

Inquiry into e-mobility safety and use in Queensland

Submission No:	1052
Submitted by:	Andrew Vickers
Publication:	Making the submission and your name public
Attachments:	See attachment
Submitter Comments:	

Dear Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the inquiry into personal e-mobility devices.

I acknowledge the growing concerns regarding the rise in accidents and the proliferation of illegal or overpowered personal e-mobility devices, which pose risks to riders, pedestrians, and other road users. Though the inquiry covers all electric mobility devices, including scooters, skateboards, and e-bikes; I will focus solely on e-bikes in this submission.

E-bikes, in particular, should be considered a distinct class from scooters and skateboards due to their unique versatility, and potential as a sustainable transport solution. Rather than imposing stricter bans on these devices, I urge the government to create clear and separate guidelines to regulate their safe and responsible use.

As a concerned citizen and advocate for sustainable transport, I wish to provide input specifically regarding the regulation and use of electric bicycles (e-bikes) to enhance their accessibility and utility while ensuring safety and compliance with road regulations.

PROPOSAL:

Allowing More Powerful E-Bikes for Road Use with Licensing and Registration

I ask that the committee consider recommending amendments to existing regulations to permit the use of more powerful e-bikes on public roads and to use them in road speed zones higher than 50kph, aligning their regulatory framework with that of traditional motor-powered scooters. This could involve introducing a tiered classification system based on the e-bike's top speed and power output, requiring appropriate licensing and registration to ensure safe and responsible use.

Rationale

E-bikes are an environmentally friendly, cost-effective, and accessible mode of transport that can reduce reliance on fossil fuel-powered vehicles, alleviate traffic congestion, and promote healthier lifestyles. However, current regulations limit e-bikes to relatively low power outputs (e.g., 200W) and top speeds (e.g., 25 km/h), and restrict their use to roads with speed limits of 50 km/h or less (a restriction not applied to traditional bicycles). These limitations may not meet the needs of all users, particularly those requiring faster or longer commutes.

By allowing more powerful e-bikes capable of higher speeds, the government can provide a practical alternative to fully fledged electric motorcycles, which may be cost-prohibitive or require more extensive licensing. This proposal bridges the gap between low-power e-bikes

and electric motorcycles, offering greater flexibility for commuters while maintaining a lightweight, efficient, and eco-friendly transport option.

SUGGESTED REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

To ensure safety and compliance, I propose the following framework for more powerful e-bikes:

Tiered Classification Based on Speed and Power:

- Standard E-Bikes: Retain most existing limits (e.g., 200W, 25 km/h, no license required) for general use, while allowing e-bikes to travel on roads with speed limits above 50 km/h, aligning with traditional bicycles.
- High-Power E-Bikes: Introduce a new category for e-bikes with higher power outputs subject to additional requirements.

Licensing Requirements:

- High-power e-bikes should require a license, with a standard car license potentially sufficient (similar to moped or scooter regulations). A graduated licensing system tied to the e-bike's top speed could be implemented, with a motorcycle license required for significantly more powerful e-bikes, or throttle-controlled models that do not require pedalling.

Registration and Insurance:

- High-power e-bikes should be registered with relevant authorities, including a visible number plate for identification.
- Consideration should be given to requiring basic third-party insurance to cover potential accidents, aligning with moped/scooter regulations.

Safety Standards:

- High-power e-bikes must meet safety standards, including a speedometer, functional brakes, lights, reflectors, and helmets for riders.
- Requiring registration and licensing for high-power e-bikes ensures riders are of a certain age, are accountable through identifiable number plates, and receive training on safe road use.

Road Use Guidelines:

- High-power e-bikes should be permitted on roads without restriction, with speeds limited for designated bike paths and lanes.

- Clear signage and/or public education campaigns should inform riders and other road users of the rules.

Benefits

- Accessibility: Provides an affordable, eco-friendly transport option for individuals who need faster or longer commutes without purchasing a motorcycle or travelling in a larger vehicle.
- Environmental Impact: Encourages the adoption of electric vehicles, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and urban air pollution.
- Safety and Compliance: Licensing, registration, and safety standards ensure responsible use and accountability.
- Economic Opportunities: Supports the growth of the e-bike industry, including manufacturing, sales, and maintenance.

Conclusion

By allowing more powerful e-bikes for road use with appropriate licensing and registration, the government can unlock the potential of e-bikes as a versatile, sustainable transport solution. This proposal balances innovation with safety, offering a practical alternative to traditional vehicles while supporting environmental and economic goals.

Thank you for considering this submission.