

## **Inquiry into e-mobility safety and use in Queensland**

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<b>Submitter Comments:</b>	

The Committee Secretary  
State Development, Infrastructure and Works Committee  
Parliament House  
George Street  
Brisbane QLD 4000

Dear Committee Secretary,

## **Submission to the Queensland Government Inquiry into E-Mobility Safety and Use in Queensland**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input to the Queensland Government's current inquiry into e-bike safety.

As the prevalence of e-bike usage continues to rise across diverse demographics, including children and adolescents, it is imperative that regulatory frameworks and educational initiatives are adapted to ensure the safety and well-being of all road users. This submission addresses a critical deficiency in current practice, namely the absence of formal education on road rules for young riders, and proposes a strategy encompassing mandatory education, certification, enforcement, infrastructure enhancements, and essential safety features to promote responsible e-bike use.

### **Issue Identification: Deficiency in Formal Road Rule Education for Young Persons**

The rapid increase in e-bike usage among children and young people presents significant safety challenges. Unlike adult drivers, who are required to undergo formal instruction, testing, and experience accumulation prior to operating vehicles on public roads, children often engage in e-bike riding without structured education regarding applicable road rules and safe riding practices.

This disparity results in several key concerns:

- **Lack of Systematic Road Rule Instruction:** There is currently no mandated program providing children with comprehensive education on the rules governing e-bike operation on public thoroughfares.
- **Unrealistic Behavioural Expectations:** The expectation that children will exhibit the same level of road awareness and responsibility as adults, who have undergone formal training, is unreasonable and unsafe.
- **Elevated Risk of Incidents:** The knowledge and skill gap contributes to unsafe riding behaviours, increasing the likelihood of accidents and conflicts with other road users.

### **Recommendations**

#### **1. Integration of Mandatory Safety and Road Rules Education into School Curricula**

It is recommended that the Queensland education system incorporate a compulsory, age-appropriate program focused on road safety and e-bike operation. This program should be introduced at the primary school level and reinforced throughout secondary education.

The curriculum should encompass:

- Comprehensive understanding of traffic signage, signals, and road markings.
- The rights, responsibilities, and legal obligations of e-bike riders.
- Safe riding techniques, including speed regulation and hazard recognition.
- The critical importance of helmet use and other protective equipment.
- Proper utilisation of bike lanes and shared pathways.
- The consequences of unsafe riding, including legal ramifications and community impact.

Practical components, such as supervised riding exercises and simulated traffic scenarios, should be integrated to facilitate experiential learning.

## **2. Implementation of Certification and Licensing Requirements for E-Bike Ownership**

Prospective e-bike purchasers should be required to complete an accredited safety and road rules course prior to acquisition.

- Upon successful completion, individuals would be issued a certificate or licence, which must be presented at the point of sale.
- Retailers would be legally obligated to verify certification before completing e-bike sales.
- Non-compliance by either sellers or buyers would attract penalties, enforced through regular audits and inspections.

## **3. Provision of a Transition Period for Existing E-Bike Owners**

A grace period of twelve months should be established to enable current e-bike owners to undertake the requisite certification.

- Support mechanisms, including subsidised or complimentary training courses, should be made available to facilitate compliance, particularly for younger riders and those from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Post-transition, enforcement measures should be applied to uncertified riders, including fines and potential confiscation of non-compliant e-bikes.

## **4. Enforcement of Mandatory Speed Limits and Helmet Usage**

- Clearly defined speed limits for e-bikes should be legislated and actively enforced, with particular attention to zones of high pedestrian activity and school precincts.
- The compulsory use of helmets must be rigorously promoted and enforced through targeted educational campaigns and compliance checks.
- E-bike riders should be mandated to utilise designated bike lanes where available, with education on appropriate lane conduct.

## 5. Development of Dedicated E-Bike Practice and Socialisation Facilities

Investment should be directed toward the establishment of purpose-built parks and training environments that replicate real-world traffic conditions.

- These facilities would provide safe venues for young riders to develop skills, engage in recreational activities, and foster community interaction under supervised conditions.
- Support for community-based programs, including workshops and organised events, would further reinforce safe riding cultures.

## 6. Mandatory E-Bike Safety Features and Registration

To further enhance safety, it is recommended that all e-bikes sold and operated in Queensland be required to meet the following minimum safety standards:

- **Rear View Mirrors:** All e-bikes must be equipped with rear view mirrors to improve situational awareness and reduce the risk of collisions.
- **Brake Lights:** E-bikes must have functioning brake lights to alert other road users when the rider is slowing or stopping.
- **Headlights:** E-bikes must be fitted with front headlights to ensure visibility during low-light conditions and at night.
- **Registration:** All e-bikes must be registered with the relevant authority for a nominal fee. Registration will facilitate enforcement, support the recovery of lost or stolen bikes, and ensure that only compliant vehicles are operated on public roads.

These requirements will not only improve the visibility and predictability of e-bike riders but also align e-bike safety standards more closely with those of other road vehicles.

### Advantages and Disadvantages of the Proposed Measures

Advantages	Disadvantages
Enhances safety outcomes for young riders and the broader community.	Requires significant investment in education, enforcement, and infrastructure.
Ensures comprehensive understanding of road rules among e-bike users.	Potential financial and logistical barriers for some families.
Establishes clear accountability for buyers, sellers, and riders.	Implementation necessitates coordination across multiple sectors.
Fosters public confidence in e-bikes as a safe mode of transport.	Risk of illicit sales if enforcement is insufficient.

Advantages	Disadvantages
Promotes a culture of responsible and lawful e-bike use.	Possible deterrent effect on e-bike adoption rates.
Supports active and sustainable transport initiatives.	Adds to educational curriculum demands.
Improves e-bike visibility and predictability on roads.	Additional costs associated with safety feature compliance and registration.

### Additional Considerations

- The introduction of minimum age restrictions for higher-powered e-bikes should be considered to further safeguard younger riders.
- Parental engagement initiatives should be incorporated to ensure families are informed and involved in promoting road safety.
- Ongoing public awareness campaigns are essential to maintain community understanding and compliance.
- Establishing robust data collection mechanisms will facilitate evidence-based policy refinement.
- Financial assistance programs may be necessary to ensure equitable access to training and safety equipment.
- A dedicated taskforce should be appointed to periodically review and update policies in response to technological and societal developments.

### Conclusion

The increasing adoption of e-bikes in Queensland necessitates a strategic and proactive response to ensure rider and public safety. The current absence of formal road rule education for children represents a significant risk factor that must be addressed through comprehensive education, certification, enforcement, infrastructure initiatives, and mandatory safety features. By implementing the recommendations outlined herein, Queensland can establish itself as a leader in e-bike safety, fostering a culture of responsible use that benefits individuals and the wider community alike.

Thank you for your consideration of this submission.

**Venesa Gleeson**

8 June 2025