

Inquiry into e-mobility safety and use in Queensland

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I write to express my concerns with the every increasing incidents with electric bikes and scooters. I see it as inevitable that serious injury and deaths can happen to those not mature enough or skilled enough to navigate the many aspects experienced riders and drivers deal with on a day to day basis.

As background

- I am a cyclist, have been for 60 years.
- I see merit in pedal assisted electric cycles for those of all ages who may be in need of assistance to complete their journey. The cycle is essentially propelled by human endeavour.
- I believe an e-bike with a throttle control is no longer a cycle but a motorcycle as defined by the act.
- I recognise that licensed adults complying with the rules of the road should be allowed to use electric bikes & scooters for transport.
- I believe that a bike or scooter driven by an electric motor (excluding pedal assist to a given capacity) is a vehicle as defined by the act and as such should be registered and insured.
- I have witnessed on numerous occasions both scooter and bikes with multiple passengers, many without helmets, riding with no regard for others safety, hooning and some with an intimidatory manner, most by people I would consider under the age of 16.
- In self reflection, when I was 16 or younger I would have wanted an e-bike.
- I understand the Police force is already stretched for man power hence cannot be every where all of the time.
- From the number of battery powered scooters and bikes I see in my area I believe, to quote the idiom, "the horse has already bolted".

For that reason I believe moving forward

- Retail outlets when selling an e-bike or e-scooter to someone under the age of 16 should be required to show brief educational videos (Gov. produced) emphasising the requirements for legal and safe ridding.
- The parent or guardian of any Juvenile purchasing an electric powered bike or scooter provide written consent for the purchase with an acceptance of joint responsibility for the actions of the rider
- Over the age of 16 they must produce a learners permit that requires at the least a PrepL test

To balance those already in use as well as new purchasers

- Recognising that many younger riders are in their pre license years and may pay more attention to the consequences rather than a fine. For any errant behaviour, an increase in the age they are able to apply for a learners permit proportional to the circumstances. e.g. Minor infraction 16 years and six months to apply, multiple or serious offences etc 17 years +.
- The parent or guardian of any juvenile with an electric powered bike or scooter held jointly responsible for any breach.

In Summary

I do not believe we should restrict the use but with education, and consent encourage both user and guardian to accept responsibility for their actions.