

Inquiry into e-mobility safety and use in Queensland

Submission No:	461
Submitted by:	Christopher Gosney
Publication:	Making the submission and your name public
Attachments:	See attachment
Submitter Comments:	

Personal Mobility Devices

We are regular motorists and pedestrians and occasional cyclists who have been spurred into contributing to this debate by two “near misses” when speeding cyclists have almost collided with my wife on the narrow footpath on Duporth Avenue.

In a modern urban environment, thoroughfares consist mainly of roads, designed to allow motor vehicles to travel at speeds between 40 and 80 kilometres per hour and footpaths designed for pedestrians to travel at walking speeds. The situation is complicated by bicycles which travel somewhere between these two speeds, causing inconvenience to the faster movers and danger to the slower movers. The advent of electric bicycles, scooters, and four-wheeled mobility scooters has significantly increased the problems as some of these machines can travel at higher speeds, increasing the risk to pedestrians on footpaths.

The speed differential between different classes of road and footpath users is one major cause of problems – another is the lack of regulation of all users of thoroughfares apart from motor vehicle drivers. Pedestrians can walk on whichever side of the path suits them and stop anywhere they like, blocking the path. Cyclists (and all other wheeled users) can also ride wherever they like. And there is no way of identifying individuals who cause harm to others – an e-scooter rider could collide with a pedestrian causing serious injury, get back on their machine and take off down the path never to be seen again.

Here are some suggestions to consider:

1. Create a code of conduct for all road and footpath users and introduce it with a serious publicity campaign. This code should include such obvious requirements as keeping to the left, cyclists and other footpath users having and using warning devices such as bells or hooters, not congregating in groups blocking the path, thanking pedestrians who move aside, etc.
2. Do not allow any motorized vehicles on footpaths except for mobility scooters (which should be registered and speed limited) and postmen’s motorcycles.
3. Do not allow cyclists on footpaths which are too narrow – it must be possible for a cyclist to pass a pedestrian without the pedestrian having to step off the path. Many countries do not allow cyclists on footpaths at all. This suggestion implies the need for (where possible) improved wider footpaths with centre lines and “no cycling” signs where it is not possible to widen the path