not saying it is okay to break the law. We do not recommend that anyone does that, but if, you know—

Mr MELLISH: Yes, okay.

Mr KEMPTON: You say that e-bikes reduce traffic. Given that they are largely recreational, is there any evidence that suggests that that is actually the case or is the counter argument that it is actually increasing the interactions between motor vehicles and e-bikes?

Mr Sullivan: One good example of that would be people using them for the ever-increasing industry of delivery riders. With an e-bike that allows them to use that type of transportation. Like I said in my submission, a 250-watt motor is not capable of doing that so if the bike is not capable those guys are just going to go straight back to using a petrol powered moped.

Mr KEMPTON: No, sorry, the question is: is there any evidence that the emergence of e-bikes actually reduces the amount of traffic that travels on the roads? That is the point you made.

Mr Sullivan: Yes. Go to your local school during drop-off times.

Mr KEMPTON: No, sorry, I am talking about evidence. Have there been any studies done? Is there any empirical evidence?

Mr Sullivan: Not that we have looked into, no.

Mr KING: I asked earlier about geofencing and a speedometer. I understand that would have to be done by a manufacturer, but could a retailer sell them with the ability to be geofenced? When the hire devices up in the Brisbane area go through a certain area, their top speed reduces because of that geofencing. I did not know if that would have to be manufacturer supplied or if it could be retrofitted. It is obviously going to make it dearer. The other thing is having a speedometer so people actually know what speeds they are doing.

Mr Sullivan: Pretty much all e-bikes do already come with a speedometer. It is actually quite rare that they will not have that on there.

Mr KING: Thank you, I was not aware of that.

Mr Sullivan: As for the geofencing, from a manufacturing point of view, yes, it would probably need to be programmed into the main controller of the bike so it would have to be undertaken by the manufacturer, but it would then probably take custom programming based on the location and what sort of geofencing would be required for it. Nothing is impossible. It could definitely be done. The other thing that does come into play with these as well is, because they are a tech product, if technology has shown us anything over the years it is that it outgrows itself. As soon as there is anyone wanting to get around any technological boundaries, they usually find a way. It is usually the young kids who find out how to do it and are doing it, with the way that communication works around the globe these days. It can be done, but the question to ask is whether or not it would remain in place and be effective and then how long before it becomes obsolete.

Mr KING: Understanding that the hire companies have to do that, and we are coming up with ideas on what to do, what if there was a compliance requirement and that was one of the fixes for it—that is, if they come into Australia they have to be subject to certain regulations in cities or wherever, which would not restrict them in the off-road situation that you are discussing.

Mr JAMES: Yesterday we heard from a doctor from the Princess Alexandra Hospital and he was telling us about the stats, particularly the costs. Minor accidents are costing \$4.5 million a year. The stats are increasing for injuries at an alarming rate. You are advocating faster, more powerful e-devices. You do not mention or even talk about the prospect of injuries and the impact on our emergency services in your submission. Can you comment on that?

Mr Sullivan: Of course, along with these other things, we always encourage safety of all kinds. As I said before, the main thing is dangerous rider behaviour when it comes to this. They should be wearing a helmet and slowing down when they are in pedestrian zones. We would happily support a 12 kilometre an hour speed limit in those sorts of areas. When it comes to injuries when riding a bike—and as I have stated this in my submission as well—a standard pedal powered bike can travel much faster than a 25 kilometre an hour so coming off those bikes would still have the same impact in terms of injury really. I do not see how it can be really that much different.

Mr JAMES: The stats he was talking about were peculiar to e-mobility devices, not pushbikes that are right down low on the list.

Mr Sullivan: I did see there is a statistic that injuries relating to e-bikes and e-mobility have risen by 112 per cent since 2021, but overall the uptake in people buying these devices and the industry is probably up 1,000 per cent or more in that same period.

Ms BUSH: I will qualify and say while I disapprove of what I have just heard from the member for Aspley and that kind of aggressive sales technique, there are aspects of your submission that I absolutely agree with and accept. In my electorate we have a lot of families who use cargo bikes to courier their kids around, getting lots of cars off the road. We are in a hilly area and they have had to massively invest to get those bikes up and down hills so I absolutely understand what you are saying that the issue is not the item it is the behaviour of some and it is about better regulation of that. I was keen to hear from you as a retailer. We have talked about leadership here today. What greater role do you see for retailers in education or the compulsory sale of helmets or the enforcing of registration and insurances? Where can you lean in and help to create a safer environment for all?

Mr Sullivan: I think one of the big ones is definitely not misleading customers. Let them know whether or not it is only legal to use it on private property or what have you. Always inform them about that and helmet sales, definitely. Of course, you could definitely work out some sort of thing where it is not so much the mandatory sale of a helmet, but every bike sold comes with one. That is probably a good practice. A lot of customers who come in are not buying their first bike so they probably already have a helmet, but that is something that could be done.

Another thing, and we did not really include it in our submission but it has come up with others, is around licensing and registration and things like that. If that is what is going to work and make this whole thing safer—I understand it would be helpful, especially for these badly behaved people, to be able to identify them and punish them accordingly—we would 100 per cent support that as well.

Ms BUSH: What I am hearing is it is in your interests to find out who these people are that are ruining the reputation of your business as well and try to target those.

Mr Sullivan: I could not agree more.

Ms BUSH: If you have any other thoughts feel free to send them in to the committee.

Mr Sullivan: Yes, for sure.

CHAIR: My question has two parts to it. The RACQ mentioned that speed limiting needs to be to 25 kilometres and allow that to happen and anything above that should be considered illegal. In fact, as you appreciate, many of those are actually illegal apparatus here in Queensland anyway. From your expertise, in terms of the very large number of e-bikes and e-mobility devices out there, is there an opportunity for us to retrofit something that will control one of those already sold devices? Can you put something on that to see it speed restricted to 12 kilometres or 25 kilometres or whatever it might be?

Mr Sullivan: Yes, definitely. Essentially the way these devices work is there are three main components. You have the battery, the controller and the motor. The controller is pretty much what takes care of all of it. It really would just be a matter of replacing that controller, whether that has a lockdown speed limitation in it or the geofencing—all of the things that you have spoken of.

CHAIR: What would be the cost of that?

Mr Sullivan: There would be an initial cost for the programming and production of them, but typically a controller costs around \$300 to \$400.

CHAIR: That is interesting because there is obviously a pathway. The question from the member for Kurwongbah's about geofencing is obviously gold standard, but we have to have some sort of pathway or transition to get to that. Thank you very much for appearing today. Unfortunately, the time for this session has expired. I will extend the same invitation the member Cooper did, which is if you have any other thoughts please share them with the committee.

MENZIES, Mr Andy, Analyst, Divisional Analysis and Reporting Team, Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service.

ROBERTSON, Mr Shaun, Nursing Director, Emergency Care Services, Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service

CHAIR: Would you like to make an opening statement before the committee has questions for you?

Mr Menzies: I am an analyst with Gold Coast Health. Shaun is a nursing director looking after the emergency department within Gold Coast Health. Gold Coast Health encompasses Gold Coast University Hospital, Robina Hospital and Tugun Satellite Health Centre. We treat typically over 500 presentations a day across Gold Coast Health. There are 500 presentations a day across the three hospitals of which Gold Coast University Hospital is the busiest emergency department in Australia. As an analyst supporting the emergency department, a key part of the emergency department is that it has to maintain patient flow. We have 500 people coming through a day so we need to modify and understand any emerging trends with the presentations coming through our doors and how to understand the patients coming through so that we can modify our models of care to best treat those patients most cost-effectively.

In analysing the data, we are looking for emerging trends and variations. E-bike presentations are definitely an emerging trend. To support our submission—you have seen the paper that I produced—I have also compared our presentations for the last year against the previous year and identified the key themes. If we look at presentations collectively for e-bikes, e-scooters and e-skateboards, last year—that is from July to June—we had a total of 747 presentations that could be attributed to those modes of transport. That was up 27 per cent on the previous year. If we were then to compare that to other modes of transport such as road bicycles and BMX bicycles, they actually decreased by two per cent. If we were then to compare that to road traffic accidents, they actually increased by 20 per cent. What we are basically seeing is that the growth of emergency presentations relating to e-modes of transport is the fastest presentation group by modes of transport.

How do we achieve that? When a presentation arrives at an emergency department they get triaged at emergency. We need to understand the nature of how that patient arrived, what their injuries are and their background. As a patient arrives at triage if the words 'e-bike', 'e-scooter' or an e-device of any sort is entered into the presenting complaint description, we have the ability to flag that data. We then have the ability to go back over our historical data and apply those same rules. That is how we were able to achieve the trending that you see in our submission. It shows a rapid growth in presentations relating to e-devices over recent years. The paper just looks at presentations at our emergency department. That is but one small part of what we call the footprint.

If you consider the whole journey that could be impacted by presentations relating to e-bikes, you have the ambulance that brings them to hospital. There are emergency departments. If things go very badly they can be going into emergency surgery. There is intensive care, inpatients, outpatients and allied health, which is social work and physio. There could then be financial supports down the track—NDIS—and impacts on the family. Whilst our paper just looks at the emergency department aspect, the social considerations could actually be much bigger.

How are we helping? Shaun is part of a panel with Transport and Main Roads, police and council to understand the nature of our e-mobility presentations and provide some science, some data, behind what we are seeing. That is helping to inform decision-making processes for a way forward.

Mr Robertson: Adding to what Andy has already said, my role is predominantly to provide a clinical lens in terms of what our practitioners and care organisations are experiencing in relation to these types of presentations. As Andy said, I have been drawn into this as the hospital and health services representative to the working group with council, QPS and TMR. I am also a representative on the Queensland Emergency Department Strategic Panel as a representative of the level 6 tertiary hospitals in Queensland.

Mr MELLISH: Thank you for presenting today and for the work you do on a day-to-day basis. I am probably getting into the technical details a bit here, but are you concerned that, with the purchase of a lot of these private bikes, people can pretty easily make them into illegal bikes by adding a different throttle or adding an override to the motor for the wattage and things like that? Are you concerned that people can essentially ride around on these illegal products?

Mr Menzies: For us, the absolute is that they end up at the emergency department. Yesterday I spoke to a paediatric doctor and the day before I was talking to allied health. As a result of modifying bikes, the speeds these vehicles can go and the behaviours I have seen—I am sure we have all seen—that is what happens, and in the emergency department we have to deal with the outcome. We see the data. We see the growth in presentations. Another way of looking at it is when I am conducting analyses, when you drill down to an individual level, when you are seeing broken bones, you are seeing trauma, you are seeing life-altering outcomes, of course we have to support anything that will help to rectify that. Fortunately, we have had no deaths within the emergency department, but from reviewing media over the last year you see that there have been deaths in the community. Anything—anything—that can be done to help support or reduce preventable injuries and preventable deaths has to be supported.

Mr Robertson: One of the things we have discussed in the working group with council and the work we are doing in the background is really to advise and try and inform some of the more regulatory organisations on how they might proceed. When a patient presents and then subsequently goes to an ICU, they are not discharged home from the intensive care unit. Their journey continues. Arriving in the intensive care unit results from quite a significant injury that potentially changes an individual's life quite significantly. We did produce a paper earlier last year which looked at some of the significance of those presentations. In the paper you have, 17 presentations to the intensive care unit are represented. In that previous paper there were two patients in particular: one spent 21 days in our intensive care unit at GCUH and the other 19 days. Both had very significant injuries. Andy spoke about the long-term social impacts. It was life altering for those patients, and if that occurred at a very young age their potential will never be met because of that injury. We would recommend that it not be the case that people have the ability to modify something and make it more likely they will experience a severe injury.

Mr KEMPTON: Andy, given that you have relied on a review of 12 months of emergency data in the busiest ED in Australia, I would think that is pretty compelling. I have raised this issue before. Would you support the centralisation of data, including non-admissions, so that we as a government can respond in an appropriate way to this issue, which seems to be escalating, and that we are all sharing one dataset across the board?

Mr Menzies: Thank you for that question. I anticipated it might come up. I am personally happy to share the method by which I compiled this paper and the key words I have used to define that. That can potentially be used across other health services to help have a consistent way of recording e-mobility devices. We are happy to support in any way we can.

Mr KING: I have been looking at the data you used to compile it. It is a pity it does not go into the detail of private versus hire. What you have done is fantastic; there is no criticism whatsoever. My question relates to tourism spikes. We are in a tourism hub here with schoolies week and things like that. Have you noticed any elevation during those times? The reason for my question relates to education. Perhaps there is an onus on hire companies to provide a bit more education when hiring them out. I just wondered if there is a spike in those instances. I see there are some terrifying stats about facial injuries because people hit face first. Full face helmets have been brought up as being far safer.

Mr Robertson: I can provide some commentary around the impacts we might see. E-scooters remain the highest e-device that we see causing presentations to the emergency department. On our working group with council we discussed whether, similarly to how you might ride a surfboard or a skateboard, there is a different way of trying to educate people on how to ride. I am sure everyone has seen people scooting along the footpaths very close to the handle. From the injuries that we see, it is sort of like someone chopping down a tree. When they hit something, they will go straight down and the face is the point of impact. That is why we see those quite severe injuries. I am just quickly looking at the previous paper we submitted which did have a month-to-month analysis. The month of November had the highest rate of e-bike presentations to GCUH and Robina emergency departments in 2023. Obviously, the Tugun satellite hospital was not open at that stage, but that would suggest there was a slight spike. I can certainly take a deeper look in relation to the fact that November is schoolies month. What was the first part of your question?

Mr KING: Whether we get a lot of people who would be inexperienced riders, whether it is hire or private, concentrated in the one area and if there is a spike in injuries during that time. The other part of my question was if there is a better education process and helmets. A helmet on the top of your head does not protect your jaw if you come off.

Mr Robertson: We would support full face helmets and increased protective equipment if that was to be the decision of the committee. In relation to our involvement with the safer schools program, we provide an emergency treatment centre down at the site at Surfers Paradise. We are also involved from next week or the week after with the safer schools program, so we do have influence in the ability to provide information to the Safer Schoolies network, which provides presentations on how to stay safe at schoolies. Given how topical this is, I think we will be adding in e-device safety messaging as well.

Mr JAMES: Your submission and stats align with what we were hearing yesterday from a surgeon from the Princess Alexandra Hospital. He also mentioned the injuries they are seeing and that the number of them significantly contributes to ambulance ramping. Do you see that could be a contributing factor?

Mr Menzies: Ambulance arrivals account for about a third of our total presentations. If we were getting approximately 500 presentations per day, we are getting approximately 180 ambulance arrivals per day. The patient flow through the emergency department could be influenced by inpatient bed occupancy. To narrow it down specifically to e-bike presentations, we are getting on average one ambulance arrival per day that can be identified as being e-mobility, so that is one out of 500. No, I would not accept that e-mobility contributes to ambulance ramping.

Mr Robertson: In the paper there is a graph that talks about the category of patient presentations. Just under half of the presentations are our highest two categories. They are the patients we prioritise quickly for our flow and assessment on arrival at the emergency department. They are highly complex patients. I think that what Andy might not be able to appreciate from a data perspective is that this does not increase ambulance numbers per se. It is consistent in terms of 30 per cent of e-device presentations coming by ambulance. Thirty per cent of emergency department presentations come in by ambulance. When a high volume of higher category patients arrives at the same or a similar time that is when it would affect ambulance ramping because we have to commit a significant amount of resourcing to those particular patients at that one time. That may not be easily demonstrated through data when it is provided as a big chunk number, but if you were to look at individual days and all of the presentations over that single day, picking a day that had an uptick in higher category presentations for trauma, I would expect you would see an impact on our ability to off-load ambulances. That would also impact patients in the waiting room.

Ms BUSH: Thank you for coming in today and giving up a good part of your morning to come along. Many reports we have been presented with and some of the submissions yesterday suggested that a lot of crashes are occurring due to infrastructure issues, including poor footpaths, potholes, poor lighting, signs that are not there, and a lack of enforcement and compliance. If we put greater attention and investment into those things, would that help shift the cost? We heard that the cost of health care to Queensland is millions of dollars. That is just the direct impact and not the indirect impacts of long-term recovery. Would greater attention and investment in those areas help shift the cost from health care and reduce injuries from occurring in the first place?

Mr Robertson: I believe so. We are always a big advocate for education and preventing the injury from occurring in the first place. The reality is that people are going to use these devices, so it is really around trying to better inform them on how to do it safely. We have heard the same submissions online and in commentary today. There are some really great benefits to e-mobility, and certainly getting people out into the community is one of those. Some of those people may be people who could not do that normally. I think that with our younger generation there is a lot of room for improvement in relation to educating on the risks associated with these types of risk activities. Everything has an inherent degree of risk. That is probably a broader conversation as well.

There is probably not as much health literacy in Australia in general. What could we achieve if there was more focus in our early schooling in terms of how you prevent injury, how you look after injuries or health care more broadly. That is probably outside the terms of reference of this committee. If you were to improve infrastructure then it could reduce the number of injuries caused by broken footpaths, poor signage, people not realising they were going down a one-way street, and things like that. Education, awareness and understanding of the actual risk would absolutely be something we would very much support.

CHAIR: Firstly, congratulations on collecting data right back to 2016, separating those different classes of vehicle. That was very helpful. With regard to unpacking that data, I refer to Dr Lockwood's evidence from the other day where he talked about 6,300 hospitalisations across the state. He had anecdotal evidence that the incident numbers could be as high as an additional 25,000. Coming to

your figures and looking at the quite large number of people who go in for emergency treatment and then come back out versus those who admitted with more serious injuries, can you relate those injuries to helmet use or speed? Is there data that you could turn to that would inform us about those things?

Mr Robertson: To provide that kind of fidelity we would probably have to delve deep into the individual patient cases, which we have not done in relation to formulating the paper. The relationship of an e-device in a presentation is entirely driven by the triage information that is entered. If the nursing staff at the time are not informed, not aware or do not enter a certain phrase of e-scooter, bike or device then we will not be able to capture that. There is a statewide trauma registry that may be able to provide that information. Several of our staff are working within that team in a temporary context with our trauma service at the GCUH. The Jamieson Trauma Institute might be another opportunity to draw that out in more detail. Certainly, there would be underrepresentation of those presentations. In terms of the specifics of whether someone was wearing a helmet or protective equipment, for the type of device specifically that they were on in terms of the brand or capability and things like that you would have to delve deep into the individual case to find that information.

CHAIR: Without a doubt, the trend is very alarming. As my colleague said, it is doubling every two years.

Ms BUSH: I am interested in any observations that you have on the types of people who present with accidents. Is there a particular cohort that concerns you? You mentioned young men. Is that because under 16s do not have a licence and so they do not have that spatial awareness? What are you seeing in terms of the people who are presenting?

Mr Robertson: The figures are pretty consistent with trauma in general in that, for the age group of 16- to 30-year-old males, that is their main reason for presenting for health care or complaints. Over the last 12 months we have seen a slight increase in female representation, which we found interesting. I think that is really just down to the availability of the devices and their proliferation, as we heard from the previous presentation.

I suppose that age group of 16- to 30-year-olds is associated with higher risk-taking behaviours in general. It is really just reflective of trauma related presentations so I would not say it is out of the ordinary. What we did find interesting was the plus-65 group, which suggests that they are using it as a mobility means, but again that is where we have encouraged the working group to engage with general practice and the primary health networks across the Gold Coast to try to get some information into general practice surgeries so that their clients potentially would be able to get a pamphlet or information around how they could make themselves safer when using it. People over the age of 65 might have a number of complex health conditions that are normally well managed by a general practice in the community. Say someone is on blood thinning medication because of a cardiac condition. If they have a trauma associated with an e-scooter or an e-bike then that is actually a really complex trauma presentation that has multiple aspects across multiple disciplines. We have to manage not only the injury but also the impact of their inability, because of the medication they are on, to actually clot their blood. Probably one of the interesting emerging trends is the people aged over 65 who are choosing to use these devices.

Ms BUSH: That is interesting.

Mr KEMPTON: Shaun, from the graph that identifies e-transport presentations that the chair just referred, to it appears that the number of e-scooter incidents are doubling every couple of years. If there was another category on there that just said 'other presentations', how would e-scooter presentations compare to everything else?

Mr Menzies: I spoke to that at the beginning. I did the comparison of all modes of transport. With our data capture, we capture all modes of transport be it cars, boats, surfboards, e-bikes. From the previous year, e-bikes had gone up 59 per cent, e-scooters had gone up 18 per cent and e-skateboards had decreased. They had gone down 10 per cent. On page 8 of our submission there is a series of graphs that show how e-skateboards are plateauing out, e-scooters went up but they are starting to come down and e-bikes are starting to go up. If you look at the waves, e-skateboards came through first in popularity and that is going down, then it was e-scooters and that is going down and e-bikes are the growing transport mode behind all the e-mobility presentations that we see.

Mr KEMPTON: My question relates to all presentations, be they drug or alcohol related or other things that young people might present for. Is this emerging as the No. 1 issue that you are facing in ED?

Mr Menzies: No, not at all. Total presentations across all of Gold Coast Health are up about two per cent on the previous year so we are getting over 189,000 presentations a year. This is a very small component. One of the main things is actually category 2 chest pains, cardiac issues. That is it by far.

Mr KEMPTON: Is that in young people?

Mr Menzies: No, that is across the whole.

Mr KEMPTON: My question relates specifically to young people who are presenting. How does the number of e-scooter presentations compare to everything else? It is important that we understand if this really is as dramatic as it appears to be on the statistics. How does this relate to other admissions of people within that category? I am talking about alcohol and drug abuse and other things that young people might present with. You may want to take that on notice. It is interesting for us to be able to make that comparison.

Mr Menzies: We certainly have the capability to tease that out and that can be easily done. I can take that on notice.

Mr KEMPTON: It would assist us with resources.

CHAIR: Actually, the graph that you have referred to about the demographics, males and females, and ages would be interesting to overlay with the totals.

Ms BUSH: I would also be interested in knowing how it stacks up compared to other vehicle admissions for the whole population, although that is not my question. I looked down at your submission before so this question might have been asked when I was doing that and I apologise if I am about to embarrass myself. We did hear yesterday from the injury unit about the need for data harmonisation and capture across the state so that we can start to get a good baseline of what is going on, what it is costing and where it is happening to target interventions a bit better. Did you want to speak to whether there is benefit in doing that, if anyone is leading that work, whether that should sit with Queensland Health and whether any states are doing great work in that space?

Mr Robertson: Absolutely, we agree with that statement. Our Gold Coast experience is perhaps similar but there are some unique features here on the Gold Coast in that we have a really transient and tourism-driven population. The numbers that you have heard around the presentations to our emergency department are pretty significant. From my recollection of what the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare expect from emergency department presentations for a population, I think it is around three per cent. Last year, we had just over 212,000 presentations to our emergency department and around 700,000 to 800,000 people live on the Gold Coast so there is a huge reliance on emergency care. I think our health service could provide a lot of rich information that could be centralised and then the anecdote across the state could be drawn out, but still you could utilise what we have done locally and what we experience locally and nuance how we respond to treating patients or what we could expect and also how we structure our models of care in our health services into the future to ensure that we have the resourcing available to look after those types of patients if this is going to continue to emerge in the way that it has.

Ms BUSH: Shaun, would Queensland Health lead that or would it be devolved to the HHSs with some support? What would that model look like to get a good sense across the state of baseline data?

Mr Robertson: I think it would be best placed with the department. The Jamieson Trauma Institute, which is located at the Royal Brisbane, would probably be an excellent place to start because there is already a lot of centralised roles and information through that organisation that contribute to research that ultimately contributes to how we do our business. There may be a structure already in place that you could leverage and up fund to then take on that work, which we would contribute to locally.

Ms BUSH: Perfect, thank you.

CHAIR: The time for this session has now expired. Could we have the answer to the question taken on notice regarding demography, asked by the member for Cook, by Tuesday, 12 August?

Mr Robertson: Yes.

CHAIR: That would be great. Thank you for appearing and for the information you have shared with the committee. Enjoy the balance of your day. We will now go to the open-mic session. As I said before, to enable as many people as possible to share their views, I ask that you keep your Robina

contribution brief. Please introduce yourself at the beginning of your statement for the purposes of Hansard and the record of the proceedings. We are particularly interested in hearing from you about things that we might not have already heard about today.

PROOF

BANDESON, Mr Andre, Private capacity

COHEN, Mr John, Private capacity

McKENZIE, Ms Meridyth, Private capacity

ROWLANDS, Mr Phil, Private capacity

CHAIR: Meridyth, would you like to go first?

Ms McKenzie: Good morning, Chair and committee. I feel that a lot of these vehicles have a motor and they are used in public so the owners should have third-party insurance. In our area, we have lots of kids and electric bikes everywhere. We see two or three kids on a bike, with no helmets, going through the traffic. We have the boys doing moves everywhere and the girls are just shocking. The parents should be responsible and have some sort of insurance. If they hit us or damage an elderly person, people can lose their livelihoods and everything else and they have to pay for that themselves. When people buy these vehicles they should be told to have third-party insurance. The parents should be responsible for their kids riding these bikes.

CHAIR: That point is well made, Meridyth, thank you.

Mr Rowlands: I have been a lifelong commuting cyclist and am now an e-scooter user. I am passionate about public transport and looking at ways to solve our current road problems. Everywhere we go, we hear people complaining about the time it takes to get from A to B. The Gold Coast is a very specific area with very significant transport issues, like right across Australia really.

I think that e-mobility provides an amazing opportunity for this to change, but it will take all levels of government to take action to produce the results we want. We need to change our infrastructure, and quickly. As an educator I watch young people just completely oblivious to the risks they are taking. I think we have very real problems. It is about education, education, education. This is completely new to all of us. E-scooters did not exist five or 10 years ago and now they are everywhere. Kids love them. It is great because it gives kids independence. We have to allow for these things.

Then we go to the other side of the question—and Paul made the comment—about limiting speed to 25 kilometres an hour. As a cyclist, I have stayed on my bike for 45 years, and I have done that because I watch the traffic. If I have to travel at only 25 kilometres an hour, I am in trouble because I am travelling at a completely different speed to the majority of road users which are heavy, dangerous cars. A car, a truck, is dangerous to every lighter vehicle and we have a lot of them on the roads. Cars have a speed limit, but they are not speed limited at 100 kilometres an hour. Why do we want to speed limit when the process ought to be education, because people will still break the rules. That is just a couple of comments.

I am so passionate about this topic because I love what I am seeing. It is independence. It is kids getting out. I know they need a lot of education, and I know we have big health issues, but then again we will always have those health issues because of silly people doing silly things. We see it on the roads. In fact, on my street I have seen two cars come off the road in the last three years. I have not seen any e-scooters doing it. Every time a car comes off the road it is a big danger to every pedestrian or whatever around them.

Mr Cohen: Thank you, Chair and committee, for allowing me to say a few words. I have actually had a bit of a scan through a number of the submissions. Listening here today a lot that I wanted to speak about has already been covered so I will not go over that, other than to say in a former life I had a lot to do with regulatory development and policy development and legislation. I think there are a lot of areas in this that are overcomplicated. It has always been a fact that anything with a motor does not mix with pedestrians—it just does not. Even compliant bikes in the hands of a 10-year-old is just ridiculous. They cannot handle the speed. They cannot handle the acceleration. They do not have the cognitive skills to deal with bikes travelling at those speeds.

My view is very simple: anything with a motor needs to be registered and you need to have a licence to ride it. It removes a whole lot of the issues that we are trying to resolve. To get it registered it needs to meet certain standards, as a car does: you need a roadworthy certificate. It needs to meet certain standards. If the bikes that people have bought now do not comply or cannot be made to comply, and if they have a twist throttle on them they cannot be made to comply—most of them have twist throttles—they have done their money. They have bought bikes that currently do not comply. If they do not comply into the future that is their problem. I was just listening to the gentleman up the end. I know that he has been riding bikes all his life. Scooters are not supposed to be on a road with

a speed limit in excess of 50 kays so there is already an attempt to balance the lower speed limit of the scooter with the traffic. That might not be enough, but there is already a process there that deals with that.

In terms of the legislation, goodness gracious, QPS have a job on their hands trying to control this sort of thing. It is so difficult. If you put a registration plate on these things straight up you can tell whether or not the bike is compliant. I have twin daughters and I have just done 200 hours of training my daughters to get a licence to go on the road. They had to do theory and they had to do practical exams. Now we have these kids whose parents are saying, 'Listen, here's your illegal bike. I don't want to drive to you the beach. I don't want to drive you to soccer anymore. I don't want to be doing all those parenting things. Here's your things, go and play on the road.'

We used to say that as a joke, didn't we—go play on the road. Now it is serious. This is what parents are doing. They are trying to get away from their parenting. They say, 'I don't have to worry about my kids anymore.' They are out with their mates all day digging up parks and sporting fields, they are getting into shopping centres, but the parents are encouraging, they are enabling them and they are supporting their kids to break the law. They are creating a compliant psyche that the laws do not apply to them. We are breeding a whole new era of youth crime because these kids realise it is just that one little road rule they do not have to comply with. They are now gathering in shopping centres, they are throwing stones at people, they are throwing cans at people.

I was involved in an issue the other day where I pulled up at my local shopping centre and there were two or three women being abused by a group of 30 to 40 boys on bikes and scooters. I stepped in to try to break it up and I got greeted with a handful of rocks, plus cans hitting the roof—half full cans. The next day I passed them and they were across the road on the edge of the park as I went past; I had a water bomb come through my passenger window. These kids are aggressive. You get bracket creep. Once you tell your child that the law does not apply, you get the bracket creep. So it starts out as a little Traffic Act infringement and then you get the grouping in the gangs and they are starting to cause nuisance and antisocial behaviour. Then they are tearing up ovals and they are tearing up sporting fields. As they get more game there is bracket creep. We are actually encouraging them to break the law. We are actually breeding it into them. Seriously; it is such a simple thing: licence, registration and the rest, burn them.

Mr Bandeson: That is a pretty hard act to follow. I am Andre Bandeson. I am a member of the cycling community on the Gold Coast. I have been on the board of Bicycle Queensland for a couple of years. I have been a president of the local club and on the committee for 15 years. I am currently retired. I was a regular cyclist. I was more a recreational cyclist than a competitive cyclist. These days I ride an e-bike because I am 75 years old and I cannot keep up with everyone else. Quite frankly, at the 25-kilometre-hour speeds on the road I still cannot keep up with them because regular cyclists go a little bit quicker.

Having said that, there are rules. The rules are with a 250-kilowatt motor they can go no faster than 25 kilometres an hour and there are to be no twist throttles. The rules are regularly broken. I saw a photo the other day of the police down at Palm Beach Currumbin State High School, talking about educating the students there, I guess, and in the back of them were about 30 or 40 illegal e-bikes. Why are they still allowed to ride them? Why do the police not do something? Why are they not given the power to do something? Because the police I speak to say, 'We can't do anything. They are minors. We take the bike off them and we have to give it back the next day.' If it is illegal, take them off them, do what you do with the hooning laws, trash the bike, dispose of the battery safely and the parents will not buy another one. Make the parents responsible if the kids are not. Deal with the rules you have.

You do not need new rules, you just need to enforce the ones that you have and leave real cyclists alone. Let them ride their compliant e-bikes. Just get rid of all the bad eggs, which are about 90 per cent of them on the road—and they are all the kids riding those Chinese Surrons, which are electric motorbikes doing 80 or 90 kilometres an hour on public streets on the back wheel. Every day you see them. I talked to a local policeman down the road. He was coming home from work at 80 kilometres an hour down Bermuda Street and there was scooter doing 80 kilometres an hour. Everyone in this room can ride a bicycle, very few people can ride a surfboard. In the middle you have the e-scooters. There are two points of contact, very small wheels and holes in the road. You get on a bike—big wheels, three points of contact. If they are legal, if they are compliant, leave them alone. Enforce the laws. Give the police the power to do something because right now the police just do not know what to do.

CHAIR: Meridyth, John, Andre and Phil, thank you for your advocacy for your community. Well said. It is good to have varied views. Thank you.

DYHIN, Mr Andrew, Private capacity.

EDBROOKE, Mr Lance, Private capacity

FAST, Mr Peter, Private capacity

PAPANTONIOU, Mr Homer, Private capacity

WILLIAMS, Mr Ellis, Private capacity

CHAIR: If you could follow the example of your cohort that just preceded you that would be great. We might go to Peter first.

Mr Fast: Thank you and good morning, committee. I would also like to thank Laura Gerber, the member for Currumbin, for informing me of the existence of the committee. I am a retired mortgage broker and my daily exercise is in the Burleigh Heads area. I walk for an hour and a half. I have done so every day for the last 11 years. I have seen the growth in the use of e-bikes. I will try not to repeat what previous speakers have said, but, yes, registration is important. In fact, it is not negotiable. If you cannot do that then let's go home. The registration will involve some cost.

I have heard mention of infrastructure. These riders use well-made roads. If there is additional infrastructure required then their registration will contribute to that. It could also contribute to additional police being used—not that we want police to divert their efforts to just look after bikes, but occasionally they should have a blitz on the bikes. That also brings into focus ownership. I think ownership should be restricted to people of the age of majority. In other words, these kids will not own their bikes, their parents will own their bikes. They will be registered. If they do something wrong they will get an infringement notice in the mail and all of a sudden the rider is accountable, because at the moment they are not accountable. They do not care less. The parents have no idea what they do. I saw a six- or seven-year-old kid last Thursday come down West Street in Burleigh, then down Park Avenue, through the stop sign going the wrong way, total darkness, no helmet and that is par for the course. I had some idiots ride through a restaurant the other day. It is pretty serious what they are doing. Accountability, registration and insurance are important because there have to be consequences for poor use of these bikes. There are people I have spoken to who no longer walk because they are too frightened. Thank you.

Mr Papantoniou: Good day, how are you people? Respectfully, ladies and gentlemen, we are putting lipstick on the proverbial pig here. Honestly. This is a really serious problem. If we do not reel this in now it will be completely out of hand. We will not be able to retrieve this. I think I am impeccably qualified to speak on this subject. I have a sports and recreation degree. I was the community recreation officer for tourism and sport about 25 years ago before I pursued a fairly interesting and colourful public speaking career where I have been one of the top corporate speakers in the country speaking mainly on wellbeing and health.

What we have to do is get out of this silo attitude. The chap who spoke beforehand spoke about us looking at this from our own little silos and we are not looking at the big picture here. One part of the big picture is there is an interaction here between health, juvenile offenders and the wellbeing and the livability of our community. Basically what I am saying, in a nutshell, is that anyone under 16 should not be on a motorised vehicle, should not be on an electric bike or whatever. Let's try to do what happened in Amsterdam 20-plus years ago where the mums all got together and said to the government, 'Stop killing our children. They want to have a safe path to get to school,' and now they are the cycling utopia of the world. What I am saying here is that everyone under 16 should be on a normal geared bike. Juvenile offending is going through the roof. We have a diabetes and obesity epidemic among our children. It just does not cut it. E-bikes do not cut it. Gears will get you anywhere and you will eventually get there.

There have to be community education and recreation programs. Councils are well positioned to do this because they are front of face. We have to provide great facilities for them and we have to have promotion. Get kids riding again—riding on normal bikes. I just do not believe it! I still ride two to three hours a day. I think I am impeccably qualified, as I say, to make this observation. How about we have some bike cops out there, too, at the moment? We need to retrieve this now. I do not know if anyone has been to Palm Beach Currumbin High School at about 2.30 in the afternoon, but when you witness 400 of these e-bikes taking off at 60 kilometres per hour, it is just out of control. We need to reel this in. If you do not do it now, it will never be controlled. It has just got me beat.

I have to ask to the honourable bureaucrats: how did we let this get to where it is at now? Who is the bureaucrat who said, 'Yes, let's give the kids the keys to the car and make it legal that they are allowed to do that'? Someone told me that an e-bike was clocked at—wait for this one—'Police clock teen e-bike riders going 120kilometres and hour.' That is amazing. Sorry, I got a bit emotional.

CHAIR: Homer, thank you very much. I just want to correct you on a couple of things. I want you to understand that with this inquiry, today we are on the Gold Coast listening to the public, but we have already heard from experts in health, from the fire brigade and experts in battery safety, and we have another four or five days of inquiries planned to get a holistic view of this. I just wanted to assure you of that. Also, with regard to your question around the bureaucrats and who made it legal, they did not. Those devices are illegal now. They are not to be purchased and not to be used on our roads.

Mr Papantoniou: When they go and buy one from a bike shop—

CHAIR: They are illegal.

Mr Papantoniou: Are they? There you go.

CHAIR: Andrew would you like to comment?

Mr Dyhin: My name is Andrew Dyhin. I am founder of CHATO International, an advocacy firm. I have taken a deep dive into this issue and I have submitted a paper, 8.49, as well, where I have looked into trauma. What I was looking for when I looked at this was the root cause analysis. I have been a solution architect across quite a few industries and I have been into research. I took a deep dive into it. What I have heard today did not quite tick the two boxes that I found that scared me. This is not about an e-mobility device, it is about the weight and the speed. When we listen to our trauma experts, the kids are hitting the ground pretty hard. I have experienced crash trauma twice in my life, once at three and once at about 53, and it is very unpleasant.

What I really ask the committee is to seriously consider two parts: one which came from the RACQ—the 25 kilometres per hour. A pushbike goes somewhere between 12 and 18 if you are not in a rush. Maybe you want to take a lower speed. Then you need to consider the weight of the device because that, particularly if it is hitting another person, can add a lot more trauma.

Mr Fast: A Lime bike weighs 38 kilos. I have tried to pick them up. Then you have the rider on top. So another bike which you often see down the Palm Beach way, three girls on the one bike, so how much weight is that?

Mr Dyhin: I was getting to that. It is trying to put limits on this so that the trauma that is caused by this moving object is reduced. It is not the 35 kilos. On top of it you have to add the average weight of a teenager at 65 kilos, so you have my weight moving at speed—around 100 kilos. That is what is causing these kids to end up in the trauma wards. I have actually heard one in a ward next to me. I do spend a little bit of time at the hospital because of my age. What you hear through the sheet that is hanging down between you, is pretty horrific what they go through.

What I am really saying is if we can first of all break this down into two areas: one where we have a low-energy device. By 'low energy', I mean it is going to be going at a restricted speed only and its total weight is restricted. This does not mean having two or three kids on it; it means restricted to one person. If there is some form of collision, it is going to have some impact. At around 25 kilometres per hour it will be moderate damage.

In my analysis, I looked at the information from the trauma centres around the country to come up with these numbers and we are not talking about they are not going to be injured; they are going to be injured, but also if you ride a bike at 18 kilometres per hour, you will get injured, too. We can set those limits. Then for everything else at a higher weight or higher speed, we licence it properly, as for a motorcycle, so that we have training and we have third-party insurance et cetera.

Just break it down into two simple categories. Do not make it difficult. Then everybody can have everything they want. If you want that utility vehicle you can get up and down the hills in, it is going to need a lot more power and it will need to be licensed because if you have two or three kids on it, you have a lot of trauma potential there, even at 20 kilometres per hour. That is what I would like to say and I believe it can really help us get over this situation and it can basically meet everything that everybody is talking about. The people who want to go faster, they can be licensed and they can do it with these devices that do not burn fossil fuels. I have recommended a great solution to you.

CHAIR: Thank you very much, and thank you for your submission, Andrew, as well.

Mr Williams: I am here because, as with Peter, my wife and I no longer walk on the footpath for the simple reason that in February we were accosted by three kids on an e-bike travelling between 30 and 40 kilometres per hour. When I yelled out to them to slow down, they basically stopped a few metres ahead of me, lifted their little finger and told me, 'Eff off, grandpa. It's none of your effing business.' The following day, the same thing happened. They came past us again and they called out to each other, 'That's them! That's them! That's them!' Then they stopped a few metres ahead of us and waited for us to walk up to them. My wife was absolutely petrified. I, unfortunately, am not afraid of these teenagers. I am an ex-police officer. I spent 10 years working on the Gold Coast, so I am not afraid of these guys. When I got close to them, they started clenching their fists, trying to intimidate me. I was not intimidated and I said to them, 'Don't go there because you won't walk away.' They said, 'We will report you to the police because you are threatening us.' They were a threat to me and my wife.

I then went to the Palm Beach police station and I was told there is nothing they can do because police are not allowed to pursue these kids on bikes because if something happens to the kid, the police will be held accountable. The police are not the ones causing the issue. It is these kids. I then went to the council. The council says, 'It is not our problem. It is the police's problem.' I then went to the school which is Palm Beach Currumbin school and I explained to them what had happened and gave them a description of these three kids—two were redheads and one had black hair—and they said they have had several complaints about these kids doing this on the road.

I have an e-bike and my wife has an e-bike, but we use them responsibly. These kids have become irresponsible. I will give an example. The e-bike rules state that not wearing a helmet brings a \$160 fine; not giving way to pedestrians on a path—\$160 fine; using a mobile phone while riding—which 90 per cent of them do—\$1,200 fine; excess passengers—\$160 fine; disobey give way signs and stop signs—\$480; ignoring traffic lights—\$610.

I just want to point out something which might seem trivial, but the Queensland government brought in a rule earlier on in the year where if you were to walk your dog on the beach unleashed you get fined \$806. I speak of experience because I had a Maltese Shih Tzu running on the beach without a lead and got an \$806 fine. I think our politicians should start taking things into context and not fine for a dog who is at no risk to anybody \$806 and yet all these penalties, except for riding with a phone, are less than for a dog walking on the beach.

I am deeply disappointed in our politicians because all they do is blow wind up your proverbial backside. No, seriously! I was a police officer for 10 years. I know what it is like to deal with these people. When I was a police officer between 1990 and 1999, the kids were unruly. Today, there is no comparison. They have absolutely no respect for anybody. They do whatever they choose to do and the solution, as the chair said earlier, is that most of these bikes are deemed to be illegal.

If you go to Palm Beach Currumbin school and have a look at all the bikes that are parked along the fence, I would say the vast majority of them are deemed to be illegal. If our politicians had any Kahunas, they would issue a warrant and allow the police to go to the Palm Beach school and seize all these bikes and have them destroyed. That would solve a big problem. These bikes are not cheap. You do not buy these bikes for 50 bucks. They range from \$3,000 to in excess of \$10,000. They are extremely dangerous. I was fortunate that these three kids did not hit me because I am 67 years old yet still very agile and I was able to jump out of the way. With that, I rest.

CHAIR: Ellis, thank you very much for that.

Mr Edbrooke: My name is Lance Edbrooke. I sincerely appreciate you providing the opportunity for the community to speak about this serious matter. I thank you for allowing me a few minutes to speak my thoughts. Consultation with the community is essential, as we live at the coalface, as you appreciate. My position is a volunteer in the Palm 18E Neighbourhood Watch and business district, owning a property there since 1993. All would appreciate, and I trust all concur, that Burleigh Beach is one of the hubs of a high use of e-transport. Questionable and unacceptable actions continue to take place. It should be an area for all to enjoy safely. With the introduction over the last five years of e-transport, which umbrellas the e-bikes, scooters and skateboards, certainly these items have compromised the safety of the general community. Potentially, Burleigh could be used as a test case area to investigate how to improve the current situation. Queensland potentially is behind how the community accepts socially acceptable actions. One item I have noted throughout the 80 countries I have visited is that e-bikes and scooters do not mix with pedestrians or vehicles.

My personal thoughts—which are potentially backed by the majority of the community who own properties along the esplanade at Burleigh Heads—is to install a bike/scooter lane which runs two ways and is incorporated on the current road. This potentially cannot be installed until the current

works are completed—light rail and redevelopment. I note what has been said here and I congratulate the speakers. There are for and againsts with separating it that need to be investigated further. This option does, however, work in numerous countries like the Netherlands, China and other places. Such consideration should be given to this.

A problem I have encountered is that no-one is willing to take responsibility for the actions of minors. I think that has been a big thing on Burleigh beach. We are watching so many young ones run around. Clearly, when questionable actions are committed there needs to be consequences. I am hoping laws will be introduced. It is apparent there is no age related to these crimes. I am personally watching people from a young age up to older age committing crimes along the esplanade and in the side streets. Sometimes they are trying to prevent the motorist driving. There has to be consequences for those actions; maybe the police should be given more ability to take action against them. Doing the crime potentially has no repercussions and I trust you all concur; we cannot continue to turn a blind eye. I congratulate those who are leading this investigation. I trust the urgently required changes to our current legislation will eventually be made. I have found the meeting very informative. Finally, it appears action is taking place. Neighbourhood Watch made an attempt about five years ago and nothing was done. Thank you, again, on behalf of the community.

CHAIR: Very much appreciate it.

Mr KING: Thank you all. I can see your passion for what you are saying. Homer, I have an answer—you said 'When did things change?' We heard from witnesses yesterday from Bicycle Queensland and the Department of Transport and Main Roads. In 2021 national laws were relaxed by the federal government. I am not arguing with the chair but to clarify: these things are not illegal; the operation of them is illegal. They can be used off-road or in someone's backroad. As someone said, if they are ridden home from school that is an illegal action. The actual owning of the thing is not illegal. That is something for us to deliberate on. Obviously, we are not the federal government but things have changed and we have received that evidence. I wanted to pass that on to you. If we could rewind and reset, I am sure everyone in this room, on this committee and everyone we have spoken to, would like to do that but we are playing the cards we are dealt. Thank you all very much for your input. It has been of great value.

CHAIR: Thank you for the clarification; it is about the operation of them. Thank you, again, to you all for participating in the spirit in which you have and for the representations that you have made for your community. To everybody who has come along today: thank you for coming along and taking an interest in this matter. I can assure you that your contributions are being listened to and are well worthwhile. We have received a submission from the Palm Beach Currumbin High School. We will be talking to the students from there and having a look at those matters as well. Thank you for the advice around that.

The time allocated for today's hearing has ended. There being no further questions, this concludes the hearing. Thank you to everyone who has participated today. Thank you to our Hansard reporters and to our secretariat for your work in coordinating all of the speakers here today. That is one of the best open-mic sessions we have had, and well done on your behaviour. I had to nearly pull you up, Ellis, on a bit of unparliamentary language at one stage, but I let it slide! A transcript of today's hearing will be available on the committee webpage in due course. I declare this public hearing closed. Thank you.

The committee adjourned at 12.19 pm.