

Inquiry into e-mobility safety and use in Queensland

Submission No: 923
Submitted by: Josh Bosselmann
Publication: Making the submission and your name public
Attachments: No attachment

Submitter Comments:

Hello, I am a Noosa resident with a young family and I would like to submit my opinion on the use of E-bikes and scooters. I currently own two E scooters, One E mountain bike and one fat tire E bike. There are hundreds of fat tire E bikes in the Noosa area and also plenty of E scooters and E mtbs in the area. I ride the area every day and unless it is raining I no longer use my cars. There are thousands of people of all ages from young children to elderly people riding the bike trails and streets in the area every day. I believe these E vehicles are a huge benefit to the community for the reasons I will explain below. Noosa traffic is terrible in the peak holiday times and these E mobility devices have taken load off the congested roads. There is plenty of space to park the bikes throughout Noosa and the trail networks make getting around extremely easy and you can stay off the roads altogether a lot of the time. These vehicles are silent so they do not disturb people at night and decrease noise pollution during the day by displacing motorised vehicles. They produce no emissions. Yes they are charged with power from a coal fired power plant but please consider this. My E bike has a 1kw battery pack. At current retail power prices that is 25-30c to charge it from dead empty and I can ride for 100kms on a full charge with me and my children. This is roughly a week of riding daily. Even compared to a 50cc moped the emissions are miniscule. They are cheap. You can get scooters for \$500 and bikes starting from \$1500. For the young people who work in the service industry's in the area these bikes are a fraction of the cost of purchasing a car and paying rego/insurance/maintenance. With the cost of living for these young people these bikes and scooters provide needed relief from the obscene amount of money they are likely spending on rent to live in the area. For high school kids these vehicles provide freedom and independence to move about the area quickly and safely without relying on their parents to drive them around or the costs associated with their own cars. For people like myself with young children we can just travel around the area in the fresh air to the playgrounds, cafes and restaurants. We don't have to get in and out of a hot car or sit in traffic or drive in circles trying to find a car park. My kids much prefer to take the bike than the car. Regarding the safety issues. As for rider safety. This method of transport is just as safe as riding a bicycle. The increase in the number of people being hurt on these things is correlated to the massive increase in the people who are riding them. Yes people are going to crash and get severely injured and die on these vehicles. Although this is unfortunate it is also inevitable. This method of transport is far safer than riding a motorcycle or a snowboard or a downhill mountain bike. In 2023 in Australia 253 people were killed on motorcycles. In the past 5 years 30 people in Australia have been killed on E scooters. If rider safety is of the utmost importance may I suggest some educational safety videos on how to operate these things. One of the main factors is taking the scooter front wheel diameter into consideration when operating up and down curbs and around cracks and holes in the footpaths and roads. Regarding public safety I have observed no behaviour around Noosa I would consider dangerous to the public. 95 Percent of the riders are operating in a manner that would not concern anyone. I have observed many teenage boys riding their bikes on their rear wheel and at excessive speeds. However I have never seen any of them on the rear wheel when in close proximity to pedestrians and I have not seen them traveling at excessive speed in close proximity to the general public. I have seen them traveling at 40 kph plus on the roads and although this is illegal considering they could be doing the same thing on a moped I am unsure if we can consider this highly dangerous. If traveling at high speed they should be wearing a full faced helmet and many of them already are. The danger related to the lithium ion battery chemistry is unfounded in my opinion. We have had lithium ion battery's in laptops and phones since the 90s and it was never an issue. These battery's are the same chemistry

just with more cells to boost the capacity and voltage. Unleaded fuel is highly flammable a leaking fuel line spraying onto a hot exhaust is surely just as dangerous as a battery. I ran a quick search and study's suggest a petrol vehicle is 10 to 80 times more likely to catch fire per 100000 vehicles than a battery powered one. Regardless, providing some basic education to the public regarding battery's is not a bad idea. The public should be made aware to periodically look at their battery's for any signs off them puffing up or bending of the plastic case. This is an indication that the battery has degraded and needs to be disposed of. Current Laws and Enforcement I recommend the 250W power restriction on the E bikes be lifted from 250W to 1000W. 250W is simply not enough power to get up a hill. Even 1000W is just enough if the hill is steep. I suggest any bikes over 250W require all riders to have a full faced helmet. I recommend the max speed on the road be increased to 50kph. Cyclists with no E bike can easily exceed 40kph so it does not make sense that the E bikes are limited to 25Kph. I suggest full faced helmets be required for traveling over 25Kph. I recommend removing the pedal assist only restriction and allowing E bikes to have throttles. Regarding law enforcement. I recommend the police focus on issuing fines for dangerous riding if they consider it to be putting the public at risk. Similar to dangerous driving in a car. To clarify a 17 year old boy doing a wheelie in an empty street is not putting the public at risk and should not be policed. Riding on a busy footpath zig zagging amongst pedestrians at 30Kph is most definitely putting the public at risk and should be policed. Please do not impose a series of new laws regarding E mobility devices. We already live in a heavily regulated country. The only rule you need is that it is illegal to ride dangerously in proximity to the public where it is likely to cause injury or death. Kind regards, Josh