

Inquiry into e-mobility safety and use in Queensland

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I am writing as a concerned parent, road user, and member of the community regarding the increasing use of electric bikes (e-bikes) by children and teenagers, and the urgent need for a comprehensive review of e-bike safety standards and infrastructure. In recent months, I've observed a dramatic increase in the number of young people riding e-bikes on suburban and arterial roads in my local area. Many of these riders appear to be under the age of 16, and are frequently travelling at speeds that match — and in some cases exceed — the flow of vehicle traffic. I've personally witnessed e-bikes being ridden at what I would estimate to be 40 to 50 kilometres per hour on public roads, often weaving between cars, running red lights, or riding without helmets or any visible safety gear. What's most alarming is that these are often children — some not yet in high school — operating powerful electric vehicles without the training, awareness, or protective equipment that we would expect from someone driving a moped or motorcycle at similar speeds. As a driver, I find myself having to take evasive action to avoid young riders who dart unexpectedly into intersections or onto road shoulders. As a parent, I am deeply concerned about the risks these children are taking, often without a full understanding of the consequences. I do not believe our laws, infrastructure, or enforcement mechanisms have kept pace with the rapid uptake of e-bikes. These vehicles occupy a legal and regulatory grey area — neither fully bicycles nor motor vehicles — yet they are capable of speeds and manoeuvres that present serious risks to both riders and other road users. I urge the government to consider the following:

- Establish Clear Regulations for E-Bike Use by Age and Speed Class** There must be clear limits on who can ride high-powered e-bikes, and at what speed. Age-appropriate speed restrictions, licensing requirements for more powerful models, and compulsory helmet use must be enforced consistently.
- Urgent Investment in Separated Bike Path Infrastructure** The current road network is not safe for fast-moving e-bike traffic, particularly when ridden by children. We urgently need a coordinated plan to expand safe, separated bike lanes that keep vulnerable riders away from cars and trucks. Shared paths are no longer sufficient — speed differences between pedestrians, regular cyclists, and e-bike riders are now too great to safely mix.
- Public Education Campaigns** Parents need to understand the risks associated with e-bikes. Many are purchasing them for their children without realising just how fast and dangerous these bikes can be in traffic. Clear education is needed to support safe decision-making. The promise of e-bikes is undeniable — they offer a cleaner, more efficient form of transport and a healthy alternative to car dependence. But without the proper safety infrastructure, education, and regulation, they are fast becoming a public safety issue, particularly for our youngest riders. I strongly urge parliament to initiate a thorough review of e-bike laws and infrastructure planning to ensure we are not putting our children in harm's way.