

Inquiry into e-mobility safety and use in Queensland

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The Gold Coast has experienced a significant surge in e-bike usage, positioning itself as one of Australia's leading cities in e-bike adoption. Despite the popularity of e-bikes this rapid growth has raised concerns regarding safety and regulatory compliance. It is well known the Gold Coast University Hospital has reported over 700 e- transport related emergency presentations. This alone must raise concerns that must be addressed. In regard to the safety, risks and regulation of e-bike usage I cover 4 areas of concern. Speed and Mass - many e-bikes are travelling at speeds in excess of 40km/hr, this is apparent when they over take me in a school zone or road works that is speed limited to 40km/h. This poses significant risk in pedestrian areas, the increased weight of the e-bike heightens the severity of collisions. I witnessed first hand an accident involving a young child on a footpath at Tugun who was knocked over and trapped underneath the e-bike. The parents took the child to the Tugun satellite clinic for observation. Shared Space Conflicts - inadequate infrastructure often leads to e-bikes being on footpaths and main roads as fore-mentioned posing dangers to children, the elderly, people with disabilities, and cars attempting to drive safely. Rider Behaviour - a lack of formal education and inconsistent adherence to traffic rules result in erratic riding, double and tripling of passengers, failure to yield to pedestrians and traffic lights, and frequent use of mobile phones while riding. Battery and Fire Risks - the use of low cost or unregulated lithium batteries presents a growing fire hazard. In conclusion this parliamentary inquiry underscores the urgent need for a coordinated national response to the safety and risks posed by the increasing use of e-bikes. While e-bikes offer many benefits addressing these issues through targeted legislation, enhanced safety standards, and investment in infrastructure will be essential to ensure the safe integration of e-bikes into Australia's transport system. Thank you for your time.