Inquiry into e-mobility safety and use in Queensland

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Submitted by:

Glen Needs

Queensland resident and regular e-bike user

1. Purpose of this submission

I make this submission to contribute practical, lived experience to the Committee's consideration of e-bike regulation in Queensland. My intent is to support safer outcomes, broader participation, and sensible enforcement approaches that reflect how e-bikes are actually used in real-world conditions.

2. E-bikes as a legitimate mobility and safety tool

For many riders — particularly older Queenslanders or those with reduced physical capacity — e-bikes are not a recreational luxury. They are a mobility aid that enables continued independence, social connection, and participation in the community.

Adequate power delivery is critical for safety, not speed. In practice, sufficient motor assistance allows riders to:

- Start safely from a standstill without wobbling or stalling

Clear intersections efficiently alongside motor traffic

- Maintain stability when climbing hills or riding into headwinds
- Avoid unsafe overexertion that can lead to loss of control or medical risk

Lower-powered systems can struggle in these conditions, particularly on Queensland's varied terrain, and can paradoxically increase risk rather than reduce it.

3. Power limits should reflect real-world conditions

Based on lived experience, including regular riding with a group of older Queenslanders, a motor wattage of at least 750 watts provides a practical and safe level of assistance for many senior riders. This level of power allows smooth, predictable acceleration and effective hill climbing without requiring high speeds or aggressive riding.

Importantly, many seniors in my regular riding circle already own e-bikes in the 750-watt range, purchased in good faith specifically because lower-powered systems proved underpowered for hills, starting from rest, or riding safely in traffic. For these riders, 750 watts represents a safety margin, not a performance upgrade.

I encourage the Committee to consider:

- Allowing motor wattage of at least 750 watts
- Distinguishing clearly between power availability and maximum assisted speed
- Ensuring wattage limits reflect terrain, rider capability, and safety