

Inquiry into e-mobility safety and use in Queensland

Submission No:	1152
Submitted by:	Road Accident Action Group
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Submitter Comments:	

The Road Accident Action group is a community group working since 2002 to decrease the road toll in the Mackay & Isaac regions. Over the past 2-3 years we have received increasing concerns from the local community around e-scooter use. We have also been in discussion with members of QPS in Mackay and the Whitsundays and they have confirmed there is a serious problem. It is one of the main issues they are currently facing when it comes to illegal behaviour, particularly for young people. They are also targeting illegal e-bikes.

Speaking with local bike shops, the sale of private e-scooters has significantly increased. While hire e-scooters have speed limits set and include some requirements to understand the rules, private ones don't. Legally they are only meant to be ridden at a maximum of 25k/m, however people can purchase e-scooters that can go well over this speed (some reports say some go up to 110km/h), with most of them not including a speedometer. The owners might not know the rules around use of the e-scooters either, as this is not a requirement of purchase or use. Whereas for any other vehicle that can go significant speeds, testing to receive a license is required, this ensures the user is at least aware of the law.

Some of the concerns we have received from the community include:

- Hire e-scooters being left in unsafe places – such as blocking footpaths, fallen over near the road etc.
- E-scooter's being ridden on main roads where they are not meant to.
- There have been many concerns brought to us about underage riding – children under 16 have been seen riding these to school, without adult supervision. Often, they are not wearing helmets, doubling and speeding.
- The Whitsundays has had particularly bad issues as backpackers who are not familiar with QLD rules are easily able to hire e-scooters. There was an accident a couple of years ago where a tourist on an e-scooter caused a motorcycle crash, killing the motorcyclist.
- Earlier in the year, a 12-year-old at the Whitsundays was hit by a car while on an e-scooter and suffered serious injuries. It is too easy for young children to be injured, especially if the parents aren't supervising like they should be.

We have received funding over the past two years to raise awareness of the rules. This included ads and a quiz that allowed people to test their knowledge. With over 400 responses collected, the responses show most people who did the quiz know the rules, which indicates a potential gap between knowledge and practice. This may be worse than people just being ignorant, they are wilfully choosing to make unsafe and illegal choices. The biggest knowledge gap was 20-25% of respondents thought it was legal for under 16-year-olds to use them unsupervised (Quizzes & responses attached).

Other reports we have received are that hospital numbers have greatly increased with e-scooter crash injuries. They can cause serious injury, particularly if a helmet is not being worn. We are advocating for a serious reform of the rules, and stricter punishments for those who don't obey. Parents also need to be held to account for allowing their children to use these vehicles while underage. While they are fun and convenient to use, they can also very easily cause significant injuries and death.

Online Quiz conducted in mid-2024

Responses Overview

Closed

Responses

346



Average Score

10.1



Average Time

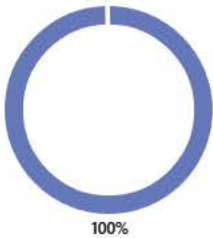
07:04



1. Do you need to wear a helmet? (1 point)

100% of respondents answered this question correctly.

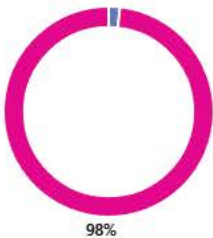
- Yes 345 ✓
- No 1



2. Can you 'double up' on an e-scooter? (1 point)

98% of respondents answered this question correctly.

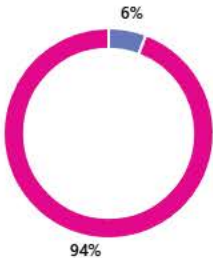
- Yes 6
- No 340 ✓



3. Can E-scooters be ridden on roads with a speed limit above 50km/h? (1 point)

94% of respondents answered this question correctly.

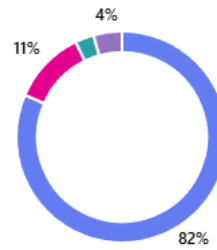
- Yes 20
- No 326 ✓



4. What is the maximum speed limit on shared paths and footpaths? (unless signed otherwise) (1 point)

82% of respondents answered this question correctly.

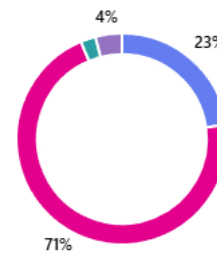
12km/h	282 ✓
15km/h	39
20km/h	10
25km/h	15



5. What is the maximum speed limit on bike paths and local roads? (unless signed otherwise) (1 point)

71% of respondents answered this question correctly.

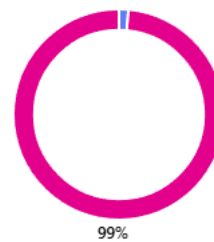
20km/h	79
25km/h	245 ✓
30km/h	8
40km/h	14



6. Can you use a mobile phone while riding? (1 point)

99% of respondents answered this question correctly.

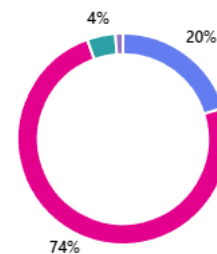
Yes	5
No	341 ✓



7. What age can you be to ride an E-scooter (without adult supervision)? (1 point)

74% of respondents answered this question correctly.

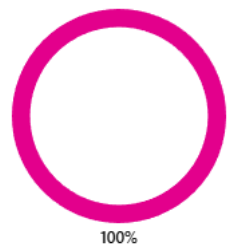
12+	70
16+	257 ✓
18+	15
Any age	4



8. Can you drink and ride? (1 point)

100% of respondents answered this question correctly.

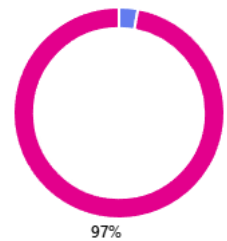
- Yes 0
- No 346 ✓



9. Can an unattached load be carried on an e-scooter? (1 point)

97% of respondents answered this question correctly.

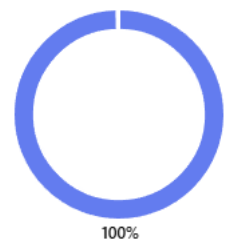
- Yes 10
- No 336 ✓



10. Should you wear shoes while riding your e-scooter? (1 point)

100% of respondents answered this question correctly.

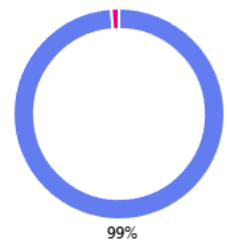
- Yes 345 ✓
- No 1



11. Is it possible to be seriously injured while using an e-scooter? (1 point)

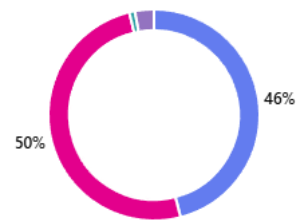
99% of respondents answered this question correctly.

- Yes 342 ✓
- No 4



13. What is your gender? (0 point)

● Woman	159
● Man	174
● Non-binary	3
● Prefer not to say	10



ongoing quiz available since mid-2024 until present time.

Responses Overview Active

Responses

37



Average Score

10.1



Average Time

02:46



1. Do you need to wear a helmet? (1 point)

100% of respondents answered this question correctly.

● Yes 37 ✓
● No 0



2. Can you 'double up' on an e-scooter? (1 point)

100% of respondents answered this question correctly.

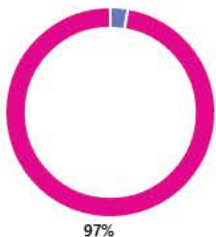
● Yes 0
● No 37 ✓



3. Can E-scooters be ridden on roads with a speed limit above 50km/h? (1 point)

97% of respondents answered this question correctly.

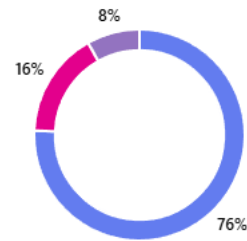
● Yes 1
● No 36 ✓



4. What is the maximum speed limit on shared paths and footpaths? (unless signed otherwise) (1 point)

76% of respondents answered this question correctly.

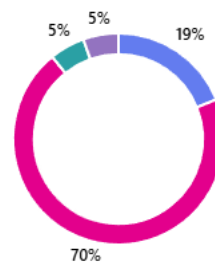
12km/h	28 ✓
15km/h	6
20km/h	0
25km/h	3



5. What is the maximum speed limit on bike paths and local roads? (unless signed otherwise) (1 point)

70% of respondents answered this question correctly.

20km/h	7
25km/h	26 ✓
30km/h	2
40km/h	2



6. Can you use a mobile phone while riding? (1 point)

100% of respondents answered this question correctly.

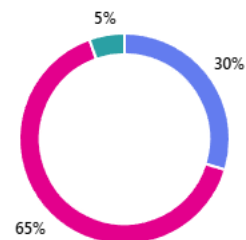
Yes	0
No	37 ✓



7. What age can you be to ride an E-scooter (without adult supervision)? (1 point)

65% of respondents answered this question correctly.

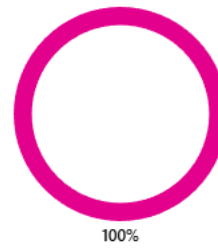
12+	11
16+	24 ✓
18+	2
Any age	0



8. Can you drink and ride? (1 point)

100% of respondents answered this question correctly.

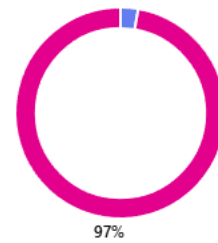
● Yes 0
● No 37 ✓



9. Can an unattached load be carried on an e-scooter? (1 point)

97% of respondents answered this question correctly.

● Yes 1
● No 36 ✓



10. Should you wear shoes while riding your e-scooter? (1 point)

100% of respondents answered this question correctly.

● Yes 37 ✓
● No 0



11. Is it possible to be seriously injured while using an e-scooter? (1 point)

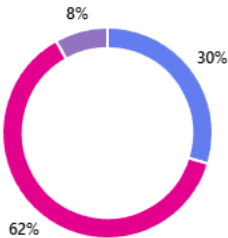
100% of respondents answered this question correctly.

● Yes 37 ✓
● No 0



12. What is your gender? (0 point)

● Woman	11
● Man	23
● Non-binary	0
● Prefer not to say	3



Reform urgently needed to reduce horrific e-scooter injuries

RACQ - 26/11/2024

News

More than one-third of private e-scooter riders presenting to emergency admitted to travelling at speeds over 25km per hour and 58% were triaged at the second highest urgency response, according to new nation-leading research.



RACQ's Head of Public Policy Dr Michael Kane said the research between RACQ and the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital Foundation, conducted by the Jamieson Trauma Institute (JTI), showed reform was needed to address the seriousness of life-changing facial and head injuries on private and hired e-scooters.

"It's clear many riders on privately owned e-scooters are speeding, and sustaining more severe injuries, but riders on hired devices are still getting seriously injured," Dr Kane said.

Patient interviews, now being conducted at five Queensland major emergency departments*, found 64% were injured on a private device compared with 36% on hired e-scooters, which is consistent with a surge in the popularity of owning an e-scooter.

“What’s worrying is 65% of all riders said they were wearing a helmet which suggests standard helmets are not always protecting against facial injuries,” Dr Kane said.

“We’re seeing terrible results when people on standing scooters crash forwards and injure their face on roads or other hard surfaces like cars.”

RACQ is calling for major changes to e-scooter rules, following the latest research.

The Club is advocating for people who are using private stand-up scooters to be required to wear full-faced helmets and for hired scooters to transition to more stable ‘sit-down’ scooters that have a lower centre of gravity.

Professor Doctor Michael Schuetz, JTI Director and RBWH Orthopaedic Surgeon, said another concerning finding was the seriousness of injuries relating to speeding, with upper limb fractures and head injuries the most common.

“We’re seeing a high proportion of private e-scooter users requiring urgent responses in the emergency department and being admitted to hospital with significant injuries, many who require orthopaedic follow ups, including surgeries,” Dr Schuetz said.

“I’m urging riders to follow the rules, don’t speed, don’t drink ride, wear a helmet, and ride in appropriate areas to minimise the chances of life-changing injuries.”

JTI Chair of Trauma Surveillance and Data Analytics Professor Kirsten Vallmuur said the majority of patients presenting with e-scooter injuries were male, with an average age of 34 years old.

“We’ve also found private scooter-related injuries are predominantly occurring during the week on the work commute while almost one-

third of hire scooter injuries presented on a weekend when people are using the scooters for recreation,” Professor Vallmuur explained.

“These patient interviews have enabled us to gain insights into different patterns and trends to allow us to better target safety initiatives.”

Dr Kane urged the new government to consider the results of the JTI research in the next round of e-scooter reforms and for consumers to re-think what scooter model is safest for them.

“We recommend anyone buying a new scooter to purchase a sit-down model to limit the chance of dramatic faceplants. If people have a stand-up device, they need a full-faced helmet.

“We’re also reminding parents it’s illegal to let children under the age of 16 ride an e-scooter unsupervised. If you can’t consistently supervise, do not buy your kid an e-scooter.”

RBWH Foundation CEO Simone Garske said the research and reform was key to ensuring better health outcomes for Queenslanders.

“Herston Health Precinct is home to some of Australia’s brightest medical and research minds and we are always grateful for additional funding for crucial projects, such as this, so they are able to be pursued,” said Ms Garske.

“We applaud RACQ for partnering with us and encourage other aligned organisations to join with us in advancing patient care innovation and life-saving medical research.”

In 2024, eight people have been killed on Personal Mobility Devices in Queensland.

As of 30 September 2024, there have been 1050 presentations to participating Queensland Injury Surveillance Unit** (QISU) emergency departments in Queensland as a result of an e-scooter ride gone wrong.

For the same nine-month period last year, there were 940 presentations.

In 2022, RACQ and the RBWH Foundation donated \$200,000 to JTI to fund research into e-scooter injuries, with the results being used to shape policy and improve safety.

**Patient interview participating hospitals: Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, Princess Alexandra Hospital, Townsville Hospital and Gold Coast University Hospital and Robina Hospital.*

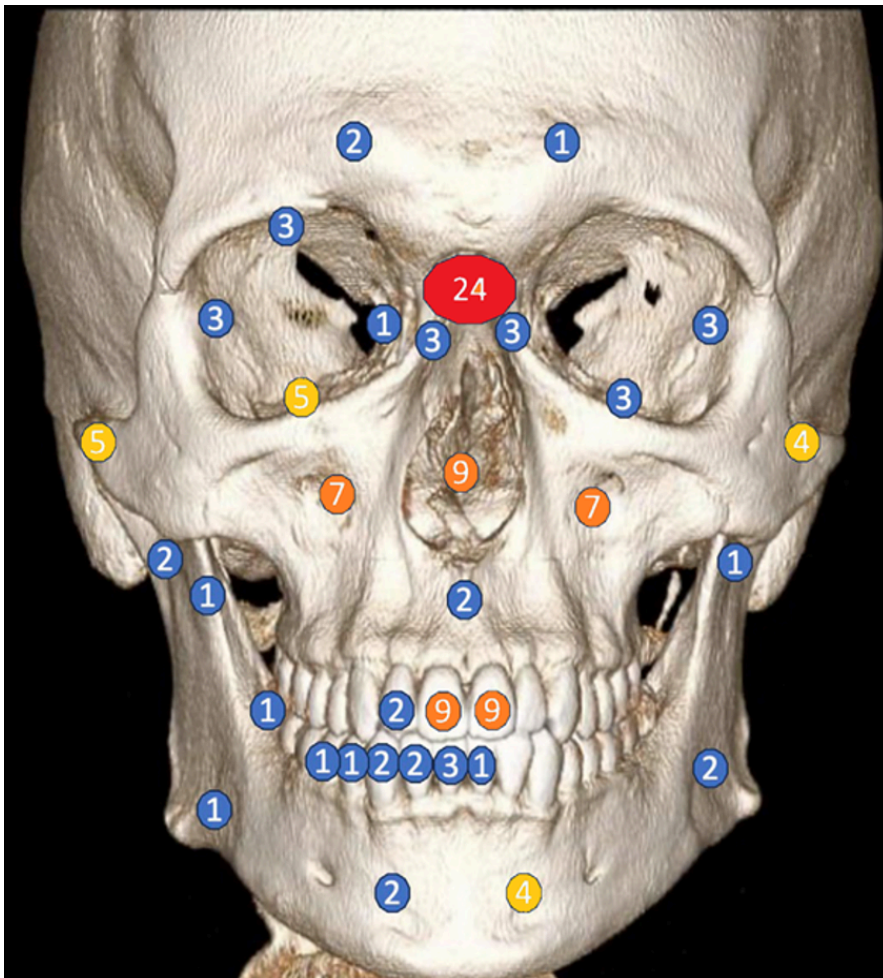
***The Queensland Injury Surveillance Unit (QISU) identified e-scooter related presentations in 31 participating emergency departments across Queensland, not all hospitals in Queensland provide data to QISU.*

Appendix 1. Key findings:

111 patients interviewed, 109 injured on an e-scooter

- *79% of people using privately owned scooters reported wearing (and fastening) a helmet compared to 50% of hire scooter users (29% of hire scooter users reported not wearing a helmet compared to 19% of private scooter users).*
- *Private scooter users reported travelling over 25km/hr 35% of the time, compared to just 12% of hire scooter users.*
- *35% of hire scooter users reported consuming alcohol in the previous 8 hours compared to 7% of private scooter users.*
- *58% of private scooter users are triaged at a high urgency of 2 or less compared to 26% of hire scooter users, and 60% of private scooter users arrive by ambulance compared to 39% of hire scooter users.*
- *Private scooter users are more frequent users of PMDs with three-quarters indicating they use the devices 4 or more times a week, while 39% of hire scooter users only used PMDs once a week and 30% never used one before the injury event.*

Appendix 2. Locations and frequency of facial fractures from e-scooter crashes



Source: Head, face and neck injury patterns for electric scooter accidents identified on computed tomography scanning: Does legislative change enforcing safer riding practices have an impact on morbidity for significant head, face and neck trauma? [Published](#) in October by [Nicholas Watson](#), [Brett Droder](#), [Gary Mitchell](#), [Craig Hacking](#). The results were from data obtained from RBWH between 1 May 2022 and 30 April 2023. This was a separate and different study to the patient interview research.

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Reported e-scooter injuries on the rise at Queensland emergency departments

ABC Radio Brisbane / By Evie Drinnan and Jack McKay

Posted Mon 15 Jul 2024 at 8:45am



There are two shared e-scooter companies that operate in Brisbane. (ABC News: Alice Pavlovic)

In short: The number of reported e-scooter presentations at Queensland's emergency departments increased from 691 in 2021 to 1,273 in 2023.

Since late 2018, fractures have been the most common e-scooter injury at emergency departments, followed by open wounds, then sprains or strains.

What's next? The state government is working on the introduction of random breath testing for riders and is exploring whether bigger e-scooters are safer to use than smaller devices.

The number of reported patients turning up to Queensland emergency departments after being injured in e-scooter mishaps has almost doubled within two years.

It comes amid ongoing work from the state government to introduce random breath testing for riders, as it also explores whether bigger e-scooters are safer to use than smaller devices.

The latest figures compiled by the Jamieson Trauma Institute have revealed there were 1,273 e-scooter-related presentations reported within the state's emergency departments in 2023.

This was up 25 per cent from the 1,018 presentations recorded in 2022, and an 84 per cent jump from the 691 presentations that were logged in 2021.

By the end of May this year, emergency departments had already recorded another 558 e-scooter incidents – putting them on track to surpass the number of presentations last year.



Since 2018, fractures have been the most frequently reported e-scooter injury at Queensland emergency departments. (*ABC News: Lucas Hill*)

The Jamieson Trauma Institute compiles data on e-scooter related presentations that have been reported at about 30 emergency departments through the Queensland Injury Surveillance Unit (QISU).

But not all hospitals report their e-scooter presentations to the QISU, including some major facilities, such as the Princess Alexandra Hospital, Logan Hospital, and the QEII Jubilee Hospital.

Fractures are the most common injury

In total, 4,233 e-scooter emergency department presentations have been reported since November 2018, with males making up 62 per cent of patients.

The most common place to sustain an injury was the head, with 604 wounds, followed by the face, with 420 wounds.

Fractures were the most common injury among e-scooter related emergency department patients, with 1,324 fractures recorded since late 2018.

The second most common type of injury was superficial wounds, followed by open wounds, sprains or strains, and then intracranial injuries, which includes concussions.



IR's Nick Mackay says some riders are not following the rules. *(ABC Radio Brisbane: Lucy Stone)*

Children aged 15 and under made up 545 of the presentations for e-scooter related incidents, but the median age for all patients was 27.

Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) manager of road rules and emerging technology Nick Mackay said it was predominantly riders, rather than bystanders, who were getting injured in e-scooter incidents.

"The really tragic thing that we hate to see is that in a lot of cases those riders aren't following the rules," he said.

"We're seeing riders who don't have a helmet on, or they have a helmet on but they haven't bothered to buckle it up.

"They're not following the speed limits. These are avoidable crashes, avoidable injuries."

Random breath testing for e-scooter riders

In 2022, the state government brought in new e-scooter rules aimed at boosting rider safety, including new tiered speeding fine categories and tougher penalties.

Mr Mackay indicated the government had further work to do to improve e-scooter safety.

"What we're looking at is whether or not longer scooters in particular are safer," he said.



e Department of Transport and Main Roads is exploring the dimensions of e-scooters. (ABC Radio Brisbane: Lucy one)

"The biggest thing that you get when you have a slightly longer scooter is you get larger wheels.

"What we're seeing through those injury stats is that lots of the crashes are really small front wheels in particular hitting a little bump and crack and the rider goes straight over the handlebars."

Mr Mackay also flagged a potential crackdown on drunk riders, with authorities exploring how they could introduce police-led random breath testing for e-scooter users.

"It's already illegal to be drunk on an e-scooter ... but at the moment police can't undertake a random breath test. And that's something that we want to work on," he said.

Mr Mackay suggested the government had not seen any evidence that shared e-scooters were more risky than privately owned e-scooters.

E-scooter companies say safety is top priority

The two shared e-scooter companies that currently operate within Brisbane are Beam and Neuron.

In a statement, a Beam spokesperson said safety was at the forefront of its operations.

"We are confident in the safety of our e-mobility operations, with less than one trip out of every 100,000 Beam trips in Queensland resulting in a reported hospitalisation," they said.

"Whilst the proportion of trips resulting in an injury is quite low, we're doing all we can to reduce this number to zero.



am says the proportion of trips resulting in an injury is quite low. (ABC News: Michael Lloyd)

"As riders become more familiar with Beam's e-scooters and e-bikes, and our education and enforcement methods, we are seeing a reduction in the rate of incidents on Beam's shared e-scooters."

A Neuron spokesperson also said safety was its top priority.

"We have a robust education program focused on ensuring our riders know the rules," they said.

"Since launching in Brisbane in mid-2021, Neuron e-scooters have become an important part of city's transport mix.

"The overwhelming majority of people ride responsibly, with over 99.99 per cent of trips ending safely and without incident."

Professor Narelle Haworth from QUT's Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety Queensland said the number of e-scooters in the community had increased, and the proportion of private to shared e-scooters had changed.

"When we did our first observations a few months after the scheme was introduced, there were eight times as many shared [e-scooters] as there were private," she said.

"The latest observations show, depending on where you are, there are more private than shared.

"When we do measurements out around Brisbane, what we find is that the private e-scooter riders are wearing their helmets as much as bicycle riders are."



Narelle Haworth says private e-scooter usage has increased. (Supplied: Professor Narelle Haworth)

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BREAKING

Iconic Aussie festival axed for second year

News > Queensland > Whitsunday

Jett McBean seriously injured in Whitsunday e-scooter crash

A 12-year-old boy should be getting ready for his first day of high school, but instead is recovering in hospital after a horror e-scooter crash caused serious injuries.



Krystal Hender

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less than 2 min read January 25, 2024 - 11:20PM Daily Mercury

AA



Jett McBean was injured in an e-scooter crash on 17 January 2024. Photo: Contributed

A boy who should be getting ready for his first day of high school is instead recovering in hospital after a horror e-scooter crash left him with serious injuries including having "skin ripped from his young body" and losing a big toe.

[Twelve-year-old Jett McBean had been out enjoying a new electric scooter near his home when, about 9.40am on January 17,](#) it and another vehicle were involved in a crash in the Whitsunday region.

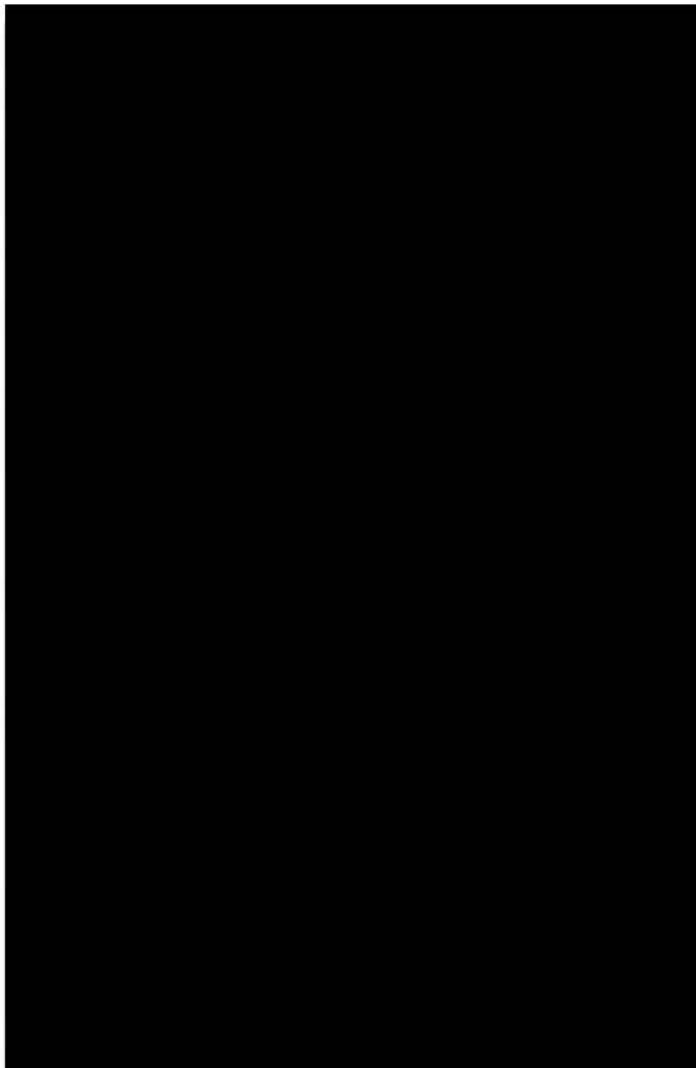
He was flown to Townsville University Hospital for emergency surgery because of the crash while family members rushed to be by his bedside.

Now loved ones say he looking at a "long and challenging road ahead to complete recovery", as those close to the family rally to help.

[Family friends Kate Marchant and Sarah Sprang started a GoFundMe,](#) which has already raised \$4740 in two days.

The pair said Jett was "stuck and run over by a truck causing significant critical injuries" and had to be treated in Townsville's intensive care unit.

"Jett sustained extensive injuries including the loss of his right big toe (which thankfully was able to be reattached), a fractured femur, fractured arm and a substantial amount of skin ripped from his young body too," Ms Marchant and Ms Sprang wrote.

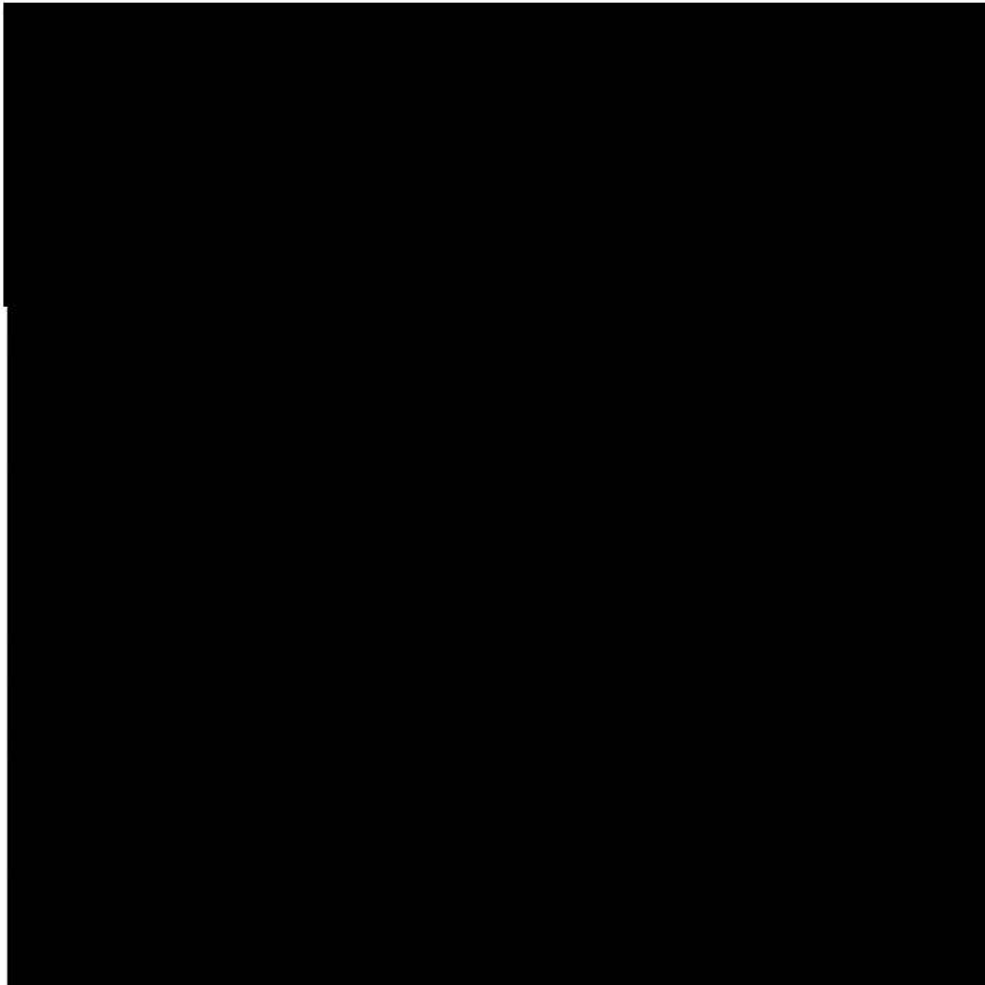


Jett McBean was injured in an e-scooter crash on 17 January 2024. Photo: Contributed

"This traumatic experience continues to cause immense physical pain for Jett and emotional stress for his family.

"Jett will continue to undergo intensive medical treatment for the foreseeable future and may involve further surgery, rehabilitation, and ongoing care."

They said Jett was meant to be getting ready to start high school but was unable to "as he remains in hospital" with his parents by his side, who are doing "their very best to ensure Jett is receiving everything he needs for a full physical and emotional recovery".



"The family have been overwhelmed by well wishes and healing thoughts for Jett – and we know that along with those wishes some would like to know how they may be able to help," Ms Marchant and Ms Sprang wrote.

They said funds from the GoFundMe would help with the general and living costs while they were away from home as well as ongoing medical costs for Jett.

"Thank you for taking the time to read Jett's story – your kindness and even the smallest gesture can make a world of difference."

To view the GoFundMe visit [here](#).