


Inquiry into e-mobility safety and use in Queensland

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1. Use of e-mobility devices

We live in large spread-out cities. Traffic will only become worse as the years go on and our population grows so we need to utilise as many forms of quick and convenient forms of transport as we can. Scooters are great for quick short commutes while bikes are well suited for longer journeys. We need to encourage the use of both forms of transport.

2. Safety and Human Nature

e-Scooters

Silently whizzing in and around pedestrians at speed is most definitely unsafe. Using these devices above the current speed limits set is unsafe. Every point brought up in the news about doubling and not wearing helmets are all causes for concern.

I do however believe that the current set of laws are correct. Current speed limits of 12kph on footpaths and 25kph on bike paths and roads. Lower these limits and regulate e-scooter use and we will legislate the use into non-existence.

There will always be a minority of people that will not obey the law and continue improper use of e-scooters. Legislation will never stop that. You only have to look at how many drivers speed, run red lights etc.

e-bikes

The same points apply to e-bikes as e-scooters with a few exceptions that I believe would greatly assist safety when it comes to riding on the road.

I have been riding all my life and while our bike paths and lanes are improving, they are nowhere near a level that would allow non interaction with traffic on very busy roads for users commuting to work or recreation. I have ridden all forms of bikes over the years and have recently switched to an e-bike. My journey takes me along Wynnum Road and many other busy roads.

While using a road bike I was easily able to maintain upwards of 35kph average for my journeys keeping up and out of the way of most traffic while also not being an inconvenience for the drivers.

Since switching to an e-bike and being limited to 25kph on the road has changed that. Suddenly you are a hazard for cars trying to pass as they need to slow down from 70kph to a crawl until there is sufficient space to pass. Accelerating from those slower speeds means gaps need to be larger and therefore more hold up for traffic.

The current laws are a detriment in certain situations and need to be reviewed.

3. Solutions

e-scooters

Current laws are correct and should not be changed. What we need to look at are the importers and shops selling devices that are capable of being ridden illegally and stop the import and sale of these items.

e-bikes

We need to change the speed limit for e-bikes being used on the road. Basing our limits on the EU does not make sense in a country more spread out. New Zealand have chosen the correct direction.

“New Zealand supports E-Bikes with motors of a maximum sustained power output of 250 watts and a maximum speed of 32km/h for off-road models, and of up to 45km/h for models designed for road use.”

I think this would be a great solution. A person with a driver's license should be able to ride on the road at these speeds as it would aid traffic flow and provide a safer and quicker commute. Pedal assistance only though, no throttle devices.

You would again see the minority of people doing the wrong thing, but this would be policed as we currently police car drivers etc.

New Zealand has a study posted providing a good resource for e-mobility matters

<https://www.nzta.govt.nz/resources/research/reports/621/>

We would still need to look at the importers and sellers of equipment used to convert bikes into motorbikes and change the loop hole with regards to retailers selling items with the “Only to be used on private property” wording.