

Inquiry into e-mobility safety and use in Queensland

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Submitted by: [REDACTED]
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To whom it may concern, I am writing as a concerned resident of the Southern Gold Coast to express both my support for the role of e-bikes in our transport future, and my deep concerns about the current unregulated and unsafe use of these vehicles within our community. E-bikes offer significant environmental and social benefits. They are a fantastic alternative to car travel, helping to reduce traffic congestion, lower emissions, and provide an accessible mode of transport for individuals who may not own a vehicle. In a region like ours, with a strong culture of outdoor recreation and sustainable living, e-bikes should be a welcome addition to our transport ecosystem. However, the rapid increase in e-bike usage "particularly among children and adolescents" has outpaced the regulations required to ensure public safety. Every day on our coastal pathways and footpaths, I witness e-bikes travelling at unsafe speeds through shared zones, often ridden by children under the age of 14, although many adults also seem to have zero consideration for other people's safety or discomfort at the speeds they travel. Many of these riders appear to lack the education, experience, and situational awareness to operate such high-powered devices safely in areas shared with pedestrians and traditional cyclists. The result is a growing sense of danger and anxiety among pedestrians, especially older residents, families with young children, and regular walkers and joggers. Near-misses are becoming disturbingly common, and it is only a matter of time before serious injuries occur. Coastal pathways were never designed for high-speed motorised vehicles, and their use in these areas is not only inappropriate but increasingly hazardous. I urge the government to consider the following regulatory measures:

1. Prohibit the use of e-bikes on pedestrian pathways and shared coastal footpaths. Consider construction of a dedicated road bike and e-bike lane on the coastal service road (e.g. marine parade or equivalent between Snapper Rocks to Tugun) ; with the other lane for one way vehicles (this will keep traffic flow and parking needs but encourage e-bike use off pathways).
2. Introduce and enforce age restrictions for e-bike riders, with a minimum riding age of at least 16 years, and compulsory helmet use.
3. Mandate speed restrictions on e-bikes when operating in shared or pedestrian areas, including technological speed governors.
4. Implement an education campaign targeted at both young riders and their parents to promote responsible riding and respect for shared spaces.
5. Increase local law enforcement presence and empower councils and police to regulate and enforce appropriate use more effectively. This is especially needed between Greenmount and Tugun.
6. Introduce on-the-spot inspections for modified e-bikes (many of these bikes have been altered to increase their speeds unlawfully). While we welcome innovation and green transport, this cannot come at the cost of community safety. Without stronger oversight and enforcement, the unchecked use of e-bikes threatens to erode the very lifestyle and public spaces that make the Southern Gold Coast such a vibrant and livable area.

Thank you for considering this submission. I urge you to act swiftly and decisively to ensure that the benefits of e-bikes can be realised in a way that keeps our pathways safe and enjoyable for everyone. Thank you