

Inquiry into e-mobility safety and use in Queensland

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Submitter Comments:

I wish to make some suggestions regarding ebike and escooter reform. I have been cycling for 40 years, driving for 35 years, riding an ebike for 5 years and a motorbike for 2 years.

Licensing People using ebikes and escooters should require a licence as they are operating a motorised vehicle. If somebody is using the roads, it is not unreasonable that they should know the road rules. If someone already have a vehicle licence such as for a car or motorcycle, then that would be sufficient. Therefore, only a small number of people would be required to obtain a licence i.e. ebike and escooter riders who do not already have a licence.

Batteries and chargers There are many fires reported for ebike batteries. The cause could be poor quality batteries and chargers. There should be a standard set for batteries and chargers and they should be the only ones available for import or sale. There should be a buyback of poor batteries and chargers. I appreciate this will cost the government money, but this would be cheaper than the cost and suffering of battery fires. There would need to be coordination between governments.

Speed Limits Roads Ebikes currently have their engine cut off at 25km/h. This is the European standard. In North America, the cut off figure is 32km/h. There is no logical reason to adopt the European standard. Surely traffic in Sydney and Brisbane is more like Los Angeles than Copenhagen.

Escooters are inherently less stable. They should have a lower speed limit. 20km/h may be appropriate.

Shared paths Ebikes should be allowed 25km/h before cutoff because that speed would be similar to pedal cyclists.

Escooters should be 20km/h the same as suggested on roads.

Footpaths Bicycles can currently be ridden on footpaths. This should be extended to ebikes and escooters. Of course none of these should be riding in areas such as shopping areas. The speed limit on footpaths should be 10km/h. This is the same as mobility scooters. In reality, these vehicles are likely to do 15km/h, but this is no faster than the speed of a good jogger.

Registration I appreciate that these speed limits may be confusing and hard to enforce. There needs to be education and signposting. Most importantly, there needs to be registration. By being identifiable and accountable for their actions, riders of ebikes and escooters are more likely to comply. There is no way the general public will accept the increased use of these devices without accountability and the ability to report offenders.

I appreciate that many people who ride such devices will oppose registration but that is just the price they have to pay for improved mobility.

Escooters These are very compact vehicles. They can be folded up to make them even more compact. Unfortunately they suffer from the problem of small wheels which are less stable than large bicycle wheels. They also have instability because the rider only contacts the escooter with feet and hands, but not a seat. This leads to the further problem of higher centre of gravity and instability.

All escooters should have a seat. This would make them safer, but riders will object because of the expense and extra bulk. Despite these objections, seats should be compulsory to aid stability and safety. It would be inconceivable to think a vehicle such as a Vespa would have no seat, yet we have scooters with no seats.