

Inquiry into e-mobility safety and use in Queensland

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Submitter Comments:

There remain some prominent contradictions to current regulations between bicycle & electric scooter use on public roads. Firstly, it is generally recognised that regular riders of bikes over a long distance (5-10km) cannot maintain an average speed greater than 25km/h. Secondly, it is generally recognised that even average fitness bike riders can approach 40-50km/h going down hills, and that fit riders can and do exceed 60km/h under the right conditions. Thirdly, bicycle lanes exist on many roads that have speed limits of 70-80km/h (for example Beckett road whilst uphill sections of that road would limit bicycle use to 20km/h for very fit riders). Fourthly, many electric scooters are capable of the same speeds on a flat or uphill as what regular bicycles with average riders are able to achieve going down hill. My submission is that it is illogical and inconsistent to over-regulate electric scooter use over that of Bicycles. If a scooter can attain 50km/h just as a bicycle going downhill, then it should not be discriminated against under any circumstances. If a bicycle can do 20km/h on Beckett Road going uphill and 50km/h going downhill, then why can the scooter not do 20 to 50km/h anywhere in the same bike lane? This said, I hear the arguments against age & responsibility. If I was a father of a 13 year old screaming along downhill on Beckett Road at 50km/h on a bike I would not want that, but punishing everyone else by regulation for the abandonment of a father's responsibility is not good regulation. I agree that police should be empowered to pull over people not wearing full facial helmets on Scooters (as the facial injuries are the main outcome and an inevitability including loss of teeth and jaw reconstruction). I also agree that police should be empowered to pull over people on unregistered electric motorcycles in any environment at any speed. Scooters however are a completely different category. They are small and light and very low to the ground and present limited risk to property and people as opposed to a full blown motorcycle. Separately, Footpaths use of these small scooters is dangerous due to cars reversing out of driveways. Attempting to regulate all permutations and circumstances in relation to scooters perpetuates the idea of the nanny state and overburdens police when more important offences are being committed. If scooter users (like bike users) are being responsible on roads and pathways and not getting in the way of traffic, people, children, or not creating injury they should not be punished. Electric Motorcycles with NO PEDALS should be Registered without exemption. Electric bicycles WITH PEDALS should NOT be registered and not be restricted with respect to road use. Electric Scooters should be treated as un-powered Bicycles and Electric bicycles. (ie Off Limits for Police unless being ridden by people without helmets). I agree that CBD Roads, CBD bikeways, & CBD footpaths need careful consideration, but this is more a function of the individual and their level of responsibility that can only be determined by police discretion. Again, I would argue that penalising 199 of 200 people for the stupidity of 1 man or woman is over regulation. If someone injures themselves and others, they are liable regardless. Let Common Law and consequence for actions demand a remedy rather than harass free people that are injuring nobody and using no fossil fuels.