

Inquiry into e-mobility safety and use in Queensland

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I wish to comment in relation to the inquiry into E-Scooter safety. In particular my submission addresses the safety of pedestrians.

I am a 71 year old female who has significant physical and health concerns. Whilst I can walk, I cannot move aside rapidly.

Although I do not live in Brisbane, I attend The Mater Hospital in Brisbane on a reasonably regular basis. I also attend one or two social outings in Brisbane – often around West End/Highgate Hill area. On most occasions I use public transport to attend these events. This will usually require a transfer to a bus at Roma St or Central Railway Station. Due to current works in relation to Cross River Rail, a walk outside the actual station is required at Roma Street.

I am aware of some requirements regarding speed travelled on e-scooters. I have regularly noted the actual speed at which the person is travelling on an e-scooter appears to be significantly faster than what I would consider safe.

On two occasions recently I have narrowly avoided a collision.

1. On Roma Street. An e-scooter rider was approaching rapidly on the footpath. Swerved to go around a slower walking pedestrian – almost colliding with me. I felt that the rider had expected me to “jump” out of his way.
2. As I walked on the left hand side of the footpath towards the intersection of Stanley St and Annerley Road to cross to the Mater Hospital, I was about to step to the right to press the pedestrian crossing button when an extremely large e-scooter ridden by a large adult bore rapidly down on me from behind. It was not possible to hear this scooter over the general traffic and other noise. Once again a very near miss.

These two memorable and intimidating incidents have left me feeling quite scared to attend my appointments. More recently my husband has driven me in order to avoid risk.

I acknowledge the difficulty involved in policing speed at all times. It is very clear to me that these e-scooters are quite capable of speeds that are very much faster than an average walking pace – let alone that of someone with physical impairments. Safety for pedestrians on footpaths cannot be assured under these circumstances.

I wish to submit the suggestion that within central CBD areas, and city areas with higher pedestrian traffic (at least), e-scooters are not a compatible companion on pedestrian footpaths. Where suitable bike-lanes are not available, it seems reasonable that the rider alights and pushes the e-scooter.