

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

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## **E-bike and E-scooter inquiry**

Submission by Derek Brown, [REDACTED]

### **Benefits:**

They help people to travel.

For older folks they help people travel further and more easily than non-e bikes or non-e scooters.

Even pedal assisted e-bikes help get folks out of their homes and doing exercise, often in social groups.

For young folk, they are fun; they're fast!

They reduce the number of vehicles on our roads.

Scooters are relatively cheap and are easily secured at home or in an office.

### **Safety Risks:**

The legal devices can easily travel at up to 25kms/hr, which is faster than most non-e devices usually travel, accidents to e-device riders, or to pedestrians, are more severe than from a non-e device accident.

The illegal devices, of which there seem to be many, can travel at much higher speeds and the accidents are even more severe.

I cycle in two groups of cyclists on Mondays and Thursdays. We are all retired and two thirds of the two groups ride e-bikes and love them. Being retirees, we don't usually cycle much faster than 20kms/hr, but we often encounter other e-bikes and e-scooters travelling much faster, and riders frequently without a helmet. The e-scooter riders often appear considerably younger than 15 years old, and there is often more than one young person on the e-scooters.

One of my sons works in ED at the Sunshine Coast University Hospital and he advises they see approx. one serious head injury from e-device accidents per week.

### **Current rules and how they compare with other jurisdictions:**

MP's don't need me to advise them what the QLD rules are for e-bikes and e-scooters! There are several websites that advise on rules in other jurisdictions, and Parliament should require a review of other jurisdictions using those websites. It can be done quickly and easily; it doesn't require our MP's to travel the world to see how other jurisdictions manage their e-devices.

Having reviewed some of these websites, I support:

- e-devices being licenced and having a licence plate
- e-devices being insured for causing injuries to third parties,
- insurance providers refusing to insure e-devices that have been modified to allow speeds greater than the legal limit
- insured e-devices being registered
- e-bikes that don't require to be pedalled should be regulated as a motorcycle
- riders of e-devices must wear a helmet
- riders should not use their mobile phones whilst operating the e-device
- the inquiry needs to carefully consider rules for e-device riders vs rules for cyclists and skateboarders. Where the rules are different, the rationale should be clearly explained. It may be appropriate to separately consider the category of e-devices that don't require to be pedalled, since they are more akin to motorbikes. However,

motorcyclists have to be 17 or older, must take training and pass a test to get a full licence.

### **Enforcement approaches:**

In my view the number of speeding e-devices with under aged riders, or multiple riders is increasing rapidly. Whatever enforcement is in place isn't working.

Consideration should be given to:

- increasing enforcement in key areas, around schools, universities and at popular playground parks,
- confiscating the e-device for repeat offenders
- fining the parents of dependent children breaking the rules
- increase publicity of statistics how many riders have been found breaking the rules and their ages, and also of the penalties that have been issued

### **Important laws**

I support e-devices being allowed on footpaths where non-e devices are already allowed. If the e-devices are used within the rules, the footpaths are far safer than the roads.

### **Communication and Education**

As with enforcement, whatever is being done now isn't working.

Consideration should be given to:

- running educational ads on TV at prime time for youngsters; highlighting the rules and showing graphic pictures of injured riders
- running programmes on TV that highlight the rules, the enforcement officers and the punishments/penalties that apply to riders and potentially to their parents
- schools inviting front line doctors and paramedics to talk to school kids to help make them aware of the seriousness of the accidents that are happening in QLD every week.