

Inquiry into e-mobility safety and use in Queensland

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Submitter Comments:

My Experiences I live on the southern end of the Gold Coast and I chose to live here for the small community feeling, good amenities for families such as parks and walks, and proximity to the ocean. What I witness with respect to e-bikes, day to day includes: young people riding on main roads full speed with no helmets, people riding 2 or 3 at a time, riders on the esplanade at full speed where pedestrians walk or past playgrounds, riders on the beach near where people and animals walk or play. I have witnessed near misses of young toddlers or dogs. I have heard of actual collisions between riders and children. I have seen videos of young people using these bikes as apparatus to commit crimes, or be public nuisances. I have seen young people be extremely reckless on these bikes. I am very angry and also fearful about the current situation and how much e-bikes have eroded the safe community feeling of the suburb I live in.

Safety risks The safety risks are clear to both riders and non riders. First, young people who are too young to hold a drivers licence are not developmentally capable to drive e bikes. They pose a danger to themselves and to others. They cannot be trusted to (and do not) follow rules or make accurate or safe judgements on risk. They drive over speed limits, and without helmets, in public places where children are and on main roads where they are a danger to themselves. They also create psychological risk to car drivers who are at risk of killing them. I want to be able to walk with my young children on the esplanade by the beach, or play at a playground or on the beach without fear of them being hit by a motorised vehicle. That is what e-bikes are: motorised vehicles. They are heavy and fast and could kill anyone they hit.

Enforcement approaches Having rules is one thing but enforcing them is another. There seem to be a number of restrictions in place around e-bikes currently and I can confirm to you that none of these are being followed to any capacity in the suburb I live in. At present there is very clearly no fear of consequence. Thus, we need ALL bikes to be registered as vehicles so that police can ticket riders. That is the only way people will be accountable and obey the rules. We need police randomly ticketing on the esplanades and on roads. We need patrols. We need speed cameras set up to book these bikes too.

Communication and education We need clear signage for speed limits and we need safe zones near playgrounds (similar to school zones with roads). Even better we need a ban of motorised vehicles on foot paths which should be for pedestrians only. All bikes should be REGISGERED VEHICLES. We cannot discriminate between some e-bikes and others. 100% of e-bikes need to be registered vehicles. This will reduce confusion and also reduce likelihood of people making illegal adjustments to bikes. As part of registration can be an education module that needs to be completed so that no one can plead ignorance to the rules and tickets can be given for breaking road rules.