

Inquiry into e-mobility safety and use in Queensland

Submission No:	1148
Submitted by:	Pedestrian Council of Australia Ltd
Publication:	Making the submission and your name public
Attachments:	See attachment
Submitter Comments:	



PEDESTRIAN COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

Health – Safety – Access - Amenity

The Walking Class

Patron: The Honourable Dame Quentin Bryce AD CVO

SUBMISSION – E-BIKES AND E-SCOOTERS INQUIRY – 20 JUNE 2025

Introduction

The Queensland government is to be commended for finally waking up to the chaos on our streets and footpaths. The explosion of e-scooters, e-bikes, and other electric Rideables has turned our public spaces into a free-for-all, with tragic consequences. Recent deaths—such as the Perth father killed by an e-scooter ridden by a drunk tourist, the Melbourne man killed by a souped-up e-bike travelling at 90 km/h, and the three-year-old child struck on the Gold Coast—are just the tip of a deadly iceberg¹²³. The police themselves admit: most e-bikes have been illegally modified; enforcement is patchy at best; and the public is paying the price.

First, please watch these recent videos:

SA Police Commissioner wants e-Scooters off footpaths:

https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/71xhvtv4w1ksbe5hnp6t/Sky-News-e-Scooters-Police-Commissioner-e-Scooters-off-footpaths-250614-IMG_6406.MOV?rlkey=tfh53asdisx6fceooyzimev60&dl=0

NSW Police Sgt states that most e-Bikes have been modified, especially those of Uber-Eats and schoolchildren:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tg6NQKVFuoo>

The Crisis: Out of Control and Uninsured

- **No Insurance, No Justice:** The family of the Perth victim will receive nothing—no compensation, no support. This is the reality for anyone injured by an e-rideable: you are on your own. Absurdly, if the victim had been hit by an unregistered, uninsured, stolen motor-bike being ridden by an unlicensed rider, the family would receive compensation under the CTP scheme.
- **Police Overwhelmed:** Police confirm that the vast majority of e-bikes are illegal, modified to remove pedals and operate as unregistered, uninsured motorcycles.

Yet, despite thousands of complaints, not a single penalty notice has been issued for failing to give way to pedestrians on footpaths.

- **Pedestrians at Risk:** The footpath, once a sanctuary for children, the elderly, and people with disabilities, is now a no-go zone. Vision Australia reports that over 90% of its members feel unsafe walking due to the threat of silent, fast-moving e-Rideables. The highest cause of avoidable death after 50 years of age is a fall. Ensure Councils proclaim all area of high pedestrian activity as dismount zones, allow Rangers to assist Police with enforcement, especially as children under 16 can ride on all footpaths and are in many cases the worst offenders. Enforce the law that all e-Rideables including ordinary bicycles riders must dismount at pedestrian crossings.

The e-Vehicles: All the Same, All Dangerous

- **E-Scooters, E-Bikes, and the Blurred Line:** The distinction between e-scooters and e-bikes is meaningless. An e-scooter with a saddle is functionally identical to a modified e-bike—only the wheel size differs. The RACQ's suggestion of saddled e-scooters ignores the fact that these vehicles are merging into a single, dangerous class. We must be curious and plan for the future.
- **Futureproofing:** Technology is advancing faster than regulation. Tomorrow's e-Rideables will be faster, heavier, and even harder to control. We must act now to prevent a future where our footpaths are overrun by high-speed, unregistered vehicles.
- **Shared Paths:** The speed limit (unless sign-posted) on a Shared Path is the same as the adjacent road. This is patently absurd. There must be a default speed limit of 10 km/h on ALL shared paths unless otherwise sign-posted.

The Solution: Back to Basics

The NSW Electric Scooter Advisory Committee got it right in 2020. Their recommendations (attached) were supported unanimously by police, councils, disability advocates, and transport experts. Our original submission was ignored by the then Queensland government, with disastrous results – over 8 e-Scooter deaths last year and a veritable tsunami of serious injuries, all paid for by the taxpayer. We must not repeat those mistakes. Here's what we need:

1. **Minimum Age 17 with a Licence:** Only licensed, trained riders should operate these vehicles.
2. **Number Plates:** Every e-rideable must be identifiable for enforcement and insurance purposes. Police cannot be expected to chase these vehicles. It's too dangerous for all road (and footpath) users.
3. **Comprehensive Insurance:** No one should be left uncompensated after a crash. Insurance must be mandatory.

4. **Maximum Speed on Shared Paths: 10 km/h:** Any higher is reckless. Queensland's 25 km/h experiment led to carnage.
5. **Ban All E-Rideables from Footpaths:** Footpaths are for pedestrians, not vehicles.
6. **Penalties That Reflect the Risk:** Current fines are a joke. Penalties must match the potential for harm.
7. **Police Commitment:** We need a clear, enforceable plan from police. If they can't enforce the rules, the rules are meaningless. Non-enforcement of the law only encourages its disobedience.
8. **Ban Importation of Non-Compliant e-Rideables:** Only vehicles that cannot be modified and meet strict safety standards should be allowed into the country. We should consider "governing" all e-Rideables which is far better than having unenforced and unenforceable speed limits. And clearly define which e-Rideables can be ridden on public roads and Shared Paths. Ban all dangerous devices like e-unicycles, hoverboards and e-skateboards.
9. **Protect Vulnerable Road Users:** People with disabilities, the elderly, and children must come first. The Disability Discrimination Act and UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities demand it.
10. **Much more:** We have been actively campaigning for common sense regarding e-Rideables for over 7 years. We have attached just some of our important documents relating to this vitally important road safety issue. We ask you to read them all carefully. And we also request the right to appear before the Committee. <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/umn8fadxcctycn3yuntg/AHv72wWHFnO6kUdDa-jghDw?rlkey=f6suicfuot2tkqe75i723wzih&dl=0>

Conclusion:

The government deserves credit for finally recognising the crisis. But recognition is not enough. We need action—urgent, decisive, and enforceable. The footpath must be reclaimed for pedestrians. The lives of our most vulnerable depend on it.

Harold Scruby
CEO

Pedestrian Council of Australia



It took humans a million years to learn how to walk...
and five minutes to forget.