

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

<b>Submission No:</b>	896
<b>Submitted by:</b>	Palm Beach Currumbin State High School P&C
<b>Publication:</b>	Making the submission and your name public
<b>Attachments:</b>	See attachment
<b>Submitter Comments:</b>	



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**Palm Beach Currumbin State High School P&C Submission to the  
Queensland Parliamentary Inquiry into E-Mobility Safety**

**Date:** 18 June 2025

Thrower Drive Palm Beach  
Queensland 4221 Australia  
Locked Mail Bag 1  
Currumbin Queensland  
4223 Australia

Telephone (07)5525 9333  
Facsimile (07) 5525 9300  
info@pbc-shs.eq.edu.au  
[www.pbc-shs.eq.edu.au](http://www.pbc-shs.eq.edu.au)

**Prepared by:** Palm Beach Currumbin State High School P&C on behalf of the school community (PBC SHS)

**Intro:**

Palm Beach Currumbin State High School currently has a student population of 2,756. Of these, more than 300 students use e-bikes or e-scooters as their primary mode of transport on any given day. We have observed a steady increase in the number of students choosing these devices for commuting, and alongside this trend, we have also seen a corresponding rise in accidents and injuries.

Given our school's large student body and the active, outdoor lifestyle typical of the southern Gold Coast, we believe our situation is unique and presents a valuable case study for understanding the challenges and opportunities associated with e-mobility use among young people. The scale of e-mobility use among our students places us in a strong position to provide relevant and practical insights to this inquiry.

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## **1. The Benefits of E-Mobility Devices**

Palm Beach Currumbin SHS acknowledges the legitimate and growing role of e-mobility devices like e-bikes in the transport landscape.

**Observed benefits in our school community:**

- **Reduced car and bus traffic:** Around 300 fewer students rely on car drop-offs or buses, easing congestion and contributing to environmental outcomes.
- **Increased participation:** E-bikes help students access before- and after-school programs, sport, and part-time work.
- **Inclusion and accessibility:** They provide a cost-effective transport option for families.

There is no doubt e-mobility devices can provide social and economic good when used safely and responsibly.

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## **2. Safety Risks and Rise in Serious Incidents**



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However, alongside these benefits, our school and community are witnessing:

- Unsafe use by underage or unlicensed riders.
- Near-misses and collisions in and around school zones.
- Helmet non-compliance and reckless riding behaviour.
- Use of high-powered or throttle-only devices that are not street legal.

These concerns echo the broader community alarm reflected in the rise in injuries and fatalities. While we are not responsible for road law enforcement, we are on the frontline of risk exposure.

### 3. Infrastructure Gaps in School Zones

Current school environments are not designed to safely accommodate high-speed e-mobility use alongside pedestrians.

- There are no designated e-device parking or lockable storage facilities, leading to unsafe clutter at entry points.
- It is unclear whether the e-devices can be used on the road only, footpath/bicycle path only or both.
- Shared-use paths near schools lack separation or lane markings, creating unsafe conditions where e-devices/PMDs mix with foot traffic.
- Entry zones experience congestion, particularly at drop-off and pick-up times, increasing the risk of incidents.

#### Recommendation:

- Government investment in dedicated e-device parking bays with signage.
- Physical separation of e-mobility paths from pedestrian walkways in and around school campuses.
- Support for local councils to introduce speed-calming measures and visibility improvements near school entry points.

### 4. Current Rules and How They Compare with Other Jurisdictions

The rules in Queensland are unclear and inconsistently enforced, particularly when it comes to:

- Age restrictions: It's unclear whether riders under 16 can legally operate e-bikes, unlike in some other states.
- Device compliance: Throttle-controlled or high-powered e-bikes are available for purchase despite being non-compliant.
- Licensing: No licensing or registration system exists, making it impossible to identify riders or hold them accountable.



We strongly support uniform national regulation — clear rules about minimum rider age, required safety features (pedal assist only), and licensing for older riders. These must be consistent across state lines to be enforceable and understandable.

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## 5. Legal and Parental Accountability

The current legal framework does not provide schools or local police with the tools to effectively address repeat offenders or educate families.

- Schools cannot identify or sanction individuals consistently engaging in unsafe or illegal e-mobility use.
- Many parents are unaware that devices purchased online are non-compliant with Queensland law. This was confirmed during the public hearings.

### Recommendation:

- Introduce a Parental Responsibility Code tied to device registration, requiring legal acknowledgement and behaviour standards.
- Strengthen data-sharing protocols between Queensland Police Service (QPS), Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR), and schools regarding repeat offences and serious incidents.

## 6. Enforcement Approaches

This is where the system breaks down.

Schools are not the right body to enforce e-mobility rules. The school/school community can communicate changes, run education campaigns, and refer issues to authorities — and we do — but enforcement of road rules is outside our authority and capacity. The community often incorrectly expects us to act as de facto regulators, which is unfair and unrealistic.

Local police face resourcing issues, and there's confusion about which agency (QPS or TMR) has authority to confiscate illegal devices.

### Recommendation:

- Stronger enforcement powers and clarity for police and TMR.
- A registration and plate system for e-bikes to allow identification and accountability.
- Clear legislation banning throttle-controlled or non-compliant PMDs.
- Develop a specific enforcement strategy for school zones.
- Expand the role of community safety officers or school-based officers in managing device behaviour.



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## 7. Importation Laws

Many of the non-compliant e-bikes used by students appear to be purchased online or assembled from parts. These often exceed legal power limits or include throttle controls, making them road-illegal but still widely accessible.

### Recommendation:

- Ban the import and sale of non-compliant PMDs.
- Hold retailers accountable for selling devices illegal for public use.

## 8. Communication and Education

PBC SHS has taken proactive steps to educate students and families, despite having no formal responsibility to do so:

- Collaborated with Kurt Fossel (OIC) and Police Beat officers to deliver school talks and tailored assemblies.
- Conducted school “blitz” operations in collaboration with police.
- Engaged with families: where parental fines were issued, behaviour changed.
- Shared government information via social media and school newsletters.
- Used school events to reinforce messages around safety, compliance, and helmet use.
- Noted increases in helmet compliance, possibly linked to Operation Elektra.

### Recommendation:

- Fund co-designed safety education programs tailored for school-aged riders and parents.
- Provide materials clearly outlining legal requirements and safe riding behaviour and distribute through schools and wider community.

## 9. Data Collection and Transparency

There is no formal mechanism for schools to report or track e-mobility-related incidents, complaints, or near misses.

- TMR confirmed in public sessions that comprehensive PMD accident data is unavailable.
- This data gap results in underestimation of risks in school environments.

### Recommendation:

- Create a centralised, school-accessible reporting portal linked to QPS and TMR.
- Require annual reporting of e-mobility-related incidents in Queensland school zones.



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## 10. Stakeholder Views

Our position, echoed by many school communities:

- E-bikes have a place in the transport system.
- Regulation is essential for safety and public confidence.
- Schools can support but cannot be responsible for enforcement.
- There must be national uniformity and clarity in age restrictions, device legality, and enforcement protocols.
- TMR and QPS roles must be clarified and resourced.
- A registration/licensing system is imperative.

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We request that government agencies acknowledge our role as stakeholders and work with us to co-design responses that are practical, enforceable, and child focused.

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## Conclusion

PBC SHS urges the Inquiry to:

- Restore clarity and authority to state agencies, not schools.
- Protect the benefits of e-mobility while cracking down on unsafe and illegal use.
- Legislate uniform national standards and enforceable rules.
- Provide schools with support tools — not enforcement expectations.
- Prioritise school zone-specific infrastructure and inter-agency collaboration.

We thank the Committee for the opportunity to submit and welcome continued dialogue.

Your sincerely,



Kaylee Campradt

P&C President on behalf of the PBC SHS school community.