Inquiry into e-mobility safety and use in Queensland

Submission No:	1184
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Publication:	Making the submission and your name public
Attachments:	See attachment
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To: QLD State Government Parliamentary Enquiry:

INQUIRY INTO E-MOBILITY SAFETY AND USE IN QUEENSLAND

Industry representative response to Section 8. Broad stakeholder perspectives, including from community members, road user groups, disability advocates health and trauma experts, academia, the e-mobility industry, and all levels of government.

Key Benefits to QLD Users and the Public

Catergory	Benefits
Health & Fitness	Encourages physical activity while providing assistance on hills or long commutes.
Transport Access	Provides low-cost transport for students, elderly and people without licenses.
Traffic Reduction	E-bikes reduce traffic congestion by replacing short car trips.
Environmental	Zero emissions during operation; reduced carbon footprint vs cars.
Economic	Lower commuting costs, reduced public infrastructure burden, job creation in e-bike sales and servicing.
Inclusivity	Higher-power e-bikes (350W-750W) are essential for heavier riders or those with mobility issues.
Recreation & Tourism	Enhances outdoor access and local tourism, particularly in hilly or regional areas.

Why 250W Limit is Problematic

Issue	Explanation
Not enough power for QLD terrain	QLD has many hills and longer distances; 250W often struggles, especially for heavier riders.

Excludes certain users	Riders with disabilities or lower physical fitness need more support than 250W allows.
Unsafe merging with Traffic	Underpowered e-bikes can't keep pace with traffic, making them dangerous on roads.
Discourages modal shift	People are less likely to replace car trips with e-bike rides if performance is limited.

International Comparison: Countries Allowing More Than 250W

Country	Power Limit	Notes
USA	Up to 750W	Class 1,2 and 3 E-bikes, regulated by speed & pedal-assist type.
Canada	500W	Legal nationally, varies slightly by province.
New Zealand	300W	Allows higher power than EU model; focused on practicality.
Switzerland	Up to 1000W (S-pedelecs)	Subject to licensing and insurance.
China	400-1000W (Urban)	Large-scale adoption due to affordability and practicality.
USA & EU (off-road)	No limits for off-road recreational use	Encourages broader uptake for trails and commuting

Summary of Reasons to Allow Higher Power E-Bikes in QLD

1. **Better transport option** for longer or hillier commutes.
2. **More inclusive** for heavier, older or mobility-limited riders.
3. **Reduces car use** easing congestion and pollution.
4. **Supports local economy** through sales, rentals, tourism and e-bike parks.
5. **Globally proven** to be safe and effective when regulated by speed, not just wattage.
6. **Enables police to focus on actual dangerous behavior,** not arbitrary technical limits.
7. **Wattage restrictions** should only be on bikes that are not bade to handle it/OEM built (eg motor kits)
8. **Speed should be to maximum in the zone riding in** eg 50kp/h zone
9. **Licensed motorbike riders should have the option of riding to current road laws.**

Everyone knows the rules but play the "I didn't know card" make accountability for the rider personally.

Recommendation

Instead of a hard 250W cap:

1. Allow e-bikes up to **500W or 750W** with a max assisted speed (Road Speed Limit)
2. Regulate via **Class system** (as in the US) balancing performance and safety
3. Provide **infrastructure and education** to safely integrate higher powered e-bikes into public spaces.