

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

Submission No: 1860

Submission By: DT Recumbents Australia

Mr Jim McDonald Chair,
State Development, Infrastructure and Works Committee
Queensland Parliament
Cnr of George and Alice Streets,
Brisbane QLD 4000 7 April 2026

Dear Jim,

DT Recumbents Australia is a specialist pedal cycle dealer concentrating on supplying recumbent style bicycles and tricycles for people of all ages and abilities. We understand the serious safety issues created by dangerous, illegal electric motorbikes and support the proposed measures to seize and otherwise prevent the use of these illegal devices.

We are, however, extremely concerned about the draft legislation regarding e-bikes and e-mobility devices. This draft law unfairly targets safe, legal e-bike use despite the fact that all of the evidence presented to the inquiry was that compliant devices are not the problem.

If the bill is passed in it's present form, it will:

- Severely impact many people who rely on safe legal e-bikes for personal mobility;
- Render hundreds of thousands of presently legal e-bikes as illegal with little chance of returning them to legal status;
- Have little effect on the sale of illegal electric motorcycles sold "for private property use only".

DT Recumbents Australia seeks urgent changes to the draft Bill including:

- Keeping the present clear and workable e-bike definition as per the Vehicle Standard (Australian Design Rule – Definitions and Vehicle Categories), allowing presently legal e-bikes to continue in use.
- Dropping all licensing, speed limits and age bans for legal e-bikes – they are unreasonable, backed by no evidence, and unnecessary if we get rid of illegal devices;
- Call on the Queensland Government to invest in active transport infrastructure as was included in the Parliamentary Inquiry's recommendation.

We trust you will give serious consideration to these concerns.

Yours Sincerely



James Ditton,
Director,
DT Recumbents Australia.

DT Recumbents Australia caters to a small but important section of the community, those that would like to cycle but do not wish to use an upright bicycle. Their decision is driven by simple preference, but also by health concerns like poor balance, disabilities, or Doctor recommendations. We modify production trikes to suit our customers' needs as required.

Our cycles are predominately recumbent tricycles, where the rider sits in an "armchair like" reclined position and utilise pedals positioned in front of the rider. The ride position is much lower than an upright bike, and provides a very comfortable, stable and secure ride experience. Owners and buyers are increasingly requesting e-assist to be fitted.



We have previously imported factory fitted e-assist, however that is no longer an option due to the recent (December 2025) change in the import laws. At present we still have the option of aftermarket e-assist systems that meet the current legal definition of electrically power assisted cycles.

Licensing and Health.

The explanatory notes to the bill completely ignores the health benefits of cycling, in stating "While there will be some persons who are not medically able to obtain a licence, the Bill does not prevent those persons from accessing alternative and safer modes of transport that are better suited to their circumstances, such as mobility scooters or other assisted mobility devices." (Bill Page 16 para 3).

We have seen many cases where a person's health has improved with the ability to cycle.

Case 1: A man who had a stroke and suffered impairment to his left side and some mild cognitive functions – the medical and support staff predicted wheel chairs, home and vehicle modifications, and a poor personal outlook. The subject bought a trike with e-assist, and has improved his medical condition and 10 years later is still managing to live and do ordinary

lifestyle travel tasks with minimal external assistance. He is now on his fourth recumbent having worn out the previous three.

Case 2: A lady with Multiple Sclerosis, an e-assist trike allows her to overcome the neuromuscular fatigue, balance problems, and has greatly improved heart/lung function, mental health, and stave off further deterioration with exercise. The aspect of taking part in activities with her life partner cannot be measured but is immense.

To arbitrarily take these benefits away and think that “accessing alternative and safer modes of transport that are better suited to their circumstances, such as mobility scooters or other assisted mobility devices” is a valid option sounds incredibly patronising and condescending on the part of the author of the notes to the bill.

E-Bike Standards.

Prior to 2021, the Australian Vehicle Standard allowed e-assist cycles complying with the European Standard EN15194, and the removal of this standard meant that e-assist tricycles could be legally used on roads.

Re-introduction of the EN15194 standard would be retrograde step and adversely effect riders of tricycles and similar pedal cycles.

EN15194:2017+A1 is a standard written around city and trekking bicycles, and expressly defines a bicycle as having two wheels, and a specified seat height. Tricycles obviously have more than two wheels, and recumbent trikes have seats much lower than the required seat height. In addition, EN15194:2017+A1 contains structural testing of features and parts that are not compatible or used on recumbent cycles.

For this reason trikes, and recumbent trikes cannot be certified to EN15194:2017+A1 and will be rendered illegal for road use if the draft bill was passed as written.

The recent change to the import requirements has forced us to stop importing and selling factory e-assist trikes that meet our present EPAC definition but do not meet EN15194:2017+A1. Australian Border Force and freight clearance companies are actively confirming e-assist status of imports.

New South Wales has recently mandated compliance with certain clauses of EN15194:2017+A1 to allow E-bikes to be sold in NSW. NSW is also set to mandate EN15194:2017+A1 as the only legal e-bike category for use on roads in NSW. To be able to sell an e-bike in NSW, a certificate of compliance must be issued by NSW Fair Trading or a Recognised External Approval Scheme member. I have contacted several of these companies and they have confirmed that they do not have the capability to test e-bikes but only review data packages and issue the approval based on overseas test results. To date there are no e-assist recumbent trikes approved for sale in NSW as the manufacturers do not test to EN15194 standards.

The draft Bill contains provisions for issue of a “Special Circumstances Permit” to allow use of an EPAC that does not comply with EN15194:2017+A1. This, together with the sudden non-compliance

of an estimated 230,000 presently legal e-bikes will present huge and possibly impossible hurdles to overcome.

Consider:

- EN15194:2017+A1 only came in to effect in August 2025;
- Manufacturers would not have been testing to EN15194:2017+A1 for models sold prior to August 2025;
- Test data is exceedingly unlikely to be available for these cycles;
- There are no accredited test laboratories in Australia capable of testing to EN15194, let alone the later revisions;
- As retailers and manufacturers will not have supporting data available, responsibility for compliance will fall to individual owners. An impossible task.;
- Special Circumstances Permit responsibility will fall to individual owners, where the lack of test facilities, standards or stated specifications will make issuance of a permit near impossible.

The Committee and the Government both made a fundamental error in recommending a crackdown on safe, legal e-bike users. The Committee was clearly advised that legal e-bikes were not the problem.

The Department of Transport and Main Roads (DTMR) provided a briefing note advising – in line with clear information on its website - that Queensland has an existing clear distinction between legal and illegal e-bikes and that legal e-bikes were not the problem.

Appearing before the committee, Deputy Director General Geoff Magoffin said – “The department is not aware of any significant safety issues with legal e-bike use; however, we are very concerned about the increasing use of illegal devices”.

Backing this up, RACQ Head of Public Policy Dr Michael Kane said - “there is no real problem with e-bikes and we should not be getting caught up with legal e-bikes.”

In spite of this, the Committee and Government have proposed legislation that will make Queensland the worst place in the world for e bikes, but still won't fix the problem. The bill will:

- Make the vast majority of the 200,000+ currently legal e-bikes illegal, even on roads, because they don't meet the EN15194 2017:A1 standard or don't have a compliance marking, and open their riders to a \$6,676 penalty if they continue to ride them;
- Render hundreds of kilometres of shared paths, bike paths and rail trails which have been built for cycling unusable for safe, legal e-bike riders due to the dangerously low 10km/h limit, thus pushing those riders onto higher-risk on-road environments;
- Exclude older Queenslanders and people with disabilities who cannot obtain any form of driver's licence;
- Remove safe, legal e-bike options for children riding to school;
- Particularly harm vulnerable neighbourhoods where more than 30% of households do not have a licence-holder and where e-bikes are used by workers to get to manufacturing, warehouse and logistics jobs; and,

- Destroy or severely harm businesses that rely on safe, legal e-bikes including retailers, tourism operators, food delivery businesses and e-mobility hire operators.

The Bill must be amended

The Bill must be amended so it targets illegal devices without punishing the thousands of Queenslanders doing the right thing. We are calling for three changes –

1. A clear and workable e-bike definition – that doesn't retrospectively make 200,000+ compliant bikes illegal. Keeping the existing Australian Vehicle definition of an EPAC, plus established AS and EN15194 standards (to cover the existing safe, legal bike fleet) appears an ideal solution.
2. Dropping all licensing, speed limits and age bans for legal e-bikes – they are an unreasonable imposition on the families, older people and people with disabilities who are most likely to use safe, legal e-bikes. They will cause crashes both through low speed crashes caused by loss of control, or by forcing riders into on-road traffic. There is not and has never been any evidence to support them.
3. Investment in the infrastructure Queensland needs – so we don't lose the benefits of the active transport and e-mobility revolutions. There is not one additional dollar allocated to new transport infrastructure in this bill.

DT Recumbents Australia wish to thank Bicycle Queensland for use of their talking points as presented to the Parliamentary Committee in Bicycle Queensland's submission, and acknowledge our broad support for their submission to the Committee.

EN15194 and Recumbents.

EN15194 is the European Standard for electrically power assisted cycles (EPAC) and has been around for some time. The initial issue was in 2009 with a significant amendment in 2017, and a minor amendment in 2023.

- The initial issue covered the electrical performance of the e-assist and referenced other machinery directives for the mechanical parts of the cycle.
- The 2017 update expanded on the electrical requirements, and incorporated mechanical standards, designs, and testing into the 15194 document.
- In 2023 added additional requirements for battery packs, and more detailed technical documents and test reports.

Applicability

The introduction to the present EN15194:2017 standard states:

- “Following the completion of a risk analysis, the focus in this standard is on EPAC as bicycles for city and trekking. Folding bicycles are included.”

The stated scope of the standard is:

- “This European Standard specifies safety and safety related performance requirements for the design, assembly, and testing of EPAC bicycles and subassemblies intended for use on public roads, and lays down guidelines for instructions on the use and care of such bicycles.” and
- “This European Standard applies to EPAC bicycles that have a maximum saddle height of 635 mm or more.”

Applicability for Recumbents.

In short, recumbent bikes and trikes are outside of the scope of the standard, initially because of the seat height requirement for both bikes and trikes, and because the standard specifically uses the term “bicycle” and then defines a bicycle as having two wheels.

Leaving aside the seat height and two wheel requirement, scanning through the standard raises multiple other issues.

Clause 4.3.5.1 Brakes

“At least two independent braking systems must be fitted, at least one on the front wheel and one on the rear wheel; and no hand shall need to be taken from the handlebar to operate brake levers.”

For tadpole trikes it is well accepted that rear wheel braking constitutes a significant hazard, and a locked and skidding rear wheel rapidly leads to loss of directional control with an extremely high probability of vehicle roll over and rider injury. Anything other than a parking brake is considered unsafe by production trike manufacturers.

Clause 4.3.6.6 Steering Assembly

This specifies the strength and safety tests to be applied to the handlebars, stem and quill assembly or stem extension. Recumbent trikes typically do not have these items fitted, and while recumbent bikes may use some of these, they are not installed in a manner consistent with the test requirements.

Clause 4.3.7 Frame Tests

The frame tests are designed around the typical diamond shaped upright bicycle and do not relate at all to the typical recumbent bike or trike. Both the positions of, and effects of applied loads on recumbent style cycles are very different to upright bikes and the specified test loads and processes would not represent reality.

Clause 4.3.8 Front Fork

Tadpole trikes do not use a fork to retain the front wheel, compliance with this section is not possible.

Clause 4.3.9.4 Wheel Retention

Tadpole trikes do not use conventional wheel retention methods for front wheels ie drop outs/ quick release/axle nuts and cannot be tested to this standard. Likewise rear wheels for delta trikes.

Clause 4.3.15 Saddles and Seat Posts

Neither saddles or seat posts are used on typical recumbents and the test requirements of this clause cannot be met.

Clause 4.3.19.4.5 Pedal Reflectors

“Each pedal shall have reflectors, located on the front and rear surfaces of the pedal.” Fairly difficult on a recumbent where the rear surface of the pedal usually has a foot on it.

Summary.

Compliance with EN15194 is often stated as “certified to” or “complies with”, but there is a difference in interpretation between these terms. “Certified” means independently tested by an accredited organisation, while “complies with” is a statement from the manufacturer.

Increasingly it is looking like “Certified” is the required standard. NSW has in place already a process where it reviews the documentary evidence from the test laboratories and issues a NSW approval for the bike (in relation to retail sales).

Certification from an approved test facility would only be granted if the product meets all of the test standard. The conclusion must be drawn that recumbents cannot be certified to EN15194:2017 and A1:2023. Trike manufacturers I have contacted confirm this.

This inability to meet the standard means importation of a recumbent e-cycle is not immediately possible under the new import rules, although I believe there is scope for a separate advisory ruling allowing importation, but that has not been tested.



Further implications are found in NSW. The Ministerial Media Release 20th Feb 2026 includes a statement that NSW will adopt EN15194 as the standard to be met for legal on road use in NSW commencing March 2026. There is a 3 year transition period for bikes already purchased with a power limit up to 500 watts but otherwise compliant with the Australian Road Vehicle Design Rules.

With the new requirements announced 20th Feb, recumbent bikes and trikes will become illegal for road and related area use in NSW in March 2029.

[Minimum age to ride an e-bike is a path to safer streets | NSW Government](#)

The Queensland draft e-mobility bill introduces mandatory EN15194:2017+A1 as the standard for electrical assist cycles. This will make all e-assist trikes and recumbent cycles illegal for road and public area use.