Inquiry into e-mobility safety and use in Queensland

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Submission to the State Development, Infrastructure and Works Committee

Inquiry into E-Mobility Safety and Use in Queensland

Submitted by: Ross Powrie - Gold Coast Resident, Small business owner and member of the Gold Coast Bicycle User Group.
Date: 12/06/2025

I'm a father to a young family and a small business owner working in Allied Health as a Prosthetist, where I specialise in making and fitting artificial limbs. I use a pedal-assist e-bike for daily commuting and have lived experience as an active transport user.

I love riding my bike. It keeps me fit, it keeps me happy and gets me to the places I want to go quickly and affordably. Riding my e-bike lets me see my community at a more human speed. I'm not looking at it through a window and can have conversations with other people at traffic stops and crossings. I love how it changes the way I interact with my city, taking quieter routes that are more interesting and enjoyable rather than just the fastest route on Google Maps. I have ridden bikes all over the world and I am convinced that Queensland and specifically the Gold Coast could be a cycling mecca (we have the weather, the beaches and almost no steep hills).

I'm writing this submission in response to the Committee's questions, with the hope of highlighting the real and practical benefits that micromobility, particularly e-mobility, can bring to individuals, local communities, and the broader Queensland population.

Clarification of terms used:

When I discuss E-Mobility in this submission, I am referring to the current legal devices as detailed by the Queensland Government on the qld.gov.au/transport website

E-bikes – https://www.qld.gov.au/transport/safety/rules/wheeled-devices/electric-bicycle-rules

For an electric bike to be legally used on the road, it must have an electric motor and be one of the following:

- A bicycle with an electric motor or motors capable of generating no more than 200 watts of power in total, and the motor is pedal-assist only.
- An electrically power-assisted cycle is a bicycle with an electric motor capable of generating up to 250 watts of power, but the motor cuts out at 25km/h and the pedals must be used to keep the motor operating. Electrically power-assisted cycles must comply with the European Standard for Power Assisted Pedal Cycles (EN15194) and must have a permanent marking on it that shows it complies with this standard.

PMD's – https://www.qld.gov.au/transport/safety/rules/wheeled-devices/personal-mobility-devices

In Queensland, a personal mobility device must:

- be designed for use by one person only,
- fit the following dimensions:1,250mm long by 700mm wide by 1,350mm high or 700mm long by 1,250mm wide by 1,350mm high
- have a maximum weight of 60kg when not carrying a person or load
- be powered by an electric motor
- have 1 or more wheels.

1. ***Benefits of e-mobility (including both Personal Mobility Devices (PMDs), such as e-scooters and e-skateboards, as well as e-bikes) for Queensland;***

Having an external power source on e-bikes reduces the effort and inconvenience of getting around without a car. This helps us to travel further, travel faster and not end up as a hot sweaty mess when we get to our destinations.

Before buying our e-cargo bike, I had tried to commute by bicycle but found that not having a shower at work was a big issue in the summer. While the Gold Coast is mostly flat, there are two main hills on my route, and I regularly found cars would get aggravated and dangerously pass due to my slow climbing speed. I wasn't particularly fit when I started cycling to work (one of the reasons I started) and would skip days if it was too hot, too wet or I was feeling low. With the e-bike, I found I would choose to ride more often because the pedal assist helped maintain a constant speed regardless of slope and I was still getting much more exercise than driving.

One of the most nerve-wracking parts of cycling used to be taking off from traffic lights as I'd again find cars getting frustrated while I got up to speed. With the e-assist, I can very easily get to my 25km/h speed limit even with my daughter on the back, panniers full of shopping and going up a decent hill.

- **Improved First-and-Last Mile Connectivity (FLMC):**
    - E-mobility effectively fills gaps in the public transport system, offering convenient options for short trips (up to 10km).
    - By enabling easier access to bus stops, train stations, and ferry terminals, e-mobility enhances the reach and utility of public transport.
    - Note: **To fully realise this benefit,** the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) should consider upgrades such as:
        - Bike racks on buses
        - Additional space for bikes in train carriages
        - Allowing bikes on the G:link light rail
- **Reduced Traffic Congestion**
    - E-mobility devices occupy far less space than private cars, enabling a greater number of people to move through urban corridors efficiently.
    - This reduces congestion, particularly during peak travel times and school drop-off/pick up periods.
- **Flexible and Efficient Travel**
    - **In urban** centres, e-mobility can outperform cars in speed and reliability by utilising bike lanes, shared paths, and low-traffic routes.
- **Sustainable transport**:
    - E-mobility contributes to improved air quality by reducing vehicle emissions.
    - Quieter, lighter e-devices also cause less wear and tear on road surfaces compared to cars (both internal combustion and EVs) potentially reducing long-term road maintenance costs.
- **Improved access, affordability and independence:**
    - Provides an inclusive transport option for individuals who cannot drive, including younger people, older adults, and those with disabilities.
    - Lower upfront and ongoing costs make e-mobility a financially viable alternative to car ownership, helping reduce cost-of-living pressures.

Personal Experience as an Active Travel user:

Daily Life with an E-Bike - For the past three years, I've been using a pedal-assist cargo bike (a Tern GSD S00) for most of my local trips around the Gold Coast. It's been my go-to for everything from commuting and weekly grocery runs to taking my daughter to swimming lessons, daycare, and trips to local parks like Frescott and the Greenheart. We've even ridden it to local events like Blues on Broadbeach which we would never have done in the car. It's made these trips not just easier, but more fun and we find ourselves going to more places because we aren't worried about parking or traffic. We hardly ever use our car apart from longer distance trips or when we're going somewhere that has no safe route (Tallebudgera Creek and Burleigh Heads).

Avoiding Rush hour traffic - During the week, I can usually skip the long lines of traffic around Robina Town Centre, especially near the schools and busy intersections along Robina Town Centre Drive. With the e-bike, I can use shared paths and quieter backstreets, which means less time stuck in traffic and a very predictable trip. For example, my commute to work will consistently be 24mins where public transport can be up to an hour and the car can range from 10mins to 30mins depending on the time of day. The bike gives me more options and access to alternative routes.

Bike and Train for Longer Trips - A few times a month, I travel to Brisbane and the bike makes that easier too. I ride the 3 to 6 kilometres to the nearest train station, which is a bit too far to walk but not a distance that justifies driving or a taxi. This combination of biking and public transport works surprisingly well, even though the train system isn't really built with bikes in mind. Still, it's a stress-free way to avoid the M1 and its regular traffic accidents and dangerous drivers. There have been multiple times that an accident on the M1 has meant that I've had to cancel appointments on route to Brisbane because of the traffic delays.

How our E-Bike Helped Us Cut Costs - Beyond the convenience, switching to an e-bike has resulted in real financial savings for our household. By staying a one-car family, we've halved our vehicle-related expenses (fuel, registration, insurance, and maintenance) and now only need to fill up the car about once a month, compared to once a week. Additionally, we've opted for a Bicycle QLD family membership, which includes third-party insurance and peace of mind. We've saved thousands by avoiding car repayments, fuel costs, parking fees, and all the usual expenses that come with owning a second vehicle.

Sharing the Ride with My Daughter - What really makes it all worth it, though, is the time I get to spend with my daughter on the back of the bike. She loves the bike and climbs into it every time we go to leave the house. Riding through our neighbourhood or heading to the next suburb, she is able to see everything, points out familiar places, and loves guessing where we're going based on the streets we take. As a dad, it's important to me that my daughter grows up in a Gold Coast that's not only safe but also encourages sustainable, active transport and an appreciation for our naturally beautiful city.

I am hopeful that through inquiries like this we can continue building a future where e-mobility continues to offer Queensland families an accessible, environmentally friendly, and affordable alternative to car dependence.

2. *Safety issues associated with e-mobility use, including increasing crashes, injuries, fatalities, and community concerns;*

Enhancing safety for e-mobility users and pedestrians in Queensland's rapidly growing urban areas requires a holistic, multi-layered approach. This includes safer road and intersection design, human-scale infrastructure, inclusive policies prioritising the safety of all users, public education on the responsible use of vehicles and e-mobility devices, and targeted enforcement to address antisocial or dangerous behaviour.

The safety conflicts currently observed between e-bikes, PMDs, and pedestrians mirror the long-standing challenges faced by cyclists on the road. When significant differences in travel speed and user vulnerability exist along shared routes, the more vulnerable party, typically the slower-moving user, will feel unsafe. In the absence of protected, on-road bike infrastructure, less confident riders often relocate to footpaths, where they are placed in direct conflict with pedestrians.

Strategies to address these issues include:

- **Safer Infrastructure**
    - Protected bike lanes that are separated from both traffic and parked cars.
    - Bike-priority intersections: Use of coloured road surfaces, advance stop boxes, and dedicated bike traffic signals.
    - Connected cycling networks: Ensure continuous, direct bike routes without sudden ends or dangerous detours while linking up existing paths and lanes for easy transitions.
    - Wider, well-maintained footpaths: Safe for people of all ages and abilities with markings separating slower moving pedestrians from faster moving e-mobility and bikes.
    - Raised or signalised pedestrian crossings: Increases visibility and slows vehicle traffic.
    - Traffic calming: Speed humps, narrowed roads, and pedestrian refuge islands reduce vehicle speed in mixed zones.
    - Smart traffic signals that detect bikes and pedestrians to give them more time/priority.
- **Improved Regulation and Enforcement**
    - Lower Speed Limits: Reduce 50km/h speed limits to 30 km/h in high foot-traffic areas such as CBDs, school zones, and residential streets.
    - Stronger Enforcement: Increase penalties and improve community reporting mechanisms for dangerous or aggressive driving behaviour.
    - Clear PMD Guidelines: Provide signage and communication on where PMDs can be used, appropriate speed limits, and yielding responsibilities.
- **Public Education and Awareness**
    - Targeted safety campaigns: Promote awareness of shared space etiquette, right-of-way rules, and responsible behaviour for all road users.
    - School programs: Introduce pedestrian and cycling safety education from an early age.
    - Driver awareness: Campaigns for motorists on how to safely interact with cyclists and pedestrians (e.g., "1.5m passing rule") as an addition to demerit points and fines.
- **Supportive Policy and Urban Design**
    - Integrated land-use planning: Design communities where walking and cycling are natural and safe choices.
    - Prioritise vulnerable users: Shift planning and funding priorities towards non-motorised users.

Personal Experience as an Active Travel user:

While riding a pedal-assist e-bike on the Gold Coast has brought many benefits to my family (freedom, affordability, and a healthier lifestyle) it often feels far from safe. It's become clear to me that we still have a long way to go before active travel and e-mobility are truly accessible for people of all ages and confidence levels.

Fear of dangerous roads - When I first began commuting by e-bike, my wife was terrified I wouldn't make it home. She asked me to send a Google Maps link each time I rode, just to be sure I wasn't lying in an intersection. Sadly, this fear isn't unique to our household. Friends and colleagues have described cycling on the Gold Coast as a "death wish" which might sound extreme, but based on what I've experienced, I understand where they're coming from. **I genuinely believe many of the tensions we see between pedestrians and e-mobility users stem from the fact that our roads are too hostile for less confident riders, forcing them onto footpaths and shared paths.**

Bike Lanes That Suddenly Disappear - One of the biggest issues is the inconsistency of active travel infrastructure. A clear example is the route to our closest Woolworths at Reedy Creek. To get there, we must cross the highway via Stapley Drive and continue south on Old Coach Road where the marked bike lane abruptly disappears. There's no warning, no signage, and no access to a footpath, just a painted line that vanishes into fast-moving traffic. With my daughter on the back of the bike, I'm forced into a lane with cars traveling past at 60 km/h who often become frustrated, aggressive, or even hostile by revving engines, shouting, or dangerously close passing us just for being on the road.

Painted lines are not protection – Most of the Gold Coast's bike lanes are just that, paint. They offer no actual protection and are frequently unusable due to vehicles legally parked in them. This lack of physical protection from traffic traveling at 70km/h directly contributed to tragedy last year. [redacted] My daughter and I pass his roadside memorial each day. This road remains the only direct pedestrian and bike connection between Robina and Mudgeeraba, and it's heavily used by schoolchildren attending Robina State School. Eight months have passed, and still, nothing has changed to improve safety on that stretch despite multiple conversations with local council and state government.

50km/h speeds are too fast for residential and narrow roads – Many of the roads we travel daily are narrow, residential streets with parked cars lining both sides. Yet they remain signed at 50 km/h. We've been close passed by drivers trying to squeeze past, revved at, shouted at, and even spat on for being on the road. We've reported these incidents through the police online portal, but there's been little follow-up. If e-mobility devices are legally limited to 25 km/h, it makes sense that this should be the speed limit on the very roads where these users are most likely to be found.

Intersections Are Really Risky - Most of my near misses have occurred at intersections. A recent example is the upgrade at Robina Town Centre Drive and Laver Drive. The previous roundabout was far from perfect, but at least it had active travel lanes in all directions. The new intersection has removed those entirely. There is no consideration for safe on-road travel heading east-west, and the design actively pushes riders onto narrow footpaths putting them in direct conflict with pedestrians. We've simply replaced one danger with another and are surprised we get complaints about e-mobility on footpaths.

3. *Issues associated with e-mobility ownership, such as risk of fire, storage and disposal of lithium batteries used in emobility, and any consideration of mitigants or controls;*

As the adoption of e-mobility devices (such as e-bikes and e-scooters) increases, concerns around battery safety, particularly related to fire risk, storage, and end-of-life disposal, are valid and require attention. However, it is essential to view these concerns in context.

Internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles carry significantly larger quantities of flammable fuel and electric vehicles (EVs) use far larger battery systems, both of which present higher energy densities and, in many cases, more severe fire risks in the event of malfunction or collision.

In contrast, the batteries used in e-mobility devices are relatively small, and with proper regulation, education, and infrastructure, these risks can be effectively managed and significantly reduced.

Key risk areas include:

- Fire Safety: While battery fires are rare, poorly manufactured or damaged batteries can pose a hazard, particularly in enclosed spaces.
- Storage & Charging: Safe storage and charging infrastructure are needed, especially in high-density residential settings or workplaces.
- Battery Disposal: The growing volume of lithium batteries highlights the need for clear end-of-life pathways to prevent environmental harm.

Mitigation Strategies:

- Establish national and state-level safety standards for battery manufacturing, import, and device certification.
- Launch public education campaigns on safe charging, handling, and maintenance of e-mobility devices.
- Support the development of secure, ventilated charging stations in apartment blocks, workplaces, and public infrastructure.
- Develop coordinated battery recycling programs, including partnerships with manufacturers, councils, and local bike retailer with clear community communication on disposal locations.
- Update building codes and planning guidelines to reflect the infrastructure needs of micro-mobility users.

When comparing E-Mobility batteries to EV batteries:

- E-bike batteries use approximately 1/100th of the raw materials required for a typical EV battery dramatically reducing demand for critical minerals.
- Smaller batteries are easier to handle, store and disassemble presenting a lower fire risk and making them safer for residential and commercial use.
- E-mobility devices require less time and energy to charge while being significantly more energy efficient per kilometre offering a lightweight, low-power alternative for urban and local travel.
- Their compact size and modularity make e-bike batteries well-suited for second life uses such as portable power packs or home storage systems.
- The environmental and economic costs of reusing or recycling e-bike batteries are considerably lower, allowing for community-level recycling programs through local councils and bike shops.

Personal Experience as an Active Travel user:

Considerations on the battery system prior to purchasing my e-bike: Battery safety was a major factor in our decision-making process when purchasing an e-bike. After researching extensively through online articles and YouTube reviews, we chose a reputable brand (BOSCH) due to its proven track record in quality and expertise in e-bike battery technology. The assurance that their systems meet rigorous international safety standards, and include built-in protections against overheating and malfunction, provided genuine peace of mind. This significantly reduced any concerns I had about battery fires and made me feel confident not only in the bike's performance but also in its long-term safety and reliability.

Positive personal experience: As someone who's owned an e-bike for over three years now, I can honestly say my experience with battery safety and charging has been nothing but positive. I've never had any issues with overheating, fire risk, or storage problems. Right from the start, I made a point of following the manufacturer's guidelines, not just for safety, but also to protect the bike and keep long-term costs down.

Safe charging habits: I always use the charger that came with the bike, avoid overcharging, and store it in a dry, well-ventilated space away from heat (my garage). I also stick to the maintenance schedule, including battery checks and software updates. It's straightforward, and doing these things gives me peace of mind that everything is running safely and efficiently.

Accessible charging options: I understand that not everyone has a garage where they can charge their batteries however there are many e-mobility options that have easily removable and portable battery packs that can be taken to a separate location for charging.

My perspective on battery risk: Yes, lithium batteries can pose risks if they're misused, but honestly, I treat my e-bike battery the same way I do my phone or laptop. Be smart, follow the instructions, and you're unlikely to have problems.

Concerns with media portrayal: I find a lot of the media coverage around e-bikes so frustrating. It often focuses on worst-case scenarios, like battery fires, without much context. Most of those incidents involve poor-quality parts, unofficial modifications, or people not using reputable products responsibly. The reporting often feels more like fearmongering than anything helpful.

Call for better public messaging: Of course, safety is important, and I'm all for raising awareness. But instead of painting e-bikes as dangerous, we should be focusing on how to use them safely, promoting education, good practices, and proper disposal of batteries. For me and many others, e-bikes are a safe, reliable, and sustainable way to get around. They deserve better than the panic-driven headlines we often see.

End-of-life battery disposal: When it comes to recycling my e-bikes battery at it's end of life, I intend to replace it and either return the old one to the manufacturer for recycling or use a local B-cycle drop off location.

4. Suitability of current regulatory frameworks for PMDs and ebikes, informed by approaches in Australia and internationally;

As PMDs and e-bikes continue to grow in popularity across Queensland, ensuring a safe, consistent, and future-focused regulatory framework is essential. E-mobility holds significant promise in addressing urban challenges offering the potential to ease congestion, lower emissions, and provide more inclusive, accessible transport options. However, these benefits can only be fully realised through supportive and well-structured governance.

Delays in adoption or policies that restrict or stigmatise e-mobility risk undermining progress. They can divert investment back toward inefficient transport options, such as private vehicles, ultimately increasing household costs (including the purchase, maintenance, insurance, and registration of vehicles) and placing greater strain on public infrastructure through ongoing road construction and maintenance needs.

A coordinated, multi-tiered approach across local, state, and federal governments is vital to create a cohesive policy environment. Queensland already demonstrates several positive regulatory elements, including:

- **Clear device categorisation**, distinguishing legal e-bikes from prohibited high-powered or throttle-only devices.
- **Mandatory helmet laws and speed limits**, forming a basic safety framework.
- **Public education campaigns**, promoting awareness of PMD etiquette and rules.
- **Pilot programs for shared e-scooter and e-bike schemes**, enabling localised trials and scalability.
- **Data-sharing requirements for these share schemes**, helping integrate operations into broader transport planning and identify transport corridors favoured by users.

While there have been commendable efforts to incorporate e-mobility into Queensland's transport ecosystem, several significant barriers still hinder widespread adoption:

Limitations and Challenges

- **Fragmented National Regulation,** Inconsistent rules between states, such as those between New South Wales and Queensland, create confusion, particularly in border regions like the southern Gold Coast. The absence of a unified federal standard for PMD classifications and import safety undermines the development of a cohesive national approach.
- **Inconsistent messaging and enforcement of illegal modifications** The identification, regulation and enforcement of modified devices, **such** as overpowered or throttle-controlled e-bikes, remains inconsistent across jurisdictions. This lack of clarity contributes to public confusion and, more concerningly, can escalate tensions on shared pathways and roads. Legal e-mobility users are at risk of being unfairly associated with non-compliant or unsafe riders, potentially leading to road aggression or vigilante-style confrontations.
- **Lack of Integration with Transport Strategy,** PMDs and e-bikes are often viewed as novelty or recreational tools rather than being recognised as legitimate components of an integrated, multimodal transport system. This perception limits their potential contribution to long-term sustainability and mobility goals.

Personal Experience as an Active Travel user:

I think Queensland has made a solid start when it comes to e-mobility. There are clear rules about what's legal like helmet laws, speed limits, and guidelines around which devices are road legal and which aren't. These measures give people a basic understanding of how to ride safely and within the law.

Confusing Rules Across State Borders There are still a few things that could really use improvement. One of the biggest issues is the inconsistency between states. Living near the Queensland/NSW border, I often come up against the confusion that comes with different rules just a few kilometres apart. It makes it harder for riders to feel confident.

E-Bikes and PMDs seen as the same: There's a lot of misunderstanding around the rules for e-bikes versus PMDs. People often group them together, but they are different in how they function, where they're allowed, and what's considered legal. I've had plenty of conversations, even with friends and family who ride, where they weren't totally sure of the differences. That kind of confusion isn't helpful, and it can make responsible riders feel uncertain or even unfairly stigmatised.

The Impact of Modified and Non-Compliant Devices: Another thing that's frustrating is how modified or illegal e-bikes are handled. I do my best to follow the rules and keep my e-bike fully compliant, but I've still had moments where I've been treated with hostility just because someone else chose to ride something that doesn't meet legal standards. I've had uncomfortable encounters on shared paths where people assumed my bike was unsafe, even though it's well within legal limits. It's disheartening and unnecessary. I've noticed myself hesitating when asked if I ride an e-bike as the term seems to be picking up a bit of a stigma. Instead, I usually refer to it as a "pedal-assist" or "cargo bike". This wording tends to spark genuine curiosity from folk rather than sarcastic remarks about whether I'm popping wheelies down the street.

E-mobility as a daily transportation option: We also need to move away from the idea that e-bikes and e-scooters are just "toys" or something only young people use for fun. They are serious transportation options and if we included them properly in transportation planning, with things like safer bike paths, more secure parking, and better links to public transportation, they could help a lot more people get around without relying on a car.

Let's support responsible riders and real progress: At the end of the day, I just want to see a system that supports people who are doing the right thing and helps more people feel safe and confident using e-mobility. It's a smart, simple part of the transportation solution we need and this inquiry is a fantastic opportunity to shift the conversation away from fear and misinformation and instead towards open communication and real progress.

5. ***Effectiveness of current enforcement approaches and powers to address dangerous riding behaviours and the use of illegal devices;***

- Law enforcement resources are finite and must be deployed in proportion to the severity and impact of offences. While dangerous riding behaviours and the use of illegal e-mobility devices are concerning, over-prioritising these issues could compromise police effectiveness in addressing more serious offences such as domestic violence, drug crime, and high-risk traffic incidents.
- Though dangerous riding on footpaths or in public spaces is highly visible, especially in dense urban areas, other road user behaviours pose far greater risks. These include mobile phone use while driving, excessive speeding, tailgating, and brake-checking, which are leading contributors to serious crashes, injuries to pedestrians and cyclists, and substantial damage to public and private property.
- Police representatives have explained that engaging in pursuits of e-mobility users, many of whom are minors, requires careful risk assessment. Pursuits can escalate danger not only for the rider but also for pedestrians and other road users, often outweighing the benefit of immediate apprehension.
- The idea that registration would resolve unsafe e-mobility use assumes voluntary compliance by the very individuals currently flouting existing laws. High-powered and throttle-only e-bikes are already illegal yet widely used. Broadening registration requirements may inadvertently penalise lawful users without improving safety outcomes.

Implementing a comprehensive registration scheme for e-bikes and PMDs presents numerous legal, social, and practical barriers:

- **High administrative costs** to establish and maintain a system covering millions of private devices that includes the databases, identification plates, and enforcement tools.
- **Little/no evidence that visible plates on e-mobility would change behaviour:** All cars currently require registration plates and despite this we still experience poor driver behaviour. I was unable to find any data to support the stance that Registration improves safety.
- **Equity concerns**, as registration could discourage low-income users, young people, and non-drivers from accessing sustainable transport.
- **Disincentivises uptake**, particularly for casual, first-time, or eco-conscious riders.
- **International experience shows minimal safety benefit**, with many schemes ultimately abandoned due to low compliance, high costs, and limited enforcement impact.
- **Legal complexity**, requiring alignment between local, state, and federal laws, with added concerns around data privacy and jurisdiction.

Rather than mandating registration, more practical and equitable approaches include:

- Enforcing clear classification standards to distinguish legal vs illegal devices.
- Targeted enforcement of unsafe or modified e-mobility devices.
- Public education campaigns focused on rider responsibility and shared-path etiquette.
- Data-sharing agreements with shared-mobility providers to monitor trends and inform enforcement.
- Investing in safe, connected infrastructure that supports predictable, visible, and lawful use of e-mobility.

Personal Experience as an Active Travel user:

Enforcement Needs to Focus on the Most Serious Risks - As someone who rides an e-bike every day I've seen firsthand the range of behaviour from both riders and drivers. Unsafe riding, especially on footpaths or in crowded areas, is a problem and should be addressed. But in my experience, the real danger doesn't come from the odd reckless e-bike rider, it comes overwhelmingly from impatient and distracted drivers.

I've lost count of the times I've nearly been sideswiped by a car drifting into the bike lane while the driver checks their phone. I've had drivers aggressively overtake or squeeze past me, only to slam on the brakes at the next red light. I've been tailgated, honked at, and cut off simply for taking up my legal space on the road. Compare that to the rare reckless e-bike rider which can be annoying or inconsiderate, but the risk they pose is usually to themselves, or it results in near-misses, not multi-tonne collisions.

If we're serious about public safety, enforcement should focus on the behaviours that actually cause harm. From what I've experienced, the most serious threats to pedestrians, cyclists, and other road users come from dangerous driving behaviours. Those are the actions that put lives at risk every single day, and that's where our limited resources should be focused.

Balancing Enforcement with Youth Engagement: Through my involvement with the Mudgeeraba Police Community Consultative Committee (MPCCC) and attending the Safe Pathways town hall meeting in Elanora, I've had valuable conversations with local police officers about these issues and heard how thoughtfully they approach enforcement, particularly when it involves school-aged children who often ride e-bikes. They note how pursuing or harshly penalising young riders can easily damage trust between young people and law enforcement, a relationship that should be built on safety, not fear. Instead, they outline a more productive approach is supporting education, open conversations, and encouraging safe riding habits through community engagement first.

Why Registration Schemes Aren't the Solution - I'm not convinced that registration schemes for e-bikes and PMDs are the solution. This idea often comes from the perception that cyclists don't contribute to road funding yet most road infrastructure is actually paid for through council rates and broader taxes like the GST, not vehicle registration fees. Riders like myself, who follow the rules and ride legally, would be unfairly burdened by a system that's unlikely to reach those riding illegal or modified devices. Realistically, those who are already ignoring current laws won't line up to register under a new scheme. That leaves us with added administrative complexity for Transport and Main Roads (TMR), extra costs for users, and a reduced incentive for people to choose e-mobility as a viable alternative to cars.

Smarter Alternatives to Improve Safety: Instead of investing in complex systems with limited payoff, I believe we should focus on approaches that genuinely improve safety and support responsible users. That means clearer classification of legal devices, consistent enforcement against unsafe or non-compliant bikes, and public education about responsible riding and path-sharing.

Ultimately, enforcement should support rather than discourage people who are choosing clean, safe, and cost-effective ways to get around. E-mobility has a vital role to play in reducing traffic, lowering emissions, and improving accessibility. What we need is a balanced, forward-thinking strategy: one that keeps our communities safe while unlocking the many benefits of active and sustainable transportation.

6. ***Gaps between Commonwealth and Queensland laws that allow illegal devices to be imported and used;***

My experience with the legal framework surrounding the importation of illegal e-mobility devices, particularly the intersection between Commonwealth and Queensland law, is limited.
However, in researching this issue to better inform my perspective, I found that the **Position Statement from Bicycle Queensland** reflects my views accurately and provides a clear, balanced approach to the challenges at hand. I respectfully recommend that the Committee consider this statement in its deliberations.

The full statement is available here: https://bq.org.au/advocacy-statement/#highpoweredebikes

To summarise:

"Under current Queensland laws, pedal-assist e-bikes are regulated by the EN15194:2017 standard, limiting motor assistance to 250W continuous power with a speed cut-off at 25km/h. These e-bikes are considered bicycles and are subject to the same rules and responsibilities as traditional pedal-powered bicycles.

However, high-powered e-bikes, defined as having motor outputs exceeding 250W or lacking a speed restriction (often exceeding 25km/h) are not appropriately regulated under current cycling or vehicle laws. These devices are often sold without adequate public awareness of their legal classification, leading to confusion and potential safety hazards."

To address this, BQ advocates for:

1. **Reintroduce restrictions on the importation** of high-powered e-bikes.
2. **Restrict on-line and in-person sales** of e-bikes which don't meet the Australian Standard based on EN15194
3. **Public Education** including providing clear guidance on how to distinguish a legal e-bike from an illegal one.
4. **Speed governing reinstatement;** suggests that existing non-legal devices are returned to the place of purchase to have the speed governed, and throttles removed.
5. **Enforcement:** QPS and TMR officers receive training and operational capacity to recognise, test and enforce regulation of high-powered vehicles.
6. **Exemptions for disability sector and for use on private property:** There is a need for specialist e-bikes suitable for those with a disability, that may require features such as a throttle etc. This will require an exemption, similar to those who wish to legitimately use high-powered e-bikes on their own property should be required to gain approval on a case-by-case basis from the Department of Transport and Main Roads that precludes their use in public spaces.

7. Communication and education about device requirements, rules, and consequences for unsafe use; and

After reading the *myPolice Queensland Police News* post on **Operation ELEKTRA (June 2, 2025)**, it is evident that there is a need for a more targeted public education campaign to improve awareness of e-bike and PMD regulations, safe operating practices, and the legal consequences of unsafe or illegal use.

(https://mypolice.qld.gov.au/news/2025/06/02/operation-elektra-deployment-results-gold-coast/)

"A lot of the young people we spoke to simply didn't know what the rules were for e-bikes and scooters. That's why we're taking an education-first approach – issuing QR codes linking directly to the relevant legislation,"

A Long-Term Investment in Culture Change - I've experienced a troubling attitude on the Gold Coast, and more broadly in Australia, where it's socially acceptable to treat people outside of cars as less than human, simply because they choose not to drive. While this attitude is bad enough on social media, I've also experienced it in community meetings and on the streets, where some find it funny to joke about running over bikes or e-scooters to "solve the e-bike problem." I personally find this attitude towards another person unacceptable and dangerous; what begins as a joke can quickly turn into harmful attitudes and even lead to real-world consequences like injuries or vigilante behaviour. Changing this culture is a long-term investment that starts by calling out disrespectful language and fostering a shared respect for all road users regardless of how they travel.

School programs as a starting point - Focusing on the next generation of Queenslanders through school programs could have a massive impact on the occurrence of reckless riding among both young people and adults. Bringing bike safety and proficiency training into schools, with regular refreshers and age-appropriate follow-up for older students, would encourage safe riding habits from a young age. It's not just about teaching kids how to ride, it's about helping them understand how to ride responsibly, how to share space with others, and why their choices matter. Changing community attitudes is a long term strategy and will require funding commitment from the State Government and buy-in from Education Queensland and the Private Schools.

Age-Appropriate Learning - By introducing these lessons early, we can shape attitudes before bad habits take root. For younger kids, this might mean learning basic safety skills like using hand signals or checking for cars before crossing a street. For older students, the focus can shift to understanding the rules around e-bikes and scooters, recognising the risks of reckless behaviour, and thinking about how their riding affects other people.

The Power of Empathy - Empathy-based messaging can really strengthen this. Instead of just telling kids what not to do, we can help them see things from someone else's perspective. For example, comparing how a pedestrian feels when a bike rushes past them on a footpath to how a cyclist feels when a car speeds by too closely. That kind of message helps build understanding and respect between different road and path users.

More Than Just Safety - School programs are about more than just safety, they're about building a culture where riding is seen as something positive, respectful, and responsible. With the right support, schools can play a huge role in reducing risky behaviour and helping the next generation of riders make better, safer choices.

8. *Broad stakeholder perspectives, including from community members, road user groups, disability advocates, health and trauma experts, academia, the e-mobility industry, and all levels of government*.

I believe I bring valuable insight from several perspectives: as a father to a young family, a daily e-bike rider, a small business owner in the disability sector, and an active advocate for improved active transport through my involvement with the Gold Coast Bicycle Users Group (BUG).

As a community member with a young child: - I'm concerned about the safety of footpaths and shared paths, especially as they often cannot accommodate the differing speeds of walkers, runners, and e-mobility users. The current road design in our community prioritises car speed over everything including pedestrian safety. As a father, I worry about my daughter's future independence. I'd love to see her ride or walk to school one day, but our streets just aren't safe enough for that right now.

As a family we love going to the beach and use the Oceanway once we're there but the incomplete layout and lack of separation between us and people traveling through on faster bikes and scooters has me worried about my daughter's safety. A much better designed example is that in Cairns, where there are multiple different paths including an on road protected bike lane, a small path close to the road that runners use and a slower, wider shared path by the water for pedestrians and dog walkers.

As a daily e-bike rider: - I love my e-bike but there is always a thought in my head when I head out that today I may not get back home in one piece. Before my daughter, I was a lot less worried about my own safety but now she's here I am getting more aware of the urgent need for safer travel routes. Ideally, I'd love to travel further up the coast to Main Beach to visit friends but not being able to put the bikes on the G:link tram makes this impossible. I recently participated in the GC30 running event up the Spit and couldn't believe there was no way to get there without a car. I ended up taking an Uber and got caught in the chaos coming up Seaworld Dr. If I had been in my own car and had to find a park, I'd have missed out on the event!

Business owner working in the disability sector – There is also an urgent need for transport infrastructure that is truly inclusive. Many people with disabilities cannot drive or walk long distances. Footpaths need to be safer and more accessible, not just for pedestrians, but for people using motorised wheelchairs and e-mobility devices. I regularly see how difficult it is for clients to schedule appointments during peak traffic times, and how poorly the current infrastructure serves those with mobility limitations. A lot of my clients use e-bikes to keep up with their families and get around the coast. Many are not able to hold a driving license due to their injuries and e-mobility gives them back their freedom. Due to their amputations, the pedal assist helps with changing terrain and slopes while other have found a low speed throttle assist to 6km/h helps get them started and balanced. Our client base are a historically isolated demographic and there is a real opportunity for these new technologies to help them get out of the house.

Member of the Gold Coast Bicycle User Group – I know I'm not alone in these concerns. There is a growing and passionate community of advocates on the Gold Coast calling for safer, more equitable streets. Together, we're pushing for changes that will benefit not just cyclists, but families, people with disabilities, and anyone who wants to get around safely without a car. E-mobility is a critical technology to get more people out and moving more often.

Conclusion

Thank you for taking the time to read my submission.

I believe active transport is an excellent and highly underutilised mode of transportation in our state. Several factors contribute to this including unsafe road conditions and a lack of dedicated infrastructure to support it. As a result, many e-mobility users are forced onto footpaths creating unnecessary conflict with pedestrians.

By investing in safe, accessible, and well-designed options for active travel supported by public education I believe we can encourage greater uptake with more conscientious and courteous users. This would not only help people move more freely and sustainably but also eases congestion on our roads and improve the safety for all users.

I appreciate the work that our State Representatives have done to bring attention to this inquiry and hope the responses provide opportunities for further discussion and a de-escalation of tensions on our pathways and streets.

As I hope you can see from the above, this is a topic I'm very passionate about. Many of the ideas I've shared are from advocacy groups and background reading/watching that I've been exploring over the past few years. Notable sources include:

- Strong Towns (a US based advocacy group) https://www.strongtowns.org/
- The Better Streets Australia community https://www.betterstreets.org.au/
- Bicycle Queensland online and in-person meetings https://bq.org.au/advocacy/
- A selection of YouTube channels that focus on e-mobility and urban planning:
    - Shifter - https://www.youtube.com/@Shifter_Cycling
    - People for Bikes - https://www.youtube.com/@peopleforbikes
    - Not Just Bikes - https://www.youtube.com/c/notjustbikes
    - GCN - https://www.youtube.com/@gcn
    - Nic the Door - https://www.youtube.com/@nicthedoor
    - Oh the Urbanity - https://www.youtube.com/@OhTheUrbanity
- Some specific YouTube videos that are specific on this inquiry questions:
    - **Road Rage Is Getting Worse. Here's What To Do About** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wmUP8OH50E0
    - **Should E-bikes Have License Plates?** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CQwopjbMxoU –
    - **Here's What Happens When You Prioritize Kids Over Cars** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nx7WtIAt9RM

I would be very interested in being part of any follow up public consultation or stakeholder discussions that come from the inquiry.

Thank you for your time,

Gold Coast, QLD