


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

<b>Submission No:</b>	1006
<b>Submitted by:</b>	
<b>Publication:</b>	Making the submission public but withholding your name
<b>Attachments:</b>	See attachment
<b>Submitter Comments:</b>	

E-bikes and e-scooters have surged in popularity as convenient, eco-friendly transport options. But behind their sleek designs and easy accessibility lie significant safety risks that are often underestimated by users and policymakers alike.

### **Key Dangers:**

1. **Speed and Control Issues** These vehicles can reach speeds up to 45 km/h or more, often without the infrastructure or rider skill level to support safe operation—especially in crowded urban areas or mixed pedestrian zones.
2. **Lack of Regulation and Enforcement** Helmet laws, age restrictions, and rules around where these vehicles can be ridden vary widely or are poorly enforced, leading to inconsistent safety practices.
3. **Rider Inexperience** With low barriers to entry, many users hop on with little to no training, unaware of how braking, turning, or balancing differs from traditional bikes or walking.
4. **Infrastructure Challenges** Roads and pathways are often not designed for these vehicles, causing conflicts with cars, bicycles, and pedestrians. This increases the risk of collisions and injuries.
5. **Battery Fires and Malfunctions** Lithium-ion batteries, if poorly manufactured or damaged, can cause fires or explosions—especially when charging in homes or apartments.

Australia has seen a steady rise in e-scooter-related hospital admissions, with some cities reporting up to a 600% increase in accidents within a year of introducing rental programs. Head injuries and fractures are among the most common.

Eight people died while riding e-bikes or e-scooters in Queensland last year. There have been at least four fatal incidents with e-scooters this year and hundreds of hospital admissions with serious injuries. Thousands of infringement notices have been issued by police for illegal use of PMDs in the last couple of years. These include for failing to wear a helmet, carrying passengers, or illegal road use.

These PMDs are often ridden too fast for situations such as footpaths and walkways and present an extreme danger to pedestrians. My wife and I do not use the New Farm walkway on weekends particularly, because of irresponsible bike and scooter use. Very rarely do e-bike/scooter users or cyclists sound their bell to warn pedestrians they are approaching.

This is particularly Important for elderly people and those with young children who may suddenly run into the path of a bike or scooter being ridden much too fast for the situation.

A broken femur resulting from a collision could be a death sentence for an otherwise healthy older person. Some users seem to think it's a triathlon training track. Common courtesy seems to have been forgotten by most of these users who pay no registration fees and seem to think they have the right to do what they wish. If an accident happened, there seems little chance of identifying the offender. Many countries such as Spain, Sweden and Korea have banned e-rideables from footpaths completely.

Delivery personnel for the fast-food delivery companies flout the law on a regular basis. I have often seen them going through red lights and stop signs while fee paying motorists are doing the correct thing. Perhaps if they had a registration plate like motorbikes, they may change their attitude. More often than not, they don't have a light or even a reflector on their bikes, which makes for an extremely dangerous situation at night or bad weather.

Legislation to introduce registration fees and license plates will no doubt be unpopular with the users of these vehicles, possibly payable by the 'untouchable' Gig employers, but I'm sure 90% of the population would applaud the decision. Compulsory education programs on proper use of all these vehicles should be part of such legislation, perhaps with a common sense certificate issued as well.

Something needs to be done, and soon.

### **Recommendations:**

- Strengthen helmet laws and enforce speed limits
- Designate dedicated e-vehicle lanes where feasible
- Introduce mandatory safety education for new riders
- Regulate manufacturing and charging standards for battery safety
- Promote public awareness campaigns on safe riding practices

**Conclusion:** While e-bikes and e-scooters offer a sustainable vision for urban mobility, their risks cannot be overlooked. By taking proactive measures, we can ensure these modern conveniences don't come at the cost of public safety.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]