

Inquiry into e-mobility safety and use in Queensland

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Submitter Comments:

I am a 55 year old male Gold Coast resident and I currently ride an e-bike to work and back. I am a big proponent of e-bikes...I know that they have been demonised and a lot of that is because of kids riding the bikes in ways that are illegal. That has made advocating for improved e-bikes and e-bike friendly infrastructure difficult, however I am convinced that e-bikes could be a major way we both move away from fossil fuels, but also change our cities to be more friendly for non car transport, as well as improving health and reducing traffic. There are a few changes I would like to request. We should have a new category of legal e-bike for those who are over 18. Keep the current e-bikes as the maximum that can be ridden for riders between 15 and 18, and then have a different category for over 18's. Increase the power wattage that is legal from 250 to 500 or even 750. 500 is what I believe it is in NSW. The reality is on hills a 250 watt bike will get up it, but it is a real challenge. In hilly areas a more powerful bike would be helpful. Increase the speed allowed from 25 to 30 or 35. Anything to help get to work faster, and a faster vehicle would allow me to get to work in a better time. The faster speed should probably only be allowed to be travelled in bike lanes or on the side of the road, not shared lanes with pedestrians. I am happy for a slower speed on those paths. I would recommend a maximum speed of 15 kmh wherever there are pedestrians, and rules that mean we always have to give way to pedestrians. Allow for the throttle to be used. I have a bad hip that occasionally flares up, and that can make peddling difficult. I don't personally understand why I can't use a throttle to travel, as turning the pedals does exactly the same thing. In addition the way the e-bikes work with the pedals is it will give you a set assist up to a certain speed. For example if I set my assist to "1" then it will go 15 kmh. If I set it to "3" it will go 25 kmh. This makes it hard to vary speed outside of those set values. A throttle would allow me to easily slightly speed up or slow down, and makes the speed options analogue instead of digital. Throttles would also help those with mobility issues have a much easier time on the bike. Better bike infrastructure with separation of pedestrians and bikes. This is a long term change, but I would like to see this as a priority. There are real risks today riding even in bike lanes, as they are often painted on on the outside of parked cars, and I have had multiple drivers open their doors, causing me to swerve or slam on my brakes. Much better when I can ride dedicated infrastructure. Also I get that pedestrians don't want to have bikes flying past them, so I would support separating pedestrians from bike lanes, and if not possible then a slower speed limit in shared pathways.