

Inquiry into e-mobility safety and use in Queensland

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Submitter Comments:

As an urban planner with over 40 years of international experience in city planning, infrastructure development, and sustainable urban systems, I bring a professional lens to the opportunities and risks posed by emerging mobility technologies. My work has spanned diverse contexts across Australia, Asia, and Africa, with a strong focus on transport integration, active mobility, and urban resilience. The comments below reflect this background, and are offered with the aim of supporting balanced, evidence-based policy that protects public safety while enabling innovation in urban transport. I support the expanded use of electronic mobility vehicles such as e-scooters and e-bikes in Queensland. These technologies represent an important step forward in sustainable urban transport—offering cost-effective, low-emission, and accessible alternatives to car dependency. When integrated into our communities with appropriate infrastructure and safety protocols, they can significantly reduce congestion, improve public health, and enhance mobility for people of all ages and income levels. However, in my local area, there is a growing and troubling trend: a significant number of teenagers and young adults are operating these vehicles in a reckless and dangerous manner. It is increasingly common to see riders without helmets, weaving through pedestrian footpaths at unsafe speeds, often with passengers or while using phones. These are not isolated incidents—they are a near-daily occurrence and pose a serious threat to community safety. The core issue is not the vehicles themselves, but the absence of consequence-based thinking among some younger users. Adolescents, in particular, often lack the neurological maturity to fully grasp the permanent damage that can result from a high-speed collision with a pedestrian or a head injury sustained without a helmet. This isn't simply about rule-breaking—it's about a developmental gap between access and accountability. If e-mobility is to be successful in the long term, it must be paired with targeted, age-appropriate safety education, strict enforcement of helmet laws, and public campaigns that make the real-world consequences of unsafe riding clear and unambiguous. Without these measures, we risk undermining public trust in what is otherwise a transformative transport option. The technology is sound—the challenge is behavioral.