

Inquiry into e-mobility safety and use in Queensland

Submission No: 748
Submitted by: Andrew Read
Publication: Making the submission and your name public
Attachments: No attachment

Submitter Comments:

I have been a regular private E-Scooter rider for 3 years and I understand both the benefits and dangers posed by this form of transport. I will limit my submission to the Private E-mobility devices. I have held a flawless driving record for almost 30 years and my transition to E-Scooter usage in a safe and responsible manner was simple. By using the common sense and awareness of road rules required to hold a driver's licence I have never had an issue with pedestrians or other vehicles in the three years of my E-Scooter riding. Using the scooter has not replaced my car, however it has allowed me reduce its usage by roughly 30% which (if more people tried) is great for the environment and reducing traffic congestion, it has also helped reduce fuel costs on the family budget. I live in an area that includes some very steep terrain so having the E-Scooter to help navigate the steep hills has been a huge help. It has also been a fun family activity as I bought my 13 year old son a scooter that he rides with me (he doesn't ride by himself and we are aware of the laws) this has given me an opportunity to teach him about road rules and what to expect with driver and pedestrian behaviour and to be aware of your surroundings (in this case mainly suburban driveways) . This has given me comfort to know that when he reaches his late teens and is ready to be on the road on his own, he will have already adapted these essential skills. As with anything, there are those who will ignore the rules and ruin it for everyone else. I have seen firsthand young teenagers riding what can only be described as unregistered E-motorbikes flying past my house at speeds of 80km/h+ quite often on the back wheel, this is a daily occurrence in the suburb where I live. I haven't witnessed the same issue on private E-Scooters which don't seem to be as popular as E-bikes in that demographic. I personally don't feel that outright banning this mode of transport is the solution, I believe further regulation and education is required and my suggestions are as follows:

- Registration - It makes sense that E-Mobility devices are going to need to be registered. I suggest a small annual registration which includes a CTP insurance element. (costs to the rider needs to be considered in this instance so it can't be prohibitive and unaffordable to those on lower incomes such as students and those in the Gig economy) A registration sticker can be attached to the E-bike / Scooter which will assist with law enforcement and identification in an accident. If the bikes /scooters need to be sold as registered, this would likely help with preventing the importation of ultra-powerful E-bikes being ordered and imported from overseas.
- Licencing – If an adult holds a full unrestricted driver's licence, they can complete an online E-mobility safety course to be tacked on to their drivers licence. Those who are too young or have not yet obtained their unrestricted driving licence, they must complete both a riding and written E-mobility safety course in order to obtain a provisional E-mobility licence. (Provisional licence restricts the rider to max 20 km/hr or a reduced motor wattage device) I feel the course should also drill down on the dangers and results of accidents when an E-bike is going 80km/h and hits a stationary object, using real life images and examples to show the seriousness of this behaviour.
- Enforcement – By adding a registration and licencing requirement to these devices, law enforcement can treat these devices like any other vehicle on the roads with fines and demerits to apply. In summary, I don't believe that banning or severely restricting E-Mobility devices is the solution, I believe holding the individual owner and operator of the device accountable is the answer. There are plenty of responsible riders who use these devices in a safe manner whether that be for personal use like myself or to earn an income such as Gig economy workers. These devices have truly revolutionised public transport and rather than fighting it, we should regulate it to make it safe for everyone and embrace the technology. Thank you.