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STATE DEVELOPMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND WORKS COMMITTEE

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

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

Thursday, 24 July 2025

Caloundra

THURSDAY, 24 JULY 2025

The committee met at 2.01 pm.

CHAIR: Good afternoon. I declare open this public hearing for the inquiry into e-mobility safety and use in Queensland. I am Jim McDonald, the member for Lockyer and 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 Chris Whiting, the member for Bancroft.

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.

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Today we will be hearing from invited guests, but there will also be an opportunity for anyone to have a say towards the end. If you are interested in having a say, please talk to our secretary Stephanie and provide your name and what your points will be, because we will try to cluster people together for ease of understanding a little bit later. There will be an opportunity for people to speak for a short time, and I am asking everybody to keep that to three minutes.

To my right I have Kendall Morton, the member for Caloundra. Kendall, we are in your home town. It is beautiful to bring a bit of parliament out to the Sunshine Coast. Would you like to say a few words?

Ms MORTON: Thank you very much, Jim. I want to give a warm welcome to the committee and everybody here to Caloundra. You are in for a real treat. We have a very well-informed and engaged community on this issue. I thank you all for your input. There is a big, topical, interesting conversation going on around e-mobility; thank you for all of your work. I hope you enjoy your travels around our great state, particularly here in Caloundra. Thank you for being here.

CHAIR: Thank you, Kendall; we really appreciate it.

ZINN, Mr Rodney, Acting Manager, Transport Network Management, Built Infrastructure, Sunshine Coast Regional Council

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

Mr Zinn: Thank you. Good afternoon, Chair and committee members. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before the committee today. My name is Rod Zinn and I am the acting manager of the Sunshine Coast council's transport network management branch. Further to our written submission, I am pleased to provide you with a brief overview of our submission and answer any questions the committee may have.

Council's corporate plan sets a clear vision for the Sunshine Coast to be Australia's most sustainable region—connected, livable and thriving. The use of e-mobility devices has the potential to support health, economic, environmental and social benefits for riders and the broader community. Council's integrated transport strategy outlines clear, ambitious targets to increase the share of active and public transport trips and reduce the reliance on private vehicle use. Council is also developing an active transport plan which recognises that lawful e-bikes can encourage a mode shift towards active transport; however, due to the low physical effort required by e-scooters these devices are not recognised as active transport.

The Sunshine Coast Active Transport Advisory Committee, SCATAC, has a keen interest in e-mobility use. I have presented to the committee a number of times on council's recently adopted Transport Network Safety Plan and TMR's recent changes to road rules relating to e-mobility devices. Through council's community consultation activity we have heard that reducing conflict between path users is important for our residents and visitors. Concerns were raised that the unsafe operation of e-bikes and e-scooters, particularly by younger riders, is a growing concern which council does not have the ability to address through enforcement.

Of high concern to our residents is the growth in illegal e-scooter, e-bike and electric motorcycles and the high speed that these devices can attain. It is not unusual to see these devices riding along Nicklin Way or Kawana Way at more than the posted 70 kilometres an hour speed limit, ignoring red traffic signals and regulatory signs. These users are exposed to great risk, and any conflict with vehicles or pedestrians will end very badly. However, the illegal use of devices should not detract from the many benefits of legal e-mobility devices. E-mobility, along with conventional bicycles, reduces dependence on private vehicles, reduces harmful vehicle emissions and reduces the demand on parking.

Key issues for our region include: the sale of illegal e-bikes and electric motorcycles; young riders sharing the road with vehicles; high-speed e-mobility devices sharing pathways with our pedestrians; the reckless and inappropriate use of the local road network and shared paths by illegal devices; the safe disposal and recycling of lithium batteries at council's waste facilities; the lack of a fully connected, separated cycleway network requiring a large capital investment from both the state and local government; and a lack of local support for shared commercial e-bike and e-scooter schemes.

Our recommendations include: consideration of an increased upper speed limit for legal pedal-assisted e-bikes and support for increasing the current speed limit from 25 kilometres an hour to either 32 or 45 kilometres an hour under a new e-bike classification similar to European standards. This change would improve travel times. It would make e-bikes more competitive with other travel modes. It should be noted that 32 kilometres an hour is considered the speed that a fit cyclist can ride a conventional bicycle on flat ground. Our recommendations also include: amending state legislation to allow for broader seizure, confiscation and destruction of illegal e-bikes, e-scooters and electric motorcycles by the Queensland police; the state to work with the federal government to close importation loopholes to prevent the flood of illegal e-mobility devices coming into the country; and the state government, through the Queensland police, undertaking increased enforcement operations within the Sunshine Coast region to manage antisocial and unsafe riding behaviour. The state should implement age restrictions for e-bikes to bring them into line with e-scooter age limits.

I have been fortunate to be a member of TMR's e-mobility safety working group for a number of years now. I have seen the many benefits of this working group, including new road rules, improved knowledge sharing between road agencies, and a support network for road practitioners. I feel it is critical that this working group continues.

In conclusion, council supports the safe and responsible use of e-mobility devices on our roads and pathways. Council looks forward to supporting Transport and Main Roads to deliver infrastructure which supports their use and supporting the police to educate users in the safe operation and use of legal devices. I thank the committee for their time and welcome any questions on this important topic.

Ms BUSH: Thank you for coming here today and presenting for us. We are keen to hear what everyone has to say. Rodney, I will park the idea of what seem to be almost electric motorbikes that kids are using for a moment. Aside from that, e-mobility devices really seem to be surging in popularity and do have a role to play, I think, in that transport mix moving forward. It does seem that maybe the investment in infrastructure perhaps has not kept pace with some of those needs. I was curious how much of the transport budget for council is allocated to active transport.

Mr Zinn: We have recently had an uplift in vulnerable road users, so we have kicked off with \$5.5 million this year to improve pedestrian infrastructure. We also have some fairly major active transport projects that are currently being delivered from our transport levy, including the Mooloolaba to Sippy Downs dedicated cycleway and the Currimundi to Caloundra dedicated cycleway, so there are a number of projects that we have been fortunate enough to receive co-funding from the state for. It has been great that we have received that assistance from the state.

Ms BUSH: I was going to go to funding, because a lot of the stakeholders who have presented to us say that ordinarily it is around one per cent. It would be great to hear from you what percentage it actually is and has been. Also, what are the barriers to achieving 20 per cent? A lot of stakeholders

seem to suggest that 20 per cent of the transport budget should be allocated ongoing to active transport to start investing really heavily in redesigning cities. What are the barriers to getting to 20 per cent? It is a reorienting of your own budget, but is it also state government assistance? What will it take?

Mr Zinn: I would probably have to take that question of the percentage of the budget on notice and provide you with that information. There are a lot of competing priorities. We are trying to get our active transport—walking, cycling—up to 20 per cent, which is a huge increase in the number of active transport users. We have definitely identified that we need to increase funding, and part of that uplift in funding is to try and address the ongoing growth in this area. We have been inundated by these devices. It has made people a lot more mobile. We are finding out that older infrastructure and pathway networks which have been acceptable or fit for purpose up until this stage are too narrow. They are reaching end of life, so we have a lot of maintenance for them. There is a balance between building new infrastructure and maintaining the infrastructure we already have.

Mr KEMPTON: Rodney, there is no question that in terms of lifestyle and mobility there is a place for these devices. In all of your research and study are you aware of presentations to the local emergency department from accidents arising from the use of e-scooters and e-bikes?

Mr Zinn: I am aware, and we do have discussions with Queensland Health. Obviously a lot of the information that they have is confidential, but we are aware of a growing presentation in our emergency departments of particularly younger riders. It is worrying because a lot of those presentations are for serious head injuries. E-scooters have smaller wheels so they are more likely to come off and hurt themselves, and they are more likely to have more serious injuries because there is not good helmet compliance when they are using those devices. One of the things I want to do as part of our Transport Network Safety Plan is build better connections with Queensland Health, and we are in the process of doing that currently.

Mr KEMPTON: We heard yesterday that presentations to a major ED were doubling every two years, so it is a serious issue.

Mr KING: I noticed you said in your submission that council does not have any dedicated cycle networks to allow for the separated use of e-mobility devices. How do you think a separate cycle network would contribute to public sentiment around the safety of e-mobility devices?

Mr Zinn: We do have some dedicated off-road paths, but we are certainly looking at ramping up in that area. The conflict between pedestrians and e-scooters and e-bikes is a significant one, and there is a lot of concern in the community about the speed differential and the potential impacts. If an e-scooter or e-bike has a collision, the outcome for the pedestrian is quite bad. I believe that improving the off-road network will separate those vehicles that have a higher speed than pedestrians. Hopefully there will be greater acceptance from the community if they are not the ones dodging these devices on the footpaths.

Mr JAMES: Rodney, your report pretty well aligns with what we have heard so far. Yesterday we went to the Currumbin state high school and they can have up to 300 of these bikes in the school grounds on any one day. I see the schools around here have banned them. Having banned them, are they still on the outside of the school, on public roads? Are you finding that?

Mr Zinn: It is very pleasing to see that the schools are stepping up and taking this issue seriously, particularly our primary schools, which are making the call that the children are too young to use these devices. If they arrive at school on one, they get sent home. I do not see this as a TMR problem or a council problem; this is a community problem, and it is fantastic to see that education is stepping up in that space.

It is a bit difficult with high school aged children because they do fall into the age bracket where they can use these devices. As long as they are legal, we would encourage them to use these devices to get to school. We work with the state government to provide secure bicycle storage at a number of schools. These are expensive devices and we want them to be safe, so we have provided secure bicycle storage and scooter storage at a number of schools to encourage kids to use those devices.

We have an issue when kids are using noncompliant electric bikes that do not need pedal assist, that have a throttle or that are considered electric motorbikes because of the speed that these devices travel at. We go into the schools to try to educate kids where we can. I would say that the police hold more sway in this, purely because they are seen as authority figures. They are in their uniform and are going into the schools to try to educate kids as well. We want to help where we can with this education in the school system.

Mr JAMES: I see that the council does not currently support the commercial e-bikes and e-scooters. That is probably why we did not see any when we were driving in. A number of councils up our way have done the same thing, but they ended up going through the hotels and the accommodation places and renting them out from there. Is the same thing happening down here?

Mr Zinn: Council did have a trial of e-scooters and e-bikes. We received fairly strong feedback from the community that they did not support the continuation of the trial that we had with Neuron, so the trial was abandoned. We had a local operator who, prior to the trial, had been approaching council to get approval to set up on our road reserves. We were not supportive of that, and some of the advice to that company was, 'Why don't you talk to accommodation providers and other businesses about renting some land off them and providing this service for tourists or other customers?' It did operate like that for a while. The Neuron trial overwhelmed the local operator and they decided to take a different track.

Mr WHITING: You talked about the recycling and the safety of the lithium batteries. Does the council have a strategy for recycling lithium batteries? What would you need from the state government to help you deal with the disposal and recycling of those batteries?

Mr Zinn: At the moment, to my knowledge—and we reinforced this in our submission—there is nowhere in Queensland to recycle lithium batteries. We are currently sending them to Victoria, I believe. There is about a \$7.50 charge to do that.

Mr WHITING: Is that per battery?

Mr Zinn: That is per battery, yes. The batteries that e-scooters and e-bikes have are over five kilograms. It is becoming a problem for us because some of these devices are getting a bit long in the tooth and their batteries are reaching end of life. We are seeing them come into our recycling centres more and more. From the perspective of what the state can do—and I am not an expert in council's waste area—it could support businesses to try to reduce those transport costs. I feel there are opportunities locally to do that. The state could provide grants or support local businesses to establish themselves to do that sort of work.

CHAIR: Rodney, could you provide some clarification of the current use of shared devices? I understand the council did that trial. Can you tell us why that did not work and some of the outcomes from that trial? In other locations we have heard that shared devices have been quite well accepted because they have a lower speed, but there is the issue of parking. Are there any shared devices? You said that Neuron is up here. Are they providing that as a third party? Can you explain that situation to us?

Mr Zinn: Neuron was a partner in the trial, but it is no longer on the Sunshine Coast. What we found was that the rideshare companies geofenced the devices, so they could control where these devices went. They were speed limited. They had GPSs and accelerometers, so the operator could manage their operation and if people were doing the wrong thing they could terminate that person's account. We found that the rideshare operator did a very good job in monitoring, reporting and controlling the operation of these devices.

They were tarred with the brush of the private e-mobility devices, though. Residents raised a lot of concerns with us about the operation of e-mobility devices, but the majority of those reports related to private devices. We also had some issues with where the devices were left. I am sure that if you travel to locations where these e-mobility shared schemes are operating you will find them lying all over the place. We had fairly strong controls around the timeframes for the operator to pick these devices up and put them in an allocated space to be re-used. That was one of the issues that we had. Apart from the community pushback, that was probably one of the deciding factors to not continue with the trial.

CHAIR: It would make sense that those private devices are still the biggest concern for the community up here.

Mr Zinn: They certainly are.

Ms BUSH: Rodney, I understand that Bundaberg council and other councils interstate are looking at using AI to gain a picture of people who might not be complying with the road rules. It is a big investment up-front but the ongoing investment is much smaller than allocating human resources. Has that come up in conversations in your team? Is that something that council is turning its mind to at all?

Mr Zinn: It is. AI is infiltrating a lot of areas in our life, and it has certainly been coming into the area of traffic management for a while now. We have had a couple of instances where we have partnered with companies that are championing those arrangements. We have used them at a Caloundra

number of locations to assess what is happening at intersections. They will identify near misses. They will identify different types of road users. It is certainly an area that we are moving into more and more. At the moment it is easier to contract out those services due to the high cost of purchasing and setting up the devices. At the moment we are not doing that ourselves; we are engaging consultants to do it.

Mr KEMPTON: Rodney, you advocate for increasing the speed of e-bikes to a practical level, such as the speed people riding normal bikes reach. On shared walkways I think it is 12 kilometres an hour. We have heard about the benefits of e-mobility and we have also heard a lot about pedestrians being anxious in areas of high traffic. As 12 kilometres an hour on the footpaths around the shops in the CBD would probably be three times faster than people walk, would you advocate banning e-mobility devices altogether in the CBD?

Mr Zinn: We have recently set up the Maroochydore city centre. A large component of that is to invite e-mobility devices and bicycles into the centre. We want to discourage private vehicle use and encourage people to use alternative modes of transport to get into the city centre. We have not at this stage banned any devices unless there is an engineering reason why. So we have a couple of locations where it is not appropriate due to railing height or the lack of railings on boardwalks that we have banned both conventional bicycles and e-mobility devices. It is not something that we would want to do going forward. We want to make sure that any infrastructure that we construct is compliant and meets safety requirements. I feel it is more around the behaviour of the user and that is a very hard thing to manage.

Mr KEMPTON: Do you think then further speed restrictions in those areas may be required—if not banning?

Mr Zinn: We are conscious that if you reduce the speed too low it is very hard to keep your balance. We have to be a bit pragmatic and say we need to not only keep people safe but also allow these devices to be used. Yes, it is a difficult balancing act.

Mr KEMPTON: It is a balancing act, thank you.

CHAIR: I think when the member for Cook refers to reducing speeds it is particular to shared space—not actually on the road.

Mr KING: I have a question about a different type of e-mobility device, the one seniors ride. Obviously some of them do whiz around as well. I do not know if, in your experience as a council, this has this presented a problem on shared pathways because they are far larger. No-one wants to stop seniors getting around—that is not the intention of anyone. We are talking about kids whizzing around everywhere on scooters but I did not know if any problems have presented—maybe some young people get hold of one of those and do something to it as well—the actual vehicle more than the operator is where I am going.

Mr Zinn: The general issue we have with mobility scooters is that the operator has a numberplate on the back of the device so they feel that they are a registered vehicle and they drive on the road. Now the rule is that you can drive on the road for a short distance to get around issues on the pathway network but they certainly should be on the pathway. There was a similar problem early on in the piece when mobility scooters came out. There were not rules or compliance around what these devices could be so you would get devices that were twin devices. They have a front and back seat and are quite large. There were also issues with the smaller devices tipping and that raised concerns for us because some of our infrastructure and kerb ramps were quite old so we needed to upgrade those areas where concerns were raised with us but we do not hear a lot of noise about mobility scooters.

Mr KING: It is quite a hilly area as you get closer to the water, as well. I really appreciate that.

CHAIR: Well-behaved seniors, you could say!

Mr KING: Or well done to the operators.

CHAIR: Well-behaved operators.

Mr Zinn: And young people do not use them because they are not cool.

CHAIR: Thank you for appearing before the committee today. The time for this session has expired. There is one question on notice with regard to the percentage of the budget being used for infrastructure that the deputy chair asked. If you could have that response to our secretariat by Tuesday, 12 August, that would be greatly appreciated. Enjoy your afternoon.

Mr Zinn: Thank you all.

BRADBY, Ms Linda, Member, Sunshine Coast Bicycle Users Group

BURRILL, Mr John, Volunteer, Get Around Caboolture

HUMPHREY, Mr Craig, Chair, Sunshine Coast Bicycle Users Group; and President, Caloundra Residents Association

NASH, Ms Wendy, Founder and Advocate, Get Around Caboolture

OSWIN, Ms Prue, Member, Infrastructure Committee, Sunshine Coast Bicycle Users Group

ROGERS, Mr John, Convenor, Safety Committee, Sunshine Coast Bicycle Users Group

CHAIR: Mr Humphrey, I invite you to make a brief opening statement after which the committee will have some questions. Following Craig, I will turn to Wendy.

Mr Humphrey: Thank you, Chair, and honourable members for the opportunity to address you today. It is much appreciated by Sunshine Coast Bicycle Users Group, which is a new group on the Sunshine Coast under the auspices of Bicycle Queensland. With me today we have: Prue Oswin, who is a member of our committee, a registered engineer and transport planner; Linda Bradby, who is a former town planner, avid rider and coordinator of rides; and the chair of our safety committee, John.

Today we have prepared some information and then allow you to ask some questions. The Sunshine Coast Bicycle Users Group appears before you today representing thousands of cyclists and active transport users who share our paths daily with an increasingly dangerous mix of unregulated e-mobility devices. What we are witnessing is not just a safety concern; it is a fundamental breakdown in how we manage emerging transport technologies. It is a crisis that is hidden in plain sight.

While the community celebrates the environmental benefits of e-mobility, we are simultaneously experiencing what can only be described as a parallel epidemic of preventable injuries. The Jamieson Trauma Institute's data reveals a troubling trajectory: e-scooter emergency presentations have jumped to approximately 150 cases a month in Queensland. Here on the Sunshine Coast, these are not abstract numbers; they represent real families dealing with serious injuries that could have been prevented. Between January 2023 and January 2024, our university hospital treated 118 e-scooter related injuries—essentially one serious incident every three days. What makes this particularly heartbreaking is that more than half of these patients were children under 18, with adolescents enduring most of the severe injuries.

It is the regulatory maze that is failing our communities. We are operating in what can best be described accurately as a 'regulatory dog's breakfast'. There is not just bureaucratic confusion; it is a recipe for a disaster that places users, retailers and enforcement officers in impossible situations. These regulatory fragmentations have created this situation: importers using loopholes; retailers selling devices without clear guidance on legality; and users, particularly young people and parents, navigating conflicting rules that change depending on which side of the state border they are on.

Queensland police possess significant powers. They can issue fines exceeding \$1,580 and impose three demerit points for illegal device use, yet these tools remain largely ineffective due to resource constraints and the practical challenges of enforcement. This enforcement vacuum creates a dangerous environment where vulnerable path users—particularly young children learning to ride, elderly residents maintaining their independence, and people with disabilities—find themselves sharing space with increasingly powerful and unpredictable devices.

We would recommend a blueprint for change with five strategic interventions. We propose that, first, national standardisation is championed, where Queensland can take the lead in advocating for uniform national standards. We cannot continue to allow a patchwork of state regulations to undermine safety and create market confusion. This requires immediate intergovernmental cooperation and should be treated as a national infrastructure priority. No. 2 is resource backed enforcement. Providing additional funding to police and local authorities is not just about more officers; it is about developing specialised expertise and targeted strategies for e-mobility enforcement. This includes training programs, dedicated resources and clear protocols for addressing under-age and reckless riding. We also strongly support evidence-based education programs. We

need to scale successful initiatives like ScootScool, developed on the Sunshine Coast and currently supported by Australian government funding and available to all communities. These programs work because they are practical, age-appropriate and delivered in settings where young people engage with technology. On behalf of Prue, I would like to announce that last night Prue Oswin, together with another partner, won an Australian safety award in Canberra for the school award. This is the award. It is proof that the award has national recognition, funding from the Australian government and significant uptake in schools on the coast. Prue can elaborate more. I would like to congratulate her publicly for the win on the work that she has done on the Sunshine Coast.

We also need infrastructure that matches reality. Our current infrastructure was not designed for the mix of devices that are now using it. We need dedicated e-mobility infrastructure that includes separated lanes, improved signage and better integration with the existing active transport networks. This is not only about convenience but also about creating a predictable, safe environment for all users. We would also like to look at stricter market accountability through import controls and at the point of sale with compliance checks to prevent the flooding of illegal, noncompliant devices that are currently undermining legitimate retailers and putting users at risk. This includes working with the Australian Border Force and supporting retailers who want to do the right thing.

You have just heard from the Sunshine Coast Regional Council. We would also recommend providing local councils with clear authority to introduce and enforce location-specific regulation for e-mobility devices and the use of appropriate technology, as one of the honourable members asked. Communities understand their local conditions, school zones, popular family areas, high traffic locations and should have the tools to protect their residents appropriately. In high traffic areas such as the Sunshine Coast, we are documenting daily conflicts that should not exist in a properly regulated environment. These are not theoretical policy discussions; they are real situations affecting real families who deserve better protection from preventable risks. On licensing and registration—a topic of much angst across the press in Australia recently—the Sunshine Coast Bicycle Users Group maintains no formal position on registration or licensing proposals and we would not be able to provide any commentary on these specific measures today.

We call this ‘the urgency of now’. Every three days another person arrives at our local emergency department with injuries that proper regulation may have prevented. Every month Queenslanders require emergency medical treatment for e-mobility related injuries. These numbers represent not just a policy challenge but a moral imperative for action. This inquiry represents an opportunity for Queensland to lead Australia in establishing the coherent regulatory framework, adequate enforcement resources and supportive infrastructure that our community desperately needs.

The Sunshine Coast Bicycle Users Group stands ready to work collaboratively with government, industry and community stakeholders to ensure e-mobility enhances, rather than endangers our shared spaces and contributes significantly to the important modal shift away from the reliance on motor vehicles in our communities. The choice before us is clear: we can continue to manage the crisis reactively, treating injuries after they occur, or we can act proactively. Our communities, and particularly our children, deserve the protection that only comprehensive and immediate action can provide. Thank you for your time today.

CHAIR: Thank you, Craig, for the leadership that SCBUG is providing in your community. I look forward to hearing more from Prue about her award and the contribution that you are making to safety and education shortly, but we will go to Wendy Nash, the founder and advocate of Get Around Caboolture.

Ms Nash: Good afternoon. Thank you for the opportunity to speak. My name is Wendy Nash and I represent Get Around Caboolture, a community group working to improve transport in Brisbane's outer suburbs where one in three people cannot drive. In Caboolture, if you do not drive, you are stuck—buses are rare, destinations are far apart and there is no easy way to get to a GP or a job interview. The economic burden of social isolation in Moreton Bay alone is around \$60 million a year through higher Medicare, unemployment, addiction and lost productivity. In this context, e-scooters are not a novelty; they are transport. They offer freedom, independence and a way to keep moving without relying on someone else or owning a car you cannot afford but our road rules have not caught up. Right now, e-scooter users face a patchwork of inconsistent laws that vary by device type, wattage, speed, footpath presence and even what paint is on the road.

You cannot tell if a device is legal just by looking at it. TMR's website lists pedestrian road rules under the URL for ‘wheeled devices’. That kind of confusion shows how out of step the system is with how people actually move. Even people who want to follow the rules cannot easily do so. When laws

are confusing and paths unsafe, riders start to internalise that frustration: 'I can't get it right.' I speak that as a bike rider. Over time it becomes, 'I am an outlaw,' not by choice, but because the system sets them up to fail.

It is true that four people—and I am not sure what the current figure is—in Queensland have died this year in crashes involving e-scooters. Each one of those is absolutely heartbreaking, and I concur with the previous speaker, but it is important to keep it in perspective. Today alone, it is likely that four Queenslanders will be killed in a car crash and another 180 today alone will be hospitalised, many with lifelong injuries that require ongoing care. What is the difference? We have normalised that risk. We have built for it and we rarely ask whether that is a fair trade-off.

It is also true that young men, whether in cars or on scooters, are the most likely to take risks. That is not unique to scooters, it is a broader road safety issue we really need to address. The environments these rules apply to do not make any sense. So let's talk about footpaths.

In Caboolture, footpaths are often narrow, damaged and end without warning. You might be riding along fine, then find yourself in the dirt, dodging parked cars or squeezing between a power pole and a wheelie bin. You share that 1.2 metre strip with parents pushing prams, seniors with walkers, people in wheelchairs, kids on bikes, delivery riders, pedestrians, people on mobility scooters and e-scooter users just trying to get to work. Then throw in a Telstra van digging up half the path for utility works or a six-foot fence right to the edge of the path blocking views of cars coming out of the driveways. I recently saw a driver reverse out so fast in an SUV, she nearly hit two schoolkids on scooters—they were the little legal scooters. She blamed them, but should primary schoolers be responsible for adult behaviour? When footpaths are that crowded, narrow and unpredictable, it does not matter if you are going 12 kilometres per hour, you are one blind spot away from injury. When a 1.5 tonne car hits a person on a 30 kilo scooter, we all know who is going to come off worse. Speed and size are the real danger. That is not a slogan; that is just physics.

So let's talk economics. Legal e-scooters on proper infrastructure are not just safer, they are smarter. They cost councils and the state less. A single trip in a Ford F350 causes the same road damage as over half a million e-scooter trips or, to put it another way, an e-scooter would need to make the same trip every day for 1.5 thousand years or 1.5 millennia to match the road damage from one trip in one large pick-up truck. That is money that could go to road repairs, better footpaths and services that people use.

What do we recommend? One: fix the laws. Make them clear, consistent and fair so people know what is legal and where they can ride.

Two: fix the paths. If you want safe riding, provide safe space in the outer suburbs. Footpaths are overcrowded, damaged or blocked, and it is getting worse. Just visit any side street in Caboolture South where people park in driveways across the footpath.

Three: fix the language. In the UK, media now say 'car crash' instead of 'accident', and use terms like 'a person drove into' instead of 'a car hit'. We need similar standards here. The way we talk about crashes shapes how we see responsibility and how seriously we take safety. I would like to share that guide today.

This is not about special treatment for e-scooters, it is about letting all people, including families, seniors and workers move safely, legally and with dignity. If we want people to follow the law, we need to make the laws and build streets that are worth following. I am happy to take questions on e-scooters in the outer suburbs. If you have any questions on the road rules themselves, I am joined by John Burrill, a former TMR road rules expert, who has kindly volunteered his time today to support this inquiry. Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you, Wendy. We will go to Prue to hear about your national award, please, on education.

Ms Oswin: My name is Prue Oswin. I am an active transport engineer. Normally I am planning infrastructure to protect children from harm, often around schools. The aim of our road safety infrastructure is that no-one should be killed or seriously injured. We can develop infrastructure like that, particularly around crossings where we slow vehicles down. The Sunshine Coast region has done an amazing job of doing that kind of work. However, a couple of years ago, it became really obvious that we have this new transport mode emerging which is almost irresistible to the young people in our communities in these lower density suburbs. There are only so many crossings we can get out there where needed and education is something we can do now. These children are suddenly powered up with e-bikes and e-scooters, and they are going out there without the education they need to protect themselves from harm.

In regards to our ScootScool program, which received a road safety grant to be funded and rolled out, we are piloting it with 600 students on the Sunshine Coast. We have already trained about 200 students in three different schools. We are aiming at year 6, 7 and 8 students. It is called the Safe Beyond the Gate program, and we quickly learnt in our literature review of road safety evidence and road safety programs that we need to make sure that we are not encouraging early adoption of risky modes, which e-scooters are. We cover road safety survival skills for walking, cycling and scooting. We point children towards the lower risk modes, and parents and families to walking and cycling before you even think of powering them up on an e-scooter or an e-bike. Very much it is about giving the redundancy and building them to double-check before they are crossing roads. The children who have been killed on the Sunshine Coast—most of the ones I know of—they were not doing the wrong thing; it was the driver. We have lots of bush turkeys driving cars in our program to train children that you cannot trust drivers and that they need to be their own advocates.

We are really proud of the program. The program has now been rolled out to 200 kids. We concentrate really hard on protecting others from harm as well, so training them explicitly in slowing down around pedestrians. Certainly the first results that we have show their intentions are to wear helmets a lot more, to slow down when they are approaching pedestrians and to have safer behaviour out there.

CHAIR: Thank you for that. Certainly, as you said, education is a very vital step and it is something we can do and control.

Ms BUSH: Thanks, everybody. Prue, I am so desperate to hear more about your work, but we have a short time and I am just going to go here to Wendy, if that is okay. I read about your program and I will continue to do that. I am interested because I read a Churchill Fellows report recently—I cannot think of his name; I am just trying to find it—around e-mobility devices in outer suburbs and the vulnerability of some of the people in those suburbs, and just the opportunities and costs that we have in not putting that infrastructure in place. Can you talk to us a little bit more about that and about some of the particular vulnerabilities of users in the outer suburbs and what more governments can be doing to get these people mobile, moving, to get cars off the road, to get people connected to education and employment?

Ms Nash: Just to clarify, when you say ‘vulnerability’, do you mean social vulnerabilities?

Ms BUSH: Correct.

Ms Nash: So hugely social disadvantage. Caboolture, I understand, has a SEIFA IRSAD score of 2 which means that 98 per cent of people who live in Moreton Bay region are more socially advantaged than the guys that I hang around with or that I know. Just tell me your question again?

Ms BUSH: When we have been talking as a committee about some of the issues, we are focusing on the inner-city areas, but it was interesting for me to read that in the outer lying suburbs you have people where the footpaths maybe have not been maintained, there are not shared or allocated spaces, so you get on a shared scooter and ride it to wherever. There is a real lack of infrastructure in those kind of forgotten suburbs.

Ms Nash: Forgotten—you said that, not me. There is quite a lot of research which says that low-income areas do get neglected. I think it is largely because—and this is certainly my experience since starting Get Around Caboolture three years ago—I have got a whole lot of footpaths fixed because I am a middle-class person and I go, ‘Okay, I can use Snap Send Solve and I can report that to council.’ Moreton Bay Regional Council is fantastic; it uses Snap Send Solve. It is super easy and I can tell people about it. That makes a huge difference; just that—30 seconds—it is fantastic.

What can I say about people who are socially disadvantaged? I am not a specialist on people who are socially disadvantaged and I have only been there three years, but certainly any barrier that makes it a little bit harder to do something is like—they are already overwhelmed. The common phrase that I hear is, ‘There is no point doing anything because nothing will be done.’ So, they do not complain and they do not do anything, so nothing gets done. I am ambivalent about e-scooters personally because of the same problems that everybody else has highlighted. With regard to the issue of social vulnerability, I do not know where you live—I think you are from Ipswich, if I recall.

Ms BUSH: No, I am closer in to the city.

Ms Nash: Okay, but a poor area is a poor area. I feel like I have not answered your question as I am not really qualified to answer on social disadvantage, but I will say that we have really rubbish footpaths, yes.

Ms BUSH: Point taken.

CHAIR: Member for Cooper, I can see Prue with her hand up here wanting to answer some of your question.

Ms Oswin: Is that allowed?

CHAIR: Yes, of course it is allowed. You are answering a question.

Ms Oswin: I think it is a really good point that a lot of the focus is on the cities, and the suburbs is where sometimes they are neglected in terms of active transport. I see huge opportunities, particularly in terms of the infrastructure is not always as complicated; it is fixing those footpath networks. The first stage of active transport is a cohesive footpath network that connects up. Fixing the crossings: we have these enormous roads that have been getting busier for decades and at some point people need protection on those crossings.

In the Netherlands, we all admire their bicycle network, but it started with the Stop Child Murder campaign. This is mothers who are standing up and saying, 'It is not safe.' Our mothers are doing the same thing. I have surveyed hundreds of parents of schoolchildren in communities and places like Bli Bli, Yandina and some of the outer areas here, and every time they give me a cohesive plan of where they need crossings and footpaths. It is like there is a shooting range in the middle of their town with this road that they need to cross to get to the buses and things. I think there are definitely opportunities to get these crossings and these completed footpath networks, and also now is the time to think about these 30 kilometre per hour zones. We cannot get to that 40 kilometres per hour to make it safe for mixing and getting these mobility devices on the roads. I will stop.

CHAIR: Thanks, Prue. Wendy, I took note of the Snap Send Solve app that the regional council is using. It is a great idea because there is a big issue with footpaths being in good order. I will go to the member for Cook.

Mr KEMPTON: Craig, the RACQ, before they even look at infrastructure and regulation and so on, have put the proposition that with regard to the e-scooters, which are currently legal, the only changes we need are perhaps to sit down, helmets and to enforce the current laws, and for e-bikes there be no changes at all. On the other side of the scale, any e-scooter that is not legal is not registerable and therefore should not be available, and that e-bikes are in fact electric motorbikes and need to be registered or taken off the road. That is the demarcation without any changes. Would you support that?

Mr Humphrey: We will go to Linda on that one if she does not mind.

Ms Bradby: Thank you very much. My name is Linda Bradby. I am an urban and regional town planner—or was, now retired. The question was around the demarcation between compliant and noncompliant vehicles?

Mr KEMPTON: Simply the RACQ say that what is legal is legal and all the rest should not be on the road.

Ms Bradby: Under the current regulations, it is difficult to classify a noncompliant e-bike or scooter as a motorbike because of the design standard requirement that is in that definition. You cannot register one of those noncompliant electric bikes as a motorcycle because of that one issue. That is something that would be worth looking at. Once it is registered, you need to be licensed to use it. Just as to ride a moped, which is a smaller motorbike, you still need to have a driver's licence, and that deals with the age factor of those people who are using it. There is an opportunity without writing lots of changes into your regulations, essentially allowing those current noncompliant vehicles to be defined as even a moped or even a motorcycle and having a look at that regulation.

The suggestion that there be import restrictions and we remove these noncompliant vehicles from our streets through regulation, I really think that that will just create a black market for them. They will be here anyway. They are already here. What do you do with the ones that are already here? You need to look at that reality and move the focus on how do we actually licence and register them under your current mechanisms. Can I pick up on another issue, a conversation from earlier?

CHAIR: The floor is yours. We are here to listen.

Ms Bradby: This is more in my portfolio as a planner—that is, the conversation around the outer suburbs and how do we make it safer for those people, those disadvantaged people in those areas who do not have access to good cycle infrastructure. The answer is infrastructure-led solutions. It is not behaviour solutions; it is infrastructure investment from government. If you put the infrastructure in for good commuter cycleways that are segregated from pedestrians and cars, then a lot of these problems will go away. If you have bikeways that are separate to the pedestrian ways, then that conversation about 12 kilometres an hour, 25 kilometres an hour or whatever is gone.

I had the privilege of cycling from Germany to the Netherlands for three months last year. They do not have a problem with hooning on noncompliant vehicles. Mopeds can use their cycle infrastructure and they share that space with pedal powered, with e-bikes, with what we call noncompliant vehicles. They are all there on the cycle infrastructure. Why is that safe? It is because those people who are on those vehicles now grew up on the back of mum and dad's bike when they were kids. It is that intergenerational change that has occurred because of the infrastructure investment that occurred in the 1970s when the mums were protesting about their children dying from cars hitting them while they were riding to school—which is the situation we have now.

We need governments at all levels investing in infrastructure. Every primary, major road or public piece of infrastructure that you consider in your portfolios should be accompanied by bicycle ways. We just have to look at the Wave project, for example, that is coming to the Sunshine Coast—a new railway from Beerwah to Maroochydore. Where is the funding for the bike infrastructure? It is on the plan but it is not funded. Why aren't you funding it? Why isn't the Commonwealth government funding it? Why isn't the state government funding it? Why isn't the local government funding it? Why aren't they all partnering together in that opportunity to make that part of that project? That is what we want. We want funded segregated bikeways—separate from car infrastructure, separate from pedestrian infrastructure.

CHAIR: John, do you have something you want to add with regard to the regulation?

Mr Burrill: The situation with regard to the demarcation between various types of vehicles as cited by the RACQ is probably correct. The biggest problem I think is the illegitimate use of a lot of the vehicles that are not meant to be there. It would be good if the police had seizure powers to just take those vehicles away.

With regard to regulation generally—and that was my forte for 20 years when I was in the Department of Transport and Main Roads—there is such a big disconnect in the rules about where these vehicles can travel. To give you an example, the rules say if there is no footpath then basically you can ride on the road but there is a list of roads that you are not allowed to use. Those include: roads with a dotted line or a built-up median strip; roads with a speed limit above 50 kilometres an hour; or a one-way street with more than one lane. If you take all of that into consideration, anybody at all riding a personal mobility device or an e-scooter legitimately often simply cannot make their journey because they get to a point in the road where the speed limit goes up to 60 or a white line appears in the middle of the road and they are stuck. Legally they are not allowed to continue along that journey. The only thing they can do is turn around and go back in the opposite direction. I think those sorts of rules are ripe for amendment with a bit of common sense added to them.

CHAIR: Thank you, John. They are wise words.

Mr KING: They are wise words, indeed. We have heard from witnesses over the last few days about the problem with young people riding these things. They are not illegal devices; they are being operated illegally. It is only when you use them in the wrong place that makes them illegal. Whatever the reason for them being used in this way, there is a cultural change that has to happen. As you said, you get to a certain point on your journey and if you continue you are breaking the law, so they will just break the law that little bit and the next time it comes to break the law we end up with this problem.

The e-bikes have proliferated so quickly that, as you say, infrastructure has not caught up. I am very proud to represent an area in Moreton Bay and I know Moreton Bay council works on a lot of active transport. I do not work for Moreton Bay council, just saying. There is a lot that can be fixed and Snap Send Solve is great—I just let the chair know—but there are active pathways. Chris and I are both involved in the upgrade of the Boundary Road overpass and the Deception Bay Road and New Settlement Road overpass—all which have active transport—and now we are trying very hard to get that to connect to other things to enhance that. I think it will take time. This is more a statement than a question, I am sorry, Chair.

CHAIR: I am gathering that.

Mr KING: Infrastructure needs to catch up. We are here to listen so I really appreciate your feedback. It all works together, particularly in a tourism area. Tourists need to be safe, as well as people getting to and from work and to appointments.

Ms Nash: I wonder if some of the public fear around e-scooters is actually about the harm we experience from cars and we have just stopped noticing it because it is so normal. Brand new research from Oxford university shows the top community safety concern in towns is not theft or assault; it is traffic—speeding, noise, parking—yet scooters are treated as if they are the biggest risk

on our streets. We accept deaths and injury from cars every day but question whether a 20-kilo scooter is safe in a bike lane. In the meantime, TMR vehicles carry 'We cannot speed' bumper stickers, a quiet admission that speeding is so expected on our roads even public officials risk abuse for obeying the speed limit.

Queensland laws still allow cars to park in bike lanes—that certainly could be changed—unlike anywhere else in Australia. We apply the same fines for cars, bikes and scooters but only cars get A-grade infrastructure. Everyone else navigates risky conditions and gets fined as if the playing field is level. Here is one practical idea. E-scooters are great for footpath audits because you quickly find out where the cracks and hazards are. My question is: how much are we projecting about harm from cars onto e-scooters simply because cars feel familiar and scooters do not? That is all I want to add.

Mr KING: That is one thing where I agree with you. Also, e-scooters, e-bikes and mobility scooters all represent a different viewpoint from the rider. We got a GoPro on the shoulder of a gentleman who I represent proudly who is in an electric wheelchair to see what he sees—the hedges and things like that on the footpath which you cannot see when you are driving past in a car. That all comes into play. I really appreciate the feedback from every viewpoint of these new devices, and we need to take that into account.

Mr JAMES: Linda, I think you have answered some of my questions. Could I potentially summarise what you are talking about. We need the infrastructure fixed—widen the footpaths, which would make it ideal for, say, the minor kids who stick to 12 kilometres an hour and under; fix the pushbike lanes and share them with the e-scooters and e-mobility devices.

Ms Bradby: It is about separating bikeways from pedestrian paths. It is having a segregated bikeway network across the coast—having both trunk infrastructure and local infrastructure that is separate to pedestrian ways and cars.

Mr JAMES: Could the current separated bikeways that you see on the side of the road now be used and shared with pushbikes?

Ms Bradby: The bike lanes?

Mr JAMES: Yes.

Ms Bradby: At the moment we have shared pathways, which is 12 kilometres an hour; we have bikeways, and they are separated from other users, pedestrians as well as cars; and then we have bike lanes, which is a cheap way of having a lane on an existing roadway. As Wendy just pointed out, you can park a car in a bike lane. I am a cyclist of many fashions—I ride a road bike, I ride a bike to go to my local shops and I do multiday tour biking—and there are a number of times on any of those trips where you are in a bike lane and you have to go around and mix it with the cars because a car is parked in the bike lane. I am an experienced cyclist, but if you have a 12-year-old child on that bike lane riding to school, you can imagine the hazard that poses to them. Then if you put in a motorised bike or scooter with that child going to school, you can see how that escalates the risk very quickly. If they were on a segregated bikeway going to school and were not having to avoid parked cars or going in and out of lanes or coming to the end or going over a crossing to get onto a footpath, that all goes away.

Mr JAMES: I suppose some of the suburban streets are too narrow to get those extra lanes, so maybe enforce the cars that are parked in the bikeways and tow them away.

Ms Oswin: When we are designing infrastructure on the busier roads, we want completely separated bike facilities. We need something physical that will stop a car going into it. On those quieter streets, there are opportunities for the little kids to be on a footpath and to slow down the speed to 30 kilometres an hour where it is safe to mix with traffic. Then you have a good network. That is a really efficient way of bringing our networks up to speed with the current needs.

If you look at the Caloundra CBD area, we are perfectly set up here to have a 30 kilometre an hour speed limit in the whole CBD area on those quiet, central streets. That would make it safe for the scooters and the e-bikes to be on the streets where the sight lines are all better. If we slow the cars down, it will only add a few seconds to the journey but it will make additional space for those users in an area where you cannot make the roads any wider and things like that.

We have a few tools in the toolbox, but we need the courage to reduce some speed limits. We have seen trials in areas where you have a community that is really behind it. I think they have just done it in Cotton Tree in the Sunshine Coast region now where they have reduced the speeds to 30 kilometres an hour. I have not seen adverse press about that and that is great. You get the scooters on the roads and free up the footpaths for people.

Mr JAMES: I think someone else suggested that yesterday as well—to slow it down to 30 kilometres an hour in the built-up areas. I come from Cairns and we slowed the CBD down from 60 or 50 to 40 and all hell broke loose. However, now that it has been in for awhile nobody talks about it.

CHAIR: Every community is different so it is appropriate that we do not have one-size-fits-all. Member for Bancroft?

Mr WHITING: I do not have a question. I have just been listening and it has been fascinating.

CHAIR: It has been fascinating. Get Around Caboolture and SCBUG, well done on the presentation you have given for your community. John, do you have any comments you wish to make?

Mr Rogers: No. My colleagues have covered our issues exceptionally well.

CHAIR: Please accept John's congratulation for the way you have performed today. Well done for the leadership you are providing your community. Thank you for being here today and sharing your thoughts with the committee. There have been some great outcomes. I can assure you that we are listening and we want to produce some safe outcomes for Queenslanders.

Ms Nash: With regards to that 30 kilometres an hour, they found in Wales that that has reduced car premiums from car crashes because there are fewer crashes.

CHAIR: Okay. Thank you.

HAMLIN, Mr Mark, President, Twin Waters Residents' Association

SMITH, Mr Greg, Twin Waters Residents' Association

CHAIR: We are running a little over time, but we will not take any time away from you. We will extend the hearing if we need to. Would you like to make an opening statement, after which the committee will have questions for you?

Mr Hamlyn: Thank you very much for giving us the opportunity to speak to you today. This is something that will be greatly appreciated by our residents, for whom this is an ongoing issue that they have seen affect them on a day-to-day basis. We would probably endorse a lot of what we have been hearing here this afternoon. However, I would like to very briefly reinforce a few points about where Twin Waters is, what it is and how it connects to this issue.

I have with me a fellow committee member, a prominent member of our community and a former police officer, Greg Smith. As I mentioned in our note to you, he is the author of the submission that we have endorsed as the Twin Waters Residents' Association. Later on, I will be asking Greg to speak in particular to some of the priorities that we have. In the interests of being focused on this, we are very interested in seeing a higher level of education and regulation. We note what has already been said here today about that from people like the RACQ. We probably see a lot of sense in that. We also have comments to make about the varying levels of infrastructure in our community, which is going to be a rapidly changing community.

Twin Waters itself was carved out of an abandoned creek bed and bush in the late 1990s by Lendlease, which developed it as a kind of bolthole for retirees seeking a good life in the sun. They took the creek and dug a giant artificial lake that sits alongside the Maroochy River. It offers the good life in many ways. It has a park-like environment around the lake where there are many pleasant and sealed footpaths. However, we are now 25 years old and some of that infrastructure is fraying. We spend a lot of our time keeping it up to scratch and keeping it safe. We have about 1,200 households in our community. There are many free-standing houses and there are three major apartment blocks. The Twin Waters Residents' Association represents a bit over 500 individual households so that is about 1,000 people, we think, more or less, who pay their \$10 a year to be part of this community group.

We are living in changing times demographically. Once a retirement focused community, in the past five years we have seen significant demographic change as younger families have moved in. That has had an impact on e-scooter use. As the families have got younger, we now also have young mothers regularly pushing prams on the pathways so we are experiencing considerable change. Twin Waters itself lives alongside a new development called Twin Waters West, which will effectively double the size of the local community with an additional 450 households. Presumably, it will also have a strong family life cohort and there will probably be many e-scooters and associated type vehicles there as well. We also live alongside Pacific Paradise, which is a long-established suburb. It has its own primary school and has a strong element of family life. The Pacific Paradise area is quite close to a major shopping area, which is a kind of magnet for the community and for people using e-scooters.

One other thing I will say in terms of profiling us is that in the 1990s the developer obeyed the rules as they were, but the roadways are quite narrow for today's vehicles and we live in quite a confined space. While we have quite good infrastructure in terms of our pathways around the lake, when you move into the side streets we have unsealed footpaths, which has the effect of forcing e-scooter riders onto the roads. The main point I am making here today is that the congestion factor is growing. We see many primary school children on e-scooters riding fast, doubling up, on the main roadways, possibly being exposed to danger. We have a number of bridges crossing over our waterways. E-scooters and bikes are supposed to be walked across them but they never are, but then this is Queensland. You are not supposed to fish off the bridges either and kids fish off them, throw themselves off them. It is life in Queensland.

However, we do believe that the time has come when something should be done. We support the idea of a higher level of monitoring and regulation. Before I pass to Greg, I would note that the footpaths have become incredibly busy and not only because of e-scooters. We have also had an expansion in the number of energetic pushbike riders, some of whom use the bike paths and many use the footpaths. For instance, a lot of the older pushbike riders prefer the footpath as they are off the road and they feel safer. A lot of them are not very good. I have been nearly run into a couple of times myself.

There is also a number of infrastructure issues that I will briefly touch on. For instance, as I mentioned we live alongside the Maroochy River. Crossing the Maroochy River is the Maroochy bridge. If you go to the southern side of the Maroochy bridge, it arcs down to join a combined pathway. Once upon a time, divided pathways for both bike lanes and pedestrian traffic were seen as a good thing. Now they are something of a deathtrap. As you ride your bike or your motor scooter from the centre of the Maroochy bridge, you go on a steadily descending arc that leads to higher speed. You then hit a blind corner, which takes you into another long downward path where you may run into pedestrians. My wife was on a charity walk at 2 o'clock on a Sunday afternoon and was knocked over by a speeding pushbike rider from an athletics club who was having a great time until he saw these people at less than 50 metres. He smashed into her. He broke her leg and she spent three months in a wheelchair. She made a full recovery. Of course, if you are run over on a pathway, as the committee knows, you are kind of in a legal dead zone and you are on your own. We think there is a high level of vulnerability there.

The e-scooter issue connects with all of these other issues as the footpaths, be they good ones or bad ones, are increasingly crowded. We welcome your efforts. We appreciate them. I will now pass to Greg Smith, who has experience as a police officer, to give you some more detailed thoughts.

Mr Smith: In policing we always say, 'What is important now?' We have had this explosion of new devices on the roads and there has really been no planning, no education, no engineering and no enforcement in relation to those things. Every day I see lots of people, including mothers with children, using e-scooters like a car. Certainly I have seen the 100-kilometre rating. The other disturbing fact is the amount of hospital presentations. I have spoken to a QAS officer on the Sunshine Coast who told me that 40 per cent of their calls for service are for e-scooter and electric bike accidents. It is not so much the accidents that are happening; it is the services, including hospital services, being diverted to totally preventable situations. I would hate for my mother or a member of my family to be trying to get an ambulance that is going off to pick up some kid who has come off their scooter because they were doing the wrong thing.

I think the horse has bolted on this. Even before the e-scooters, there were enough troubles with pushbikes on pedestrian paths, especially in coastal waterways such as Twin Waters. This other explosion now is almost impossible to reel back. Certainly the council and the government will not be able to engineer a solution quick enough. There is no land anyhow so it would take another 30 years on top of the Olympic Games. I think the only option in these situations is that the enforcement needs to be pushed. A lot of those e-mobility bikes and electric bikes are just illegal vehicles, basically. They are not pedal assisted; they are throttle assisted. They do not comply with the TO(RUM) Act, the traffic act, or anything else let alone the Australian Design Rules. Basically, they are deathtraps. That is coupled with the coastal lifestyle, although it is not just the coast because I have worked in Brisbane, Cairns, Townsville and everywhere else and they are experiencing the same problems with kids having a good time. Unfortunately, they end up either injuring themselves permanently or killing themselves or cleaning up someone on a footpath.

I will not go on about it long. The previous speakers have covered a lot of what I wanted to get across so I will not repeat the same things. I think the only option in these situations is the enforcement angle. The only way you are going to do that is through policing and local councils changing areas where they can traverse and just enforcing those regulations as best you can.

CHAIR: Thanks, Greg, for authoring your submission.

Mr WHITING: One of the things that you have put in your submission is a call for greater parental supervision and awareness. What specific measures would you like to see available to help educate and empower parents?

Mr Smith: I think it has to start with the enforcement side, identifying the people who are doing the wrong thing and then taking action against the parents and the children. Some of these kids are as young as 12 and some of them are 16 or 17 so clearly the parents are buying these vehicles for the children so you make them responsible.

On the education side of it, obviously the schools are doing a good job of banning them from coming into some areas, but there needs to be a greater push to do that again. Government services are pushed to the limits at times. I have been retired for three years, but certainly the police have trouble doing core service work and chasing kids on e-scooters will not be a priority. There needs to be a harder focus from the government to actually identify whether we should establish an education enforcement unit. How that would be compromised I do not know; that is something for your minds to ponder. That is where it needs to come from. Certainly there are hotspots. Sherwood, in Brisbane, is a shocking area. It looks like a scene out of downtown Italy. It is crazy. Certainly up on the north coast it is bad.

Mr Hamlyn: My son is a teacher so, as I am about to ask the education system to do more, I realise how overburdened teachers are. Given the social history of how parenting in the community is an uneven skill, we often look to the education system to fill in gaps of awareness and social responsibility. We would respectfully encourage something in the curriculum that simply addressed the fact that you are out there in the world and you ride your bikes and you ride your e-scooters. Perhaps people could come to the school and make the kids endure a certain number of lectures. Some of it will sink in about the sense that there is more responsibility required than we see even in the best parts of exuberant Queensland. We do not want to be spoilsports. There is a great liberating factor, which Greg has recognised in the paper, about how these are very economical transport options for people who may not have many transport options and a force of liberation for the younger generation. However, how do you put more wisdom into their heads? I am afraid probably school is one of the few places where you can do it in some kind of organised way.

Mr KEMPTON: Mark, in your submission you say that the state government is vicariously liable for any injury caused to pedestrians due to a lack of action in relation to these illegal vehicles. I am not sure that is entirely the case. This is not a knee-jerk reaction; this is a social responsibility that we are taking seriously. We are not running scared on this. You talk about parental supervision and awareness. Is there a case for parents to be legally responsible for the consequences of these illegal vehicles and their operation by their children?

Mr Smith: I think that parents are totally responsible. They have assisted the child in getting something that should not be able to be purchased, so they have purchased it on their behalf so they are a party to the offence. They are liable for their actions or any reckless driving or any damage they do to anyone from there on in. I think parents have to take a stronger interest in what their children are doing. I see 13- and 14-year-old kids out at two o'clock in the morning. Clearly, they are not being parented properly. If I got mowed down on a footpath I would not be very happy about it, and certainly if someone in my family was injured permanently I would not be too happy about it either. There are plenty of people out there banging the drum about the dangerous operation of these vehicles on footpaths. If the state government or the police are not taking responsibility and enforcing the legislation in the land at the time, then the government is responsible for that because they are not keeping the community safe or looking after the public interest.

Mr Hamlyn: I would add that, as much as we would hate to seem like we are being overbearing or unsympathetic to the wide variety of circumstances in which families can find themselves, there is an element of carrot and stick required with this. There is a fairly established understanding out there in the community that some parents need quite a bit of encouragement to take the appropriate level of responsibility, especially given that what we have seen happen through the energy of the market and technology is—as has been noted here—an entirely new era in youthful transport where very young people are transporting themselves at considerable speed at great danger to themselves and possibly others in a way that historically has just never been the case.

Mr KEMPTON: Would you extend that to actually penalising parents in a legal sense?

Mr Smith: I think you have to.

Mr Hamlyn: Yes.

Mr Smith: Because they will have the ultimate power over the child, they can either take the scooter off them or restrict what they are doing. I have been on Nicklin Way and a kid on a scooter overtook me. I was doing 60, so I do not know what he was doing. Not much more than that. Sitting on a backpack on the board of a scooter you have absolutely no control over a vehicle of that type at that speed. You have no visibility of them either. I only just saw the handlebars go past the mirror on my car.

Another thing is that at Twin Waters and other areas there are a lot of people on the road who probably should not be driving. When you mix the elderly, whose driving skills are in question, with irresponsible 12-year-old kids who are not doing the right thing, it is going to come undone. Sunshine Coast is very typical of those demographics. In Caloundra there is an older demographic mixed in with some younger kids. Up at Twin Waters we have the same problem. It is a recipe for disaster.

Ms BUSH: We have heard a lot of evidence already along those lines. It strikes me that these are new products for a lot of parents and they do not know a lot about what these things can do. They do not think their kids are behaving in this way, so it is news to them when they discover their child has done something. I think there is a big role there for education for everybody. As was mentioned today by somebody, maybe we could look at a registration process, where the bikes are registered and then it links back to someone who ultimately gets those images. Someone ultimately has to pay Caloundra

a fine or is made aware of that. There could potentially be the introduction of a CTP insurance scheme like a registration scheme. I want to get your views on whether that approach would be something you would like to see.

Mr Smith: Definitely. They are using the public purse. They are taking up ambulance services, hospitals, possibly NDIS. The ramifications to the community and the amount of money being spent to care for these accident victims, basically, is a big impost on the community. Any of those vehicles or mobility devices should be registered and have some component of insurance because it is no good a small percentage of the community paying the way for a larger percentage. That is what is happening. Everyone has to pay registration and insurance, and that comes at a cost. They see these things as cheaper alternatives. Pushbikes are a fairly cheap alternative too but you have to push them or pedal them. I am not quite sure where the motivation is to go to that form of transport. Maybe they are not able to pedal a pushbike. At the end of the day, it seems like an easy sell for parents who probably are not parenting their children to the extent they should be.

Mr Hamlyn: The common view of my management committee and the view of the majority of residents I have had contact with over the last four years I have been in the association—I am also editor of the local newsletter that communicates with the Twin Waters community specifically—is that these are powered vehicles as opposed to muscle-powered vehicles. That puts them in a different category; therefore, the case for a registration process and an insurance process is quite strong. It may mean that some people miss out, but if the greater good is that there is a greater level of protection for the community, given the accidents we are already seeing I think there is a case for it.

Mr Smith: There is no difference between these and the old motorbikes that people would ring up and complain to the police about to go and chase out the other chook chasers. These are no different. They are higher powered; they are just not as noisy. That is why it does not draw the criticism and everything else that the motocross bikes get. These bikes are more powerful than any of the petrol ones now. There is no difference; it is just probably a bit of a less noticeable thing.

CHAIR: I do have a couple of questions but we have run out of time. Those questions were really just going to reinforce the submission that you made, particularly around the distinction of somebody getting a 75 or 100 cc motorbike and having to go through a full licensing process, wearing helmets or what have you, whereas these things are so high powered, albeit quiet. Very quickly, do you think most in the community do not understand that these high-powered electric bikes are able to be purchased, but as soon as they are ridden on the road they are illegal?

Mr Smith: I think that is part of it. I think a lot of parents, because they hear they do 25 kilometres an hour, think they go that slow. With something that has a low centre of gravity like that and riders who have no situational awareness or any road skills, it is a recipe for disaster. I think that is probably part of the issue, yes. Again, they are sold as going 25 kilometres an hour, but most of them are well capable of going in excess of 50 or 60, and some 70.

Mr Hamlyn: One of the other detailed experiences I have in my number of roles is not only with scooters but also dogs. Look at the way the community has reacted to dog controls. The state government has introduced a quite strong level of fines for keeping dogs on a leash, and that has played a significant role in educating the dog community about what will happen if they do not comply. I think there is widespread ignorance. The other side of human nature is that, if you give people a chance to operate in a borderless universe, which is what we have at the moment, then they will. That will have unintended consequences, which I guess is why you are here.

CHAIR: Thank you, Greg and Mark. We really appreciate your evidence today and answering our questions. The time for this session has now expired, so please enjoy the balance of your afternoon.

JONES, Professor Christian, Leader, Engage Research Lab, University of the Sunshine Coast

MEHRANFAR, Ms Vida, PhD Candidate and Researcher, Engage Research Lab, University of the Sunshine Coast

CHAIR: Thank you for being here this afternoon. At the outset, I want to thank you for the high-quality submission you made to the committee. It is very thoughtful. If you would like to make an opening statement, then the committee will have questions for you.

Prof. Jones: The recommendations from the University of the Sunshine Coast are in the area of shared public e-scooters and private e-scooters. I am here with Vida Mehranfar, who is the co-author of this research. We are from the Engage Research Lab at UniSC. We focus on complex societal challenges where we seek to understand not only what people do but also why they do it. We are supportive of e-mobility as part of the transport solution.

Our recommendations are evidence based from our research. We have the most recent and most comprehensive published systematic literature review covering 168 academic papers and industry practice. We have an observational study of e-scooter rider behaviour along the CityLink cycleway in Brisbane and we have completed a recent survey of 461 e-scooter riders from all across Queensland where we explore wider awareness, behaviour and compliance with the road rules. We are also members of TMR's working group on e-mobility.

A key finding is that many e-scooter riders are unclear of the road rules, which in turn is compliance and increases the risk of incidents and injuries. Consistently throughout our recommendations we call for simplification and clear communication of e-scooter road rules, and I will discuss some of these in turn.

In terms of age, over a quarter of our survey riders incorrectly believe that unsupervised riding is permitted from the age of 12. We recommend one rule for age: that the minimum age to ride an e-scooter is 16. This also addresses dual riding which, although already illegal, is occurring. Forty per cent of riders say that they ride with their child because it is safer. Thirty per cent of dual riding is with the under 25-year-old group. Twenty per cent believe that dual riding is allowed. Forty per cent cite financial savings as the reason for dual riding. This simplification of the road rules, which I will be discussing, will help in this regard.

In relation to speed, 31 per cent of our riders were unaware of location specific speed limits. We found that a quarter of riders decide their routes based on the risk of collisions with pedestrians and obstacles and smoother surfaces even if that route is illegal. If the only realistic option for e-scooters is riding on a footpath, then the current maximum speed on footpaths is probably too high. We can make footpaths safe for pedestrians by reducing the maximum speed of e-scooters on footpaths to 10 kilometres or six kilometres; however, we should be trying to move e-scooters off footpaths into separated third lanes—these could be bike lanes or e-mobility lanes—where they can travel at 25 kilometres an hour. We also generally support allowing e-scooters on more of the road network with speeds of 50 kilometres or less, but we recommend that the state government undertake more research into the feasibility of this safe road use. In cities, it may be possible to reduce traffic to 30 or 40 kilometres per hour to allow safe mixed road use with e-scooters, and we have heard that being discussed already. Some EU countries use six kilometre limits, which they call walking speed, for footpaths. Our research does not definitively recommend either 10 or six, and further research is really needed on this.

In regards to location of signage, riders are confused about where they can ride. Two-thirds of our riders were unaware of which roads they could actually ride on. There is a need for clear signage on footpaths on these separated third lanes and roads showing e-scooters where they are allowed to ride, where they are not, and also giving them the speed limits. However, if we were to safely integrate legal e-scooters onto more of our road network, or separated lanes, then the road rules for e-scooters would be less complicated, it would be less confusing for riders, there would be less need for signage and it would be easier for enforcement.

With regard to parking, we recommend reallocating kerbside parking which would be normally for cars instead to e-mobility parking. A single car space on our roads could accommodate up to 10 shared e-bikes or e-scooters. Seventy-two per cent of people in our study would use designated parking if it was within a short distance of their destination, and this would address some of the concerns that non-users have regarding footpath clutter. Again, that was part of the discussion for the Sunshine Coast council—the reasons that, in their survey, many non-e-scooter riders did not want to have e-scooters, and that was due often to the clutter associated with them.

With regard to regulation, we recommend greater transparency by mandating data sharing from shared operators on the use of such features as cognitive impairment tests for drink-riding, account suspensions for unsafe behaviours, and other incentives or penalty-based interventions such as helmet selfies and parking credits. It is not clear at this moment that the providers are strictly enforcing these measures, so we do not know how effective they are. Thirty per cent of our surveyed riders support banning repeated violators from shared platforms.

Further, we recommend a single repository for all data—maybe at TMR—where we would have all the accident and incident data from Queensland hospitals, maybe from the QISU or the JTI, and that we can make requests to access such data.

With regard to education, we need to help riders understand why the rules exist. In our data, noncompliance was often situational. Riders do assess risk. A third of our riders speed when they perceive the speed limit is too low or when there are few people around. Our lowest helmet use occurs while riders are in groups or the trip is short. A third of alcohol-impaired riders believed that they could ride safely. We find that riders do understand risk. When they do, they are more compliant with the rules. Our data showed that the highest helmet use is when riding at speed and when sharing roads with motorised traffic, so they do recognise that that is more risky. However, education must be backed by enforcement.

We have a number of publications, some that we can provide to you now and some which are under review at the moment, but we would be very happy to provide those should the committee allow it. We thank the committee for the invitation to participate in this session and we do welcome your questions.

Ms BUSH: Sometimes in this role you just have a day where you think, ‘God I love my job,’ and when I read your submission it kind of gave me that big-blue-sky thinking of what we could do if we started to think differently about design. Thank you. I really enjoyed reading it and was looking forward to having you here today. I know we will get into some technical things, but I want to ask you firstly if you could speak, maybe broadly, to the economic and social benefits of reclaiming some of those urban spaces and thinking about redesigning them to be equitable for all users.

Prof. Jones: The economic impact is not an area unfortunately that we have actually put numbers on; however, there are opportunities in these areas. Our cities are built for car use, vehicle use, and then there is a hope that they are built for pedestrians, and in some cases they are not well served by pedestrians. This gives us another opportunity for accessibility, and we have heard that from Caboolture and other user groups as well, and it does not just go for disadvantage, but in terms of people with disability, to allow them extra access to our cities and to our locations, to our experiences that we have around Queensland. They are not well served, and that is the problem at the moment. They can go on footpaths, but we have heard all of the challenges associated with that. They can go on a bike lane, but very few of those exist. We have heard previously that we should be investing in those separate infrastructures or they can go on very few roads, and as soon as they are on a road, they are then in conflict with other very large vehicles which can be problematic. So, there is nowhere really that they can go.

If we do provide them with separated infrastructure, then they can become part of the mobility; they can be part of the solution. We would then need less parking, we would need less public transport and often these mobility devices are considered to be the first mile or the last mile, so it is making those connections.

Our study goes well beyond Sunshine Coast, but in certain locations, the transport network has to survive across a very broad region. We are not just a CBD, we have to take in a lot of area. That does not necessarily support that last mile or last five miles that you might have on a trip. That could be the difference between you taking the car or not participating in what is going on in your location. I do not have a figure, but this is a very low cost in terms of the costs to the individual. There will need to be investment to ensure that the cities are able to accommodate them.

If I may, there are two parts to this as well. We are focused on e-scooters. I cannot comment about e-bikes as that is another area, but e-scooters include shared providers and private, and they do have an opportunity in this solution. When we are talking about shared solutions—the shared schemes—then we should revisit those in locations like the Sunshine Coast because we can control them; we can manage them if we do that well.

The shared e-scooters are not going to be great for regional, last-mile travel. It could be good for the CBD. But if you have your own private e-scooter, then you can do that last connection from home to a public transport location, and then it is about what type of private e-scooters do we allow and how do we manage them, which I am sure might be a follow-up question.

Mr KEMPTON: Professor Jones, a large cohort of e-scooter riders are under 16 and that number is growing. We heard from students yesterday who said, in their view, those younger people did not have sufficient situational awareness and did not understand the rules or the risks that they were taking on. Others suggest that, with the appropriate infrastructure, education and parental supervision, they may well safely operate these scooters. Can you see a situation where your statement that 16 years should be the cut-off where that might be reduced?

Prof. Jones: I do see an opportunity where we could reduce this. I think right at this moment in terms of the infrastructure and how they have to navigate the current road infrastructure, you are right in the statement that it is a challenge and maybe a chance that our very young people are not prepared for. I remember growing up in the UK—and I think it is the same in Australia as well—that we all rode around on our little bikes, around PCYC-type things where we had road networks, and we all learnt how to do that, how far to be away from the kerb. We do not have that necessarily for e-scooter behaviour or any of these other types of devices. It is a different device. So, if we were to provide better education for young people to understand how to appropriately manage this new way of getting around, then that might be better able to cope with these situations.

However, again, if you are away from very large vehicles on a safe, separated location, separated from pedestrians as well, then there is less risk to you, and your situational awareness does not need to be advanced because it is a simple path. As soon as you put more complexity in that, then it really does not matter whether you are 12, 22 or 32, you have a large environment where the consequences of somebody making a less informed choice could be drastic.

Mr WHITING: One of the points that you have talked about is that added investment into dedicated infrastructure is an important part of that, and we have heard from local government as well to that effect. Would it be a really important part in this to ensure that each local government has a specific strategy for separate active transport networks and what role would the state government have in funding the development of those strategic plans?

Prof. Jones: I do like how you are pushing me towards the dollars as well. It is not something where I have actually put a number against these things.

Mr WHITING: Be brave. Tell us what you reckon.

Ms BUSH: Go out on a limb.

Prof. Jones: There can be good urban planning practices which can be applied across all regions; however, each region has its own challenges, and that is why we have regional councils that have to manage those regions as well. Those councils, those regions, will be best placed to make these decisions. However, I do think there is a place, and we talk about trying to harmonise rules around this. Each state and territory really has different rules. It is quite easy to say that because there is some difference with that and there continues to be difference even though people are making new rules.

For people who are in any region, it is difficult to understand what their rules are, and anything we can do to harmonise them will help. When you have people coming from interstate or coming from overseas, there are rules to change again, so there is further complexity. What I would be suggesting is we do not really want to have more and more different types of solutions across different LGAs, but if we have clear planning practice and clear understanding of what works, like separated lanes, and clear understanding about rules, about speeds and type of use and types of devices, and that is consistent, then the actual way in terms of how much might be separated lane, how much parking might be relevant, will differ depending on the usage patterns in the population and where people are moving, and that could be nuanced for each different LGA. I do think there has to be a combined solution. There have to be clear guidelines and then there is some room. But the minimum standard is too minimum; we need to raise that bar.

To do this well, like anything, will involve significant investment. We are trying to say, 'Well, that is not going to happen overnight, however people are still moving around.' There are these mid-term issues. That is why we say, if we cannot ride on footpaths, people are going to ride on the road, so how can we ensure that that is safer? The local governments can have some say on that. State governments in terms of rules and policy can have some say on that. We are trying to get to a situation where e-mobility is part of the solution because it is an economically viable solution. Everybody talks about the Olympics coming. That is not just a phrase we keep throwing out there. We are going to have very large volumes of people moving around and we want to do that safely. It is not an active solution, but it is a more active solution.

CHAIR: Professor Christian and Vida, thank you very much for your presentation here this afternoon. I love the saying, 'If you do not know something well enough, you cannot explain it simply enough' and you have challenged us with a number of different thoughts, but particularly around harmonisation of what the use is and what the rules are. Thank you very much. Unfortunately, the time this afternoon has expired. I did just confer with my colleagues. In regards to the offer to present the other research, we just have to move that that be accepted. The committee is happy to accept those documents this afternoon. I move that they be tabled. All in favour.

Ms BUSH: Thank you, Chair.

Prof. Jones: We will probably send them to you electronically, if we can engage with how best to do that.

CHAIR: We will do that. It would be very good.

Prof. Jones: That would be brilliant.

CHAIR: Thank you. We will accept a tabling electronically.

Ms BUSH: Yes, thank you.

CHAIR: When you have the other research that you talked about, it would be great if you could provide that as well. We would be very happy. Once again, thank you for your very detailed and comprehensive submission.

SPINDA, Mr Greg, Partner, Travis Schultz & Partners

CHAIR: I invite you to make a brief opening statement before the committee may have questions for you.

Mr Spinda: Let me begin with a simple truth. These e-mobility devices are not toys—and we have heard that already—they are vehicles, they are electrically powered, they are fast moving and they are increasingly present on our roads and mingling with pedestrians and in parks with many other individuals. Like any vehicle, they demand respect, regulation and responsibility. You have heard the stories and you have read the thousands of submissions about the injuries, the fatalities and the lives that are changed in an instant. I will not repeat that and the statistics, but I want to remind you that these are individuals and community members whom you represent.

We cannot afford to ignore this issue. We need to act now, and we have heard that already this afternoon. We faced similar challenges when motor vehicles were introduced and we did not do away with motor vehicles. We have regulated, we have developed infrastructure and we have had insurance put in place, and that is what we need today—bold reform on e-mobility devices.

When someone is injured or killed by one of these devices, it does not just impact the individual; it ripples through our community. Families are shattered, communities are shaken and the already strained public health system and welfare system is impacted. Queenslanders cannot afford to fund their treatment and rehabilitation after a serious injury. That is the reality. What we need now is a system in place for registration and insurance so that when incidents occur—and, unfortunately, they will occur—we look after our members of the community.

What we are doing right now is we are shifting the burden quietly and invisibly onto our hospitals, our welfare system and the National Disability Insurance Scheme. I will give you an example. In 2019 I completed my masters in health law specialising in the NDIS. When I completed my thesis, the projected numbers were 450,000 participants at about \$25 billion per annum. Currently, we have about 717,000 participants costing \$48.5 billion. This is not sustainable. Those people who are going to be seriously injured on e-mobility devices and are eligible for the NDIS will face challenges in the future as the Commonwealth attempts to rein in this spending.

Our workers compensation system is impacted as well. WorkCover Queensland made a very thoughtful submission on the numbers to this committee. On my basic mathematics when you look at the numbers, between 2021 and 2025 WorkCover has seen a 360 per cent increase in what is called journey claims—that is, workers injured commuting to and from work—as a result of specifically e-mobility devices. In the 2025 financial year, that cost us \$4.4 million as a community. That is on employers.

The interest in this inquiry has been overwhelming obviously. I am here today to talk about the end, which unfortunately is when people are injured. That is my speciality as a personal injury lawyer. I see the individuals and I see the families. I would strongly encourage that a CTP style insurance be recommended to be introduced for these devices. Our road rules need clarity and our communities need education—young people, parents, drivers, riders alike. Again, we need to reinforce that these are not toys; they are transport options that carry real risks.

The final point I would like to make is data collection. We have disparate data collection in Queensland. We urgently need a centralised, reliable authority which can collect the data on this—rather than relying on a few universities and hospital and health services to keep incomplete data. Mr Zinn earlier this afternoon indicated data confidentiality issues accessing Queensland hospital data. How on earth can we make informed decisions at the state and local level if we do not have the data available to us?

I do not envy your task. You have a lot of submissions to review. You must balance innovation with safety. You must balance individual freedom and social responsibility. As Queenslanders, we cannot shy away from reform, and I would encourage you to be bold in the recommendations that you make. Thank you for allowing me to come along today. I am happy to answer your questions.

CHAIR: Thank you. That is a very thoughtful submission and I thank you for the detailed interest you have taken.

Ms BUSH: Greg, I agree with you on your point around data. We heard I think from the Jamieson Trauma Institute on Tuesday and members from Queensland Health around that. I guess my question goes to that. Who is best to lead the coordination of that data collection and data cleansing?

Mr Spinda: I think Transport and Main Roads. We already have a system of collection for car accidents. The data is easily available online. I have spoken out that the data being kept on car accidents itself is not great, but TMR has the facilities and the infrastructure available. Those reporting systems can be put in place. I am not going to say that would be done easily because you will probably have to collect it through a number of different agencies, including Queensland Health.

Ms BUSH: That is where I thought you were going to go. I think some people have suggested Queensland Health could work with QPS to try to wash the data a bit, but you think DTMR.

Mr Spinda: Correct. The reason for that is they are already keeping data in respect of roads and road infrastructure. One of the things that I would like to see is decision-making from state and local governments as to investment in infrastructure. We have heard a lot about that, but the only way you are going to be able to make informed decisions on that is if you have the data. Car accidents will give you some data, but we are seeing this new transport modality come in and I think we will have to see that data—and TMR I think is probably best placed to do that. They would have to pull data from other sources, I suspect.

Ms BUSH: You have just got me thinking. We heard earlier from the Caboolture group about the snap it and send it idea around potholes. Would something like that work for incidents due to a design fault or something like that where you are not admitted and QAS and QPS are not called? Would something like that work, where you can snap it and send it to TMR? Would that start to get a fuller picture?

Mr Spinda: There is no harm in doing that. I suspect it would just be a matter of education and uptake, but there is no harm.

Mr KEMPTON: This insurance is a bit of a nightmare. Some say it is covered by home and contents, Lime have their own insurance, and I guess with workers compensation and others there is quite a variety. To have a comprehensive scheme that you are talking about, we are also looking at mountain bikes that are electrically assisted and then we go to normal pushbikes. It would be very difficult to develop and incorporate that kind of a scheme right across all mobility vehicles because some of those things just cannot be registered. It seems to me that that would be a very expensive exercise. Are there any alternatives to that?

Mr Spinda: We are talking about two different devices here. I think the illegal devices are not going to be registrable, unfortunately. That is a different topic of conversation in terms of what is done with enforcement and if changes are made how those devices are taken off our roads. In terms of the devices that are legal and registrable, it would just tack on simply to our compulsory third-party insurance system, as it already is with motor vehicles. I think the solution there would be fairly easy. At the time of purchase by the individual through the retailer—much like when you are purchasing a motor vehicle through the retailer—the CTP insurance is put in place with relevant annual renewals.

With the illegal devices, that is a challenge and I accept that. I do not have an immediate solution. I would not mind thinking about that solution and seeing where we land with it. One thing that we do in the CTP scheme where motor vehicles have not been registered—rego has not been paid or the vehicle is unknown or otherwise uninsured—we have the nominal defendant scheme. I know that is probably not overly palatable, but certainly I think the costing can be designed with premiums in mind to acknowledge those kinds of vehicles.

Mr WHITING: I like the idea of you coming from a health economics point of view if we are looking at the impact of this. From that point of view, a registration scheme would be really crucial as a way of funding the health care for e-mobility injuries. Do I have that right?

Mr Spinda: Correct. Can I give an example. In WorkCover's submission, the cost to the workers compensation scheme and employers in the state for journey claims was \$4.4 million. If someone is injured on the way to work or from work to home—and let us say it is a car accident—then if that person can maintain and is able to maintain a CTP claim, at the end of that CTP claim, the cost shifts to the CTP insurer. In other words, the CTP insurer refunds WorkCover Queensland the rehabilitation and treatment costs associated with that injured worker. Not all of that \$4.4 million, if that was covered, would necessarily be refunded but certainly a portion of it is. It is a matter of looking at how we spread the cost of this away from our public health systems and our workers compensation systems to really where the users are at fault here.

Mr WHITING: In the same way, a compulsory insurance scheme would be really useful or even necessary to help defray the costs of those same types of injuries?

Mr Spinda: Correct. You also have the National Injury Insurance Scheme in Queensland which is a tack on from the National Disability Insurance Scheme which applies to serious injuries. The most prominent participants in that are traumatic brain injuries and spinal cord injuries. As we have heard already, traumatic brain injuries are very common in e-mobility devices. The benefit of that scheme is it is a lifetime treatment, care and support scheme and will provide that lifetime treatment, care and support which is funded through the collection of relevant premiums rather than the state government having to chip in through the public health system.

CHAIR: Greg, I am going to offer another challenge for you to take on notice potentially. When we talk about CTP, that does apply to motorbikes. If the currently illegal bikes were able to have a compliance plate or there was some sort of change and pathway forward and they became a motorbike that would require people to have a driver's licence and registration, maybe there is something in that space that you could consider and report back to us.

Mr Spinda: I would be more than happy to think more about that. It might take me a bit of time, a bit of homework, but I can certainly consult with colleagues as well in the legal profession.

CHAIR: There are obviously a few challenges around that. I am not saying it is going to be the solution, but I think there is a very clear pathway of separating those higher powered vehicles out of what most people are doing and being very responsible with some lower powered devices.

Mr Spinda: Correct. Can I make one very quick point. We had a wonderful individual here earlier, Prue, talking about the education part and I want to highlight that. I think we need early education in our schooling system and people like Prue to come in—hopefully funded through state and local government—because it starts there. I spoke about parental responsibility in my submission as well. I absolutely advocate parental responsibility but there are limits to it. I have got two young sons myself. Luckily, they are nowhere near the age of riding these e-mobility devices and I would never let them and I would never buy them one. However, if they had one, I accept that as a parent I may have limited ability to control that, but if I were forced to go into a police station because it was confiscated and I got a bit of a dressing down from a copper, I sure as hell would go home and make sure my child never did that again.

CHAIR: It is a very good example, thank you. Thank you for your time and wisdom and we look forward to further advice from you down the track—on a pro bono basis of course.

Mr Spinda: Absolutely.

AYLING, Mr Kym, Private capacity

BUDER, Ms Kathryn, Private capacity

HOLLAND, Mr Adrian, Private capacity

STARK, Mr John, Private capacity

CHAIR: Welcome. You have heard the evidence this afternoon. If there is something that has already been covered, please note that we have listened carefully to that. If there are some new things or very important things you need to reinforce for us, please do so but just limit your time to two or three minutes. We will start with Kathryn.

Ms Buder: My background is that I am a retired primary teacher of 35 years with Education Queensland from Torres Strait down to Morayfield. I am presenting today as a pedestrian, an e-bike rider and a driver in my local area at Mountain Creek near here. Basically, I agree with just about everything that has been said today. My main thing is we seem to have moved past e-scooters as being the big problem and we are now onto e-motorbikes and I think we need to give them the terminology of e-motorbikes. We have talked about registering bikes. I lived in Shanghai for a year about 30 years ago and my bike was registered. It is not impossible to do. It was just an ordinary pushbike and you paid a nominal fee of, let's say, \$10 or something like that. There was a little numberplate attached to my bike and you knew then that you were accountable for things that happened with you as a rider. I really think we need to have accountability for riders and their parents.

CHAIR: Thanks, Kathryn. That was very succinct. You did that very well. Adrian, would you like to go next?

Mr Holland: I have been a bike rider of regular bikes for many years and of the electric mountain bike more recently—one that is compliant with the regulations. I would like to point out that I do not think there is much difference between a legal electric mountain bike and a mountain bike other than an electric one helps you get up the hills a bit quicker. They cut out at 25 kilometres an hour. You can ride faster than that on a regular bicycle. I do not believe we need a whole lot more regulation around how they need to be registered et cetera. They are pretty much the same kind of thing.

On the way here this afternoon at three o'clock I was overtaken by two electric motorbikes and one electric scooter on the highway while I was driving at 60 kilometres an hour. The problem is the illegal bikes, not the legal bikes. We need to encourage active transport and keep people on bikes but they should be active bikes. If you are not pedalling it is not active transport.

Parents turn a blind eye. I had conversations with some parents about this at an EV expo at Noosa recently and told them the person was trying to sell them an illegal electric bike. They were going to turn a blind eye to it until I mentioned that in New South Wales they are looking at confiscating these bikes and charging the parents. They started to listen and walked away and did not make the purchase.

The electric mobility shops that are popping up selling these bikes now are competing with the regular good bike shops. They are almost putting them out of business because they are getting so many sales. Children and parents want these high-powered bikes without realising that they are illegal. Those shops are like cigarette shops; they are actually selling dangerous products to our children and should be stopped. We need to regulate and bring in compliance for certain bike types. You should not be able to sell an electric bike unless it is compliant and has gone through some process to register it as such. The shops that are still selling those which are not compliant should be shut down.

I also agree education is key. Schoolkids are riding these things. The parents are not aware of how dangerous they are. Again, a regular, compliant e-mobility bike should not be treated any differently from a standard pushbike. Thank you.

CHAIR: That was a very good summary for us, Adrian. John, would you like to go next?

Mr Stark: I was not really expecting to talk this afternoon. I am fairly active in my local community, which is the Moffat Beach area. We are currently undertaking a place-making activity with the council, which is looking at how to create more open space and more green space along the coastline to get to the Moffat Beach area. At the moment the area is choked by cars. There have to be other ways to get to the beach, like bicycle tracks, proper pathways and having options for local transport, which are not there at the moment.

Signage is an issue. Currently we have shared spaces and high-activity zones, which the average punter does not really understand. We do not know who has what rights. Does the pedestrian have rights over cars et cetera? Those areas are vague and they need to be improved for the advent of e-transport.

I noticed the council is looking at active transport corridors. It seems to me that that definition needs to be clear. I assumed it was for bicycles and assisted pedal bikes with e-motors, but it definitely should not be for motorbikes that happen to have electric motors. I think they are dangerous. The Sunshine Coast Coastal Pathway runs for 73 kilometres. The vision is to get a coastal pathway going. At the moment it is designed mainly for pedestrian traffic, but more and more it is being used by e-bikes and the like where separation is required, I believe, as has been pointed out today.

Basically what I heard today was very encouraging. To have active transport further along the coast we need that to be extended to the various villages along the coast. The reason people come to the Sunshine Coast for holidays and to live is they want to get to the beach. At the moment there is no safe way to get to the beach either as a pedestrian or as a bicycle or e-bike rider. That is a different perspective on our local area, but I think it is very important to recognise that. Along the coast there are many opportunities where pedestrian pathways and active transport can be separated.

CHAIR: Good on you, John. Well done. Kym, would you like to comment?

Mr Ayling: My name is Kym Ayling. I am from Cotton Tree on the Sunshine Coast. I am an avid cyclist. I have been cycling since the 2000 Olympics. I have managed to ride my bike from Port Phillip Bay to Cape York almost solo, so I sort of know the east coast, and I have been in education for 20 years as a primary teacher. My opinion, unlike that of some others, is definitely experience-based. I have no evidence to back up what I have to say.

One of the things I have noticed recently is that motorists hate e-mobility people much more than cyclists, which is interesting. That change has happened over the last couple of years. That is an interesting observation. As a teacher, I certainly agree that education is the key but, like the gentleman here said, it should not be foisted on schools. Schools have enough to do. I actually believe the education needs to be targeted at motorists. We need a public awareness campaign similar to sun safety or something like that. It is about educating the motorists. In the last 12 months or two years there was a campaign about A Metre Matters, and I have noticed that it has made quite a lot of difference. Motorists tend to be aware that at certain speeds they need to give space. Even though that campaign has perhaps not been on for a while, I think that is the area we need to work on.

We need to tell motorists three main things. Firstly, cyclists or e-mobility people are not their enemy; they are actually mums, nannas, dads, grandpas and kids. Once they realise we are people, they will be less likely to try to kill us. Secondly, many cyclists and some e-mobility people actually pay rego. We are already paying lots of money, so money is not necessarily the solution. Thirdly, and most importantly, motorists should share the road. They do not own the road. We share the road. That is very important.

In a similar way, the message we need to get through about e-mobility people is scooter riders are vulnerable. There should be different laws about vulnerable people. They were proposing to do that in Tasmania because someone getting knocked over in a car is one thing but getting knocked over on a motorbike or a scooter is very different. Secondly, not all scooter riders are illegal. Many scooter riders are literally allowed to be on the road. Thirdly, again, motorists need to share the road. They do not own it. That is all I have to say. Thank you.

Mr KING: A statement that was made yesterday highlights and accentuates what you said: for every pushbike, e-scooter or e-bike on the road is one car off the road, which eases congestion. Along the lines of what you are saying, part of the public education has to be that they are not the enemy. They are actually helping. We were on the Gold Coast yesterday and it was noted that the traffic had lightened significantly due to the problem that we are discussing.

Mr Ayling: There are lots of other ways to emphasise that too—fitness, saving on medical bills and that kind of thing. Generally motorists want to kill cyclists. We have to get them to understand that we should not be killed. We are entitled to be here. We need to make them realise that we are real human beings as well.

CHAIR: Thank you, everyone, for coming before us today. We heard some wise words and some very thought provoking ideas. Thank you very much. When I was listening to the Sunshine Coast BUG witnesses earlier and also to Greg, it occurred to me that I cannot remember the last time Caloundra

I saw a cyclist actually indicate that they were going to turn, which we all learned as kids. It just does not seem to happen so much anymore. Maybe it is because a lot of the bike tracks are separated. It certainly is another area of education.

To all of you here, thank you for representing your community so well. Thank you to everybody who has attended the hearing today. Thank you to our Hansard reporters. Of course, thank you to our secretariat. A transcript of today's hearing will be available on the committee's webpage in due course. I declare this public hearing closed.

The committee adjourned at 4. 25 pm.