

Transport and Other Legislation (Managing E-mobility Use and Protecting Our Communities) Amendment Bill 2026

Submission No: 0108

Submission By: Brisbane South Bug

Brisbane South Bicycle User Group

Brisbane South BUG

Submission to the State Development, Infrastructure and Works Committee - Transport and Other Legislation (Managing E-mobility Use and Protecting Our Communities) Amendment Bill 2026

On behalf of the Brisbane South Bicycle User Group, please accept the following submission formally objecting to sections of the proposed Transport and Other Legislation (Managing E-mobility Use and Protecting Our Communities) Amendment Bill 2026.

As a local stakeholder group, we represent the interests of those who walk, cycle and scoot in the southern suburbs of Brisbane. We have been engaged with this inquiry since its early stages and made a formal submission during the consultation phase (1166). This current submission has been informed by the opinions and views of our membership base.

Bicycle user groups support people of all skill levels and ages to use active transport as a healthy, efficient, environmentally friendly and enjoyable way to get around. It is a relatively low cost and zero emission form of transport. We believe the new “e” forms of active transport are to be celebrated but must operate within a framework that ensures the safety and consideration of all active transport users.

We do not oppose this Bill in its entirety. Several of its measures are sensible and proportionate responses to a genuine problem. Our submission focuses on four provisions that will impede or prevent Queenslanders from using compliant e-bikes for every day transport, without delivering safety benefits to the community: explicit compliance to one version of EN15194, 10km/h footpath/shared path speed limit, licensing requirements, and minimum age requirement . We also make comments regarding the personal mobility device (PMD) definition.

In this submission, the following terminology will be used:

- ‘EPAC’ = ‘electrically power-assisted cycle’ - an electric bicycle with an electric motor providing a pedal assist function, and which complies with the EN15194 standard.
- ‘E-motorbike’ and E-moto’ - an electric vehicle with a similar form factor to a bicycle or motorbike but which does not comply with EN15194.

1. EPAC Definition : Explicit compliance with one version of EN15194

We understand that one purpose of the Bill is to require EPACs to comply with the European Standard EN15194. This standard was first introduced in 2009, and has since been through four revisions:

EN 15194:2009 (first version of the base standard)
EN 15194:2009+A1:2011 (2011 amendment)
EN 15194:2017 (revised 2017 edition of the base standard)
EN 15194:2017+A1:2023 (2023 amendment)

Since its inception, this standard has defined an EPAC as a bicycle with an electric motor which cuts off at a speed of 25km/h, which cannot be operated with a throttle at speeds above 6km/h ('walk assist' mode), and which provides a maximum 250W of continuous rated power. An EPAC which meets these requirements is comparable to a conventional bicycle in its speed envelope, kinetic energy, physical footprint, and reliance on human power as the primary means of propulsion. It is therefore no more hazardous to pedestrians and other cyclists than the unassisted bicycles with which it already shares infrastructure under existing road rules across all EU member states. **We strongly support using EN15194, which is increasingly used as a *de facto* global standard, as the basis for defining a compliant EPAC in Queensland.** However, we believe that the Bill currently defines compliance too narrowly, which is likely to have significant unintended consequences.

Standards Australia has a provision for EPACs: AS15194, includes an implementation of EN15194 and safety elements from AS/NZ 1927. This Australian standard captures all the fundamentals the Bill hopes to achieve: maximum motor support speed of 25km/h, pedal assist, 250W maximum motor power, no throttle (other than 6km/h walk assist). The safety elements of AS/NZ 1927. Maintaining a current version of this standard is a Commonwealth responsibility, and its adoption by States would provide nation-wide consistency, which we consider highly desirable.

Currently, the Bill (clause 63) specifically defines an EPAC as complying with the European Committee for Standardisation standard EN15194:2017+A1 (which we believe is a truncated reference to EN15194:2017+A1:2023) rather than the parent standard EN15194, or the Australian Standard AS15194. By defining an EPAC according to a specific version, the Bill excludes all other versions, both older and newer. There are two specific problems with this:

- 1) It creates legislation which is 'locked in time', creating a situation where future EPACs compliant with future versions of EN15194/AS15194 are treated as non-compliant in Queensland.
- 2) It is not backwards compatible with existing devices.

The most recent version of EN15194; EN15194:2017+A1:2023, was published in August 2023. Due to a transitional period during which newly-manufactured EPACs meeting the older EN15194:2017 standard are still regarded as compliant, EPAC dealers in Europe are only required to comply with EN15194:2017+A1:2023 from May 2026. In practice, this means that a large number of brand-new EPACs from the current model year are compliant with EN15194:2017. Australia is a low priority for the global bicycle industry, and it is

expected that retailers in Queensland will not have stock of newly manufactured EPACs compliant with EN15194:2017+A1:2023 for quite some time.

Additionally, Commonwealth import regulations still permit the import of devices which are compliant with the 2017 standard (EN15194:2017) rather than the most current version. Australia is likely to receive devices compliant with this older standard until all global stock is exhausted. For this reason, mandating that EPACs in Queensland comply with EN 15194:2017+A1:2023 specifically (rather than EN15194 or AS15194) creates a situation where *compliance is virtually impossible even for consumers purchasing a brand-new EPAC from a retailer.*

Another major unintended consequence of the use of EN15194:2017+A1:2023 is that it fails to provide legacy support for the over two hundred thousand compliant EN15194 EPACs currently in use in Queensland, including virtually 100% of EPACs that were legally imported prior to 2026. Given that revisions to EN15194 have not changed the fundamentals of the standard (requiring pedal assist, 25km/h maximum assistance speed, 250W maximum motor power, etc.), there is no community safety benefit to ruling these legacy devices non-compliant and requiring that their owners stop using them. Such a requirement would be deeply harmful to consumers and commercial hire operators who have made large investments in safe, compliant devices, some of which retail for upwards of \$10,000. Enforcing compliance with EN15194:2017+A1:2023 rather than EN15194 or AS15194 is tantamount to giving consumers 6 months' notice that they must replace their 2-year-old car at their own expense because of a regulatory technicality; this is *unreasonable*.

A further issue with the Bill is that it requires EPACs to be labelled with 'EN15194:2017+A1'. We strongly support a labelling requirement, and note that the Australian standard AS15194 requires the EPAC to be permanently labelled with compliance showing "EN15194" for ease of enforcement. However, a requirement for labelling with "EN15194:2017+A1" specifically will be extremely difficult for consumers to meet. In March 2026, we conducted a survey of 25 EPACs at a major bicycle retailer and found only one EPAC model specifically labelled with "EN15194:2017+A1:2023", even though we believe all were compliant with current or previous versions of the standard. Again, we believe that for both forwards and backwards compatibility, compliant EPACs in Queensland should be defined as those compliant with AS15194/EN15194.

We therefore request that *Clause 63 is updated to remove "EN15194:2017+A1" and to replace it with "AS15194"*. The alternative to utilising an Australian Standard would be to remove version information from the European Standard so that it only references "EN15194". This has the advantages that the legislation will not require further amendments based on actions in Europe completely beyond the State Government's control, and supports the existing pool of EPAC owners.

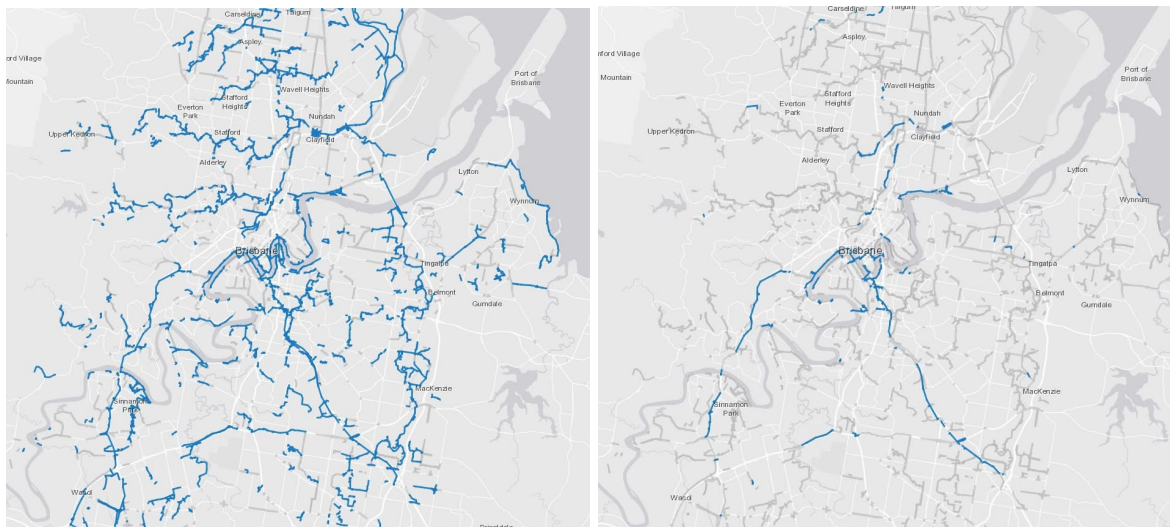
2. 10km/h Speed Limit on Footpaths/Shared Paths

We acknowledge community concerns related to nuisance behaviour towards pedestrians by a small number of users of e-bikes and scooters while riding on footpaths. Specifically, path users raised concerns about riders speeding, failing to warn pedestrians using a bell, and the obstruction of footpaths with hireable e-scooters. The law already requires that riders -

whether on bicycles, skateboards, kick scooters, EPACs or PMDs - give way to pedestrians on footpaths and shared paths, keep left, and ride with due care and attention. Within the Bill, the existing offence for failing to ride with due care and attention has been converted to an infringement. This aids police enforcement by enabling on-the-spot fines to be issued for poor rider behaviour around pedestrians rather than requiring a court appearance. We support this measure as a proportionate and sensible response to the irresponsible behaviour of a small number of riders.

Unfortunately, the Bill also introduces a blanket 10km/h speed limit for all EPACs and PMDs on footpaths and shared paths. Implementation of this speed limit would increase confusion and conflict between pedestrians and cyclists on shared paths, and create safety hazards for both pedestrians and riders due to the instability of two-wheeled vehicles at low speed. It would also force many responsible users of EPACs and PMDs to choose between riding on extremely unsafe roads in traffic, and abandoning active travel entirely. **It is difficult to overstate how disastrous this speed limit would be for active travel in Queensland and we oppose it in the strongest possible terms.**

Figure 1: Off Street Separated Active Transport Infrastructure Maps:



Brisbane's Shared Path Network

Brisbane's "Bicycle only" Cycleways

The majority of purpose-built active travel infrastructure in Queensland has been provided in the form of shared paths. In fact, over 90% of the total paths in the Brisbane cycle network are shared paths (Figure 1). Most 'shared paths' are designed as bikeways: they are smooth and flat, with gentle curves and lane markings. Many of them include 'bikeway' in the name, making their intended purpose very clear: some examples within our local area are the Norman Creek Bikeway, Tarragindi Bikeway, and SE Freeway Bikeway. These bikeways represent a significant investment of taxpayer money into high quality active travel infrastructure and form the backbone of safe, off-road routes for people cycling for transportation and commuting. Queensland taxpayers deserve to continue receiving the

benefits of this high-quality infrastructure they have already paid for. Imposing a 10km/h speed limit on these bikeways is comparable to building arterial roads, then restricting drivers to 30km/h: **the speed limit is so low as to make the infrastructure unfit for purpose.**

The explanatory notes for the Bill include the following statement regarding the 10km/h speed limit:

"...lower speeds on footpaths and shared paths may deter riders from using these environments in areas with high pedestrian activity or where higher-quality active transport infrastructure is available."

As long-term advocates for the provision of safe infrastructure for active transport in Brisbane's south, we feel qualified to state unequivocally that in most cases, higher-quality infrastructure is NOT available; the 'shared paths' which we are being 'deterred' from using are, in fact the 'high-quality infrastructure' to which the explanatory notes refer.

For most riders, the alternative is using the road: a highly unsafe proposition on a vehicle which is speed-limited to 25km/h. Publicly available crash data (sourced from data.qld.gov.au) indicates that there are over 600 incidents with injuries annually between bicycles (including EPACs and PMDs) and motor vehicles on our roads. In addition to the clear safety hazard that riding on the road poses for the rider, it creates a nuisance to other road users (who may be stuck behind an EPAC/PMD travelling at 25km/h indefinitely) and fuels impatient driving behaviour, which is hazardous (for instance, unsafe overtaking).

Realistically, many riders would simply abandon active transport if forced to choose between riding at 10km/h and riding on-road: a shameful waste of investment and opportunity, and a further contribution to fuel demand, traffic congestion, and city parking woes.

Those riders who do choose to use footpaths and shared paths while attempting to obey an unreasonable speed limit of 10km/h are also endangering themselves, as well as other path users. As stated elsewhere in this submission, EPACs are very similar in their physical and handling characteristics to other bicycles. The following quotes are taken from a 2020 report published by the State of Queensland (Department of Transport and Main Roads), entitled "Guideline: Speed Management on shared paths.":

"Riders balance their bicycles in an upright position, mainly due to the forward-motion forces they exert on their machines. Without this forward motion, a bicycle loses stability and falls over... Studies of bicycle operational stability during the last century have shown that a bicycle can become unstable at speeds below 11 km/h."

In addition to the reduced stability of a two-wheeled vehicle traveling at low speed (which increases potentially alarming wobbling movements while around pedestrians, as well as increasing the likelihood of an actual crash), obeying the 10km/h speed limit unsafely diverts the rider's attention from the path ahead and other path users. On even the gentlest downhill gradient, remaining below 10km/h requires virtually constant attention to the brakes and the speedometer, making it impossible for a rider to pay proper attention to their surroundings.

Additionally, because riders of unpowered bicycles are not subject to these speed restrictions, pedestrians will be far less able to predict the behaviour of other path users. The

authors of this submission frequently walk on shared paths in southern Brisbane suburbs, and would ourselves feel less safe surrounded by bikes that look the same but were travelling at different speeds.

Most frustratingly of all, this speed limit is attempting to solve a virtually non-existent problem. Key findings from the 2020 TMR publication state that without mandated speed limits, the frequency of crashes between pedestrians and riders on footpaths and shared paths, over a 17 year period, was extremely low at 4.7 incidents per year across the State. The document goes on to state that:

“On well-designed paths and in good conditions, people riding bikes can travel comfortably at speeds of between 15–25 km/h with minimum risk or decrease in amenity to people walking... As is the case in on-road situations, the small percentage of riders travelling at excessive speeds (not appropriate to the prevailing conditions) presents the largest concern to the safe operation of shared paths.”

It goes on to say: *“Section 5.2 of Austroads’ ‘Guide to Road Design’ Part 6A recommends that shared paths be built to a design speed of at least 30km/h.”*

The ‘Design Speed’ of both PMD and EPAC devices is 25km/h. The application of a 10km/h limit on well designed shared paths would be like implementing a 30km/h limit on the M3/M1 Motorway joining Brisbane to the Gold Coast for motor vehicles.

Once again, this is **an issue best addressed by enforcement of existing laws**, rather than introducing incredibly onerous new restrictions on responsible adult commuters who are already doing the right thing. We also suggest that in areas of congestion or high pedestrian activity, advisory speed zones be signposted by local councils. Managing speed with direct and obvious signage removes confusion and makes enforcement clear.

We also wish to reiterate that unless the illegal e-motos are removed from distribution and use, they will continue to flout existing laws - introducing an unrealistic and overbearing speed limit on other riders will not solve that problem.

We would like to conclude this section with a further quote from the TMR document:

“Requiring people riding bikes to travel at speeds which may detrimentally affect their stability (and safety) on inadequately-designed paths, shared with other users insensitive to their operational needs, is not an equitable or safe path management strategy.

Any regulatory device which instructs people riding bikes to undertake a behaviour that will compromise their safety cannot expect compliance and damages the credibility of the device and should be replaced with a more suitable treatment.”

3. Requirement to hold a car license to ride an EPAC

The Bill proposes (section 78B) that riders of compliant EPACs must hold a valid driver’s license. We strongly oppose this proposition because it is absurd to require that somebody hold a license for a car in order to ride a bicycle. Across the European Union, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Canada, compliant EPACs are treated in law as bicycles and require no licence, registration, or insurance. If a licensing requirement were

implemented for EPACs, Queensland would become one of a few jurisdictions to require a driver's license to ride one (North Korea being the most notable other).

At the first public hearing of the *Inquiry into E-mobility Safety and Use in Queensland*, on 22 July 2025, Dr Michael Kane, the Head of Public Policy at RACQ, made the following statement:

"With e-bikes, we are saying there is no real problem with e-bikes and we should not be getting caught up with legal e-bikes. They are a good thing. There is some need to enforce existing laws as is the case with motor cars and motorbikes. The real issue is with what we would call the 'illegals'."

Unfortunately, this clear expert advice has not been followed. The proposal to gate these devices behind the car licensing system is an overreach which will have many unintended consequences resulting in negative impacts on the community, and in particular, morally indefensible impacts on seniors and people with disabilities who rely on their EPACs as a primary means of transportation.

The proposed requirement that riders of compliant EPACs hold a valid driver license is a *de facto* ban on the use of EPACs by anybody who does not qualify to drive a car. The medical and social requirements for holding a license to drive a car reflect the degree of risk - to the driver, and to other road users - inherent in operating a vehicle that weighs two or more tonnes at speeds up to 110km/h.

Many Queenslanders do not qualify for a driver license on the basis of disabilities or medical conditions which are incompatible with this degree of risk, including vision impairment, epilepsy, stroke or acquired brain injury, heart conditions, severe diabetes, and musculoskeletal disabilities. However, the degree of risk - to oneself and others - involved in riding a bicycle (including EPAC) is vastly lower. For this reason, there is no licensing requirement for bicycles, and it is legal for a person with a disability or medical condition that disqualifies them from driving, to ride a bicycle on footpaths and shared paths, cycleways and roads. EN15194-compliant EPACs are, for all intents and purposes, bicycles. If we accept the risk of a person with a disability or medical condition riding a bicycle, then we should accept the equivalent risk of them riding a compliant EPAC.

Critically, for many Queenslanders who cannot or choose not to drive, EPACs offer freedom, autonomy and independence - to run errands, attend appointments, commute to work, enjoy outdoor recreation, exercise at a manageable and controllable intensity, and participate in the community. Deserving of special consideration are seniors and people with disabilities, who may especially benefit from the motor assistance provided by an EPAC. Indeed, these members of the community may not have the physical ability to use an unpowered bicycle.

A licensing requirement for EPACs would cost vulnerable Queenslanders an immense amount of autonomy and joy as e-bikes are "critical tools for independence, access to employment and community participation". We consider this short-sighted, callous, and morally indefensible, and we strongly support the statements by Queenslanders with Disability Network and EveryBody eBikes which describe the moral case against a licensing requirement in more detail.

Another major issue with the proposal to require a car license to ride an EPAC is its impact on visitors to Queensland. Presently, many tourists explore Queensland cities via casual hire of EPACs and PMDs from operators such as Lime and Neuron, or hire EPACs for day trips and multi-day tourism experiences. For instance, visitors to Mount Tamborine (the most popular day trip destination in south-east Queensland) can hire an EPAC from an operator who also supplies a picnic lunch, while numerous bicycle and ebike hire companies offer supported day and multi-day trips on the Brisbane Valley Rail Trail. A requirement for tourists to hold a car license in order to hire an EPAC for a day trip will harm businesses such as these, reduce the options available to tourists, and introduce red tape that creates frustrating experiences for visitors - hardly the way we should aim to receive guests while preparing to host the Olympics in 2032.

We draw the attention of the Committee to the article recently published in *The Conversation* by researchers in urban planning from The University of Queensland, who strongly oppose the licensing requirement on these and other grounds:

"EN 15194 compliant e-bikes should be legally treated as ordinary bicycles and integrated into everyday mobility. They shouldn't require a driver's licence, registration, or insurance. Riders should simply follow the same rules that apply to cyclists."

We urge the Committee to listen to the experts: requiring a car license to ride an EPAC is an absurd overreach which does nothing to address the actual problem (teen hoons on illegal e-motorbikes) while creating unconscionable impacts on vulnerable sectors of the community.

4. Restriction of EPAC use to persons over 16

We acknowledge community concerns in relation to the use of e-bikes and e-scooters by children and teens. In particular, it is clear that the community is immensely frustrated by 'hooning' behaviours of children and teens riding illegal e-motorbikes: riding unsafely on the road at traffic speed or weaving in and out of traffic, doing 'wheelies' and other stunts on public roadways, riding with two or more passengers per bike, and speeding and other dangerous, intimidating behaviour on footpaths and shared paths. We strongly agree that these behaviours constitute public nuisance, are hazardous to the riders and to other members of the community, and that a crackdown on these behaviours is required.

We wish to draw the Committee's attention to features of EN15194-compliant EPACs that make it impossible to engage in 'hooning' behaviours on these bikes. Because they are limited to a maximum of 25km/h under motor power, it is simply not possible for riders of compliant devices to reach traffic speeds and zip in and out of traffic, or to 'buzz' pedestrians on footpaths at alarming speeds clearly well in excess of 25km/h. Because the motor cuts out when the EPAC is not being pedalled, it is not possible for the rider to remove their feet from the pedals or stand on the pedals in order to do a 'wheelie' while continuing to power the rear wheel; the bike would simply stop moving. It is obvious that the devices being ridden in a 'hooning' manner are not EPACs, from the simple fact that the observable characteristics of the nuisance bikes from the many available videos are incompatible with meeting the requirements of EN15194.

From this observation, we can again conclude that the unsafe behaviour of some children and teens riding e-motorbikes is attributable to the nature of the devices they are riding, and that EPACs are simply unable to be misused in this way. Conversely, EN15194-compliant EPACs offer freedom for responsible teenagers too young to drive cars, who are able to use them to get to school and after-school activities independently. Banning teens from EPACs will reduce their independence and opportunity to choose an active method of travel, while doing nothing to address the ‘hooning’ behaviours of community concern, which are occurring on an entirely different class of device. These behaviours are best addressed by strong enforcement action against illegal e-motorbikes, modified e-bikes, their riders, and their parents.

Another unfortunate consequence of banning children and teens from riding compliant EPACs is the loss of family outdoor recreation options which are supported by these devices. Many families enjoy using mountain bike trails or long-distance recreational trails (such as the Brisbane Valley Rail Trail), with children riding EPACs under the direct supervision of their parents or other responsible adults. The power assistance provided by the compliant EPACs allows children to ‘keep up’ in speed and distance with their family members, helping the whole family enjoy a day outdoors exploring the bush or the city together. Banning these experiences would be a loss to children and families, for no gain.

We would like to reiterate that EN15194-compliant ebikes are, for all intents and purposes, bicycles. Clearly, the community accepts that the benefits of children and teens riding bicycles - to school, to work, for exercise, and for recreation - outweighs the risk of harm. If a teen has sufficient understanding of the road rules to safely ride an unpowered bicycle to school - a judgment call we leave up to the parents, not the state - they are also safe to ride an EPAC.

5. PMD Definition

We would like to highlight that the Definition of a Personal Mobility Device (PMD) within Clause 52 of the Bill differs from the *Commonwealth’s Road Vehicle Standards (Classes of Vehicles that are not Road Vehicles) Determination 2021* which was last amended in December 2025. When defining an EPAC, the Explanatory Notes expressly stated that the desire was to use a nationally consistent standard. However, for PMDs, the Bill clearly moves away from the Commonwealth’s standards by increasing the permissible dimensions, not limiting the number of occupants, and – unlike the national standard – making no requirement for a PMD to have brakes. Considering the complexity of the globally used EN15194 standard for EPACs, the PMD definition is overly simplistic, and state based. This could lead to interstate compliance issues and safety issues.

We can appreciate why there is a community concern with PMDs on footpaths when they don’t require brakes. We call upon the committee to review the definition of PMD and align it to the Commonwealth Standards, which will introduce a basic roadworthy item for the community’s safety – brakes.

5. Recommendations

We respectfully call upon the Committee to recommend the following amendments to the Bill:

1. EPAC Definition:

- Replace the definition of an EPAC with the base Australian Standard AS15194 to create a national approach to standardising EPACs. Alternatively, the base European standard EN15194 could be used as the definition. Do not refer to a specific revision of the standard.
- Prioritise ensuring that the definition of an EPAC encompasses the existing population of compliant EPACs as well as future technologies as they gain import approval; this is best achieved by defining an EPAC as compliant with AS15194.

2. 10km/h Footpath Speed Restrictions:

- We request that amendments to restrict speeds on footpaths and shared paths be omitted from the Bill.
- We support the requirement to ride with due care and attention around pedestrians to enhance the existing requirement to keep left and to give way to pedestrians.

3. Licensing

- We request that the proposed requirement for riders of compliant EPACs to hold a license to drive a car be removed from the legislation.

4. Age restrictions

- We request that the age restrictions on compliant EPACs be removed from the legislation.

5. PMD definition

- Align to Commonwealth standard to include controls of occupant numbers, and brakes – an important safety feature.

In conclusion, we trust that these suggested amendments to the Bill in its current form are favourably considered, because the Bill as written will be profoundly detrimental to active travel in Queensland. If Queensland is to be a healthy, environmentally friendly and supportive place for people to live, then it is unacceptable to greatly curtail the use of a key form of active transport. Active enforcement and removal of existing illegal devices, along with increased investment in separated infrastructure are the answers, not punishing people who have complied, acted responsibly and abided by the laws that currently govern EPACs.

4 April 2026

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