

Inquiry into e-mobility safety and use in Queensland

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Submitter Comments:

There appear to be two types of user: those in full compliance of e-bike legislation who follow all bicycle road rules and a 2nd group that acquire high powered ebikes and use them on Qld roads with apparent impunity. Perhaps there should be two classes of ebike Class 1: low powered pedal assist bikes with a registered VIN or other unique no cost identifier that law enforcement can easily verify. Class 2: high powered ebikes that may only be used by licensed road users and registered as a motor bike, full motor bike helmet required. Why have Class 2 at all? Because they are a valid form of transport that are currently slipping between the vehicle classification cracks if not in terms of legislation then in terms of enforcement. Penalties for breach of class to include seizure of vehicle for destruction/recycling (the batteries are expensive and contain rare earth minerals that should be recovered), 4 demerit points and \$2000 fine. Minors caught in breach to have penalties served on their guardians or parents. Import bans should apply to all non-compliant vehicles. Some ebikes exist that comply with Class 1 and all current Qld legislation but can be unlocked or jail broken to a higher power level using a PIN code. Consequently they will "look" compliant and have an European Standard for Power Assisted Pedal Cycles (EN15194) standards tag that complies with Qld legislation but the software has been circumvented to allow higher power levels. Penalties as prescribed above to apply as a breach. I'd suggest there also needs to be a public education campaign around ebikes, what's permitted and the road rules for same including upper level primary school classes melded into the curriculum as perhaps a 3 lesson plan plus assessment. Also drop the speed limit for escooters right back to 5kmh max to reduce the head traumas we're currently seeing. Increase penalties for breaches in line with the above, including but not limited to helmet breaches irrespective of being a "hire" scooter or otherwise. No helmet, no ride. Very simple. ebikes are a fantastic boon to urban transportation that is eco-friendly and needs to be actively encouraged BUT the ridiculous scenario of 12 years olds zooming along Waterworks Road in excess of 60kmh with no licence and no registration needs to be stopped. I was PASSED by an ebike (thankfully on the bike path) whilst I was on the western freeway doing 70kmh last week ie the ebike was going 70kmh+ on a bike path. Just a death waiting to happen, only a question of how many people they'll take with them.