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

Submission No: 1938
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Publication: Making the submission and your name public

Submission on Proposed Changes to E-Bike Regulations

To Whom It May Concern,

We appreciate the opportunity to provide input on the proposed changes to e-bike regulations. As a business operating within the e-mobility sector, we strongly support initiatives that improve safety outcomes for all road and path users. However, we believe the current proposals risk being disproportionate, insufficiently targeted, and potentially counterproductive to broader transport, environmental, and accessibility goals.

1. The Importance of Evidence-Based Regulation

Available data suggests that the risks associated with e-mobility devices are being overstated relative to their actual impact:

Approximately 75% of incidents involve riders over 16, indicating this is not primarily a youth compliance issue
Only around 20% of "bike/scooter" injuries are confirmed to involve e-devices
The average age of e-bike fatalities (~34) reflects adult commuters rather than recreational misuse
Over 50% of incidents involve alcohol or lack of helmet use, both of which are already illegal

Additionally:

There are an estimated 300,000–500,000+ e-mobility devices in Australia, yet fatalities remain extremely low (approximately 12 annually)
This represents a tiny fraction of total road deaths (300+ per year)

These figures indicate that the overall risk profile of compliant e-bikes is relatively low and does not justify broad, restrictive measures.

2. The Problem of Over-Generalisation

A key concern is the grouping together of:

Pedal-assist e-bikes
Throttle-controlled e-bikes
Electric scooters
High-powered electric motorbikes

These are fundamentally different in terms of:

Speed capability
Weight and inertia
Intended use
Risk profile

Regulating them under a single framework risks misidentifying the actual source of safety issues. Evidence suggests that illegal or modified high-powered devices, rather than compliant pedal-assist e-bikes, are responsible for the majority of serious incidents.

3. Accessibility and Equity Impacts

The proposed restrictions—particularly around throttles and licensing—risk disproportionately affecting:

Older riders (many of our customers are 40+)
Individuals with knee, joint, or mobility limitations
People who rely on e-bikes as an alternative to driving but do not hold licences

Throttle functionality is often misunderstood. For many users, it is not about speed, but about accessibility and usability—

allowing them to:

Start from a stop without strain
Ride despite physical limitations
Use e-bikes as a viable, low-impact transport option

Removing throttle access would effectively exclude a significant portion of users from participating in e-mobility.

4. Infrastructure as a Core Issue

Infrastructure remains one of the most significant contributors to safety outcomes.

There is a lack of dedicated bike lanes and safe cycling infrastructure
Riders are often forced to choose between unsafe roads or impractical shared paths

At the same time, proposals such as a 10 km/h speed limit on bike paths create further challenges:

This speed is impractically slow for commuting purposes
It discourages adoption of e-bikes for transport
It may unintentionally push riders back onto roads or into cars

If the policy goal is to reduce congestion and improve safety, then enabling efficient, practical commuting speeds is essential.

5. Inconsistencies in Licensing Proposals

The introduction of licensing requirements raises several concerns:

A person can ride a conventional bicycle at high speeds without a licence, yet an e-bike rider may require one
Licensing would create barriers to entry for low-cost, accessible transport
It risks excluding individuals who are unable to obtain licences

This creates an inconsistent and inequitable regulatory framework.

6. Environmental and Economic Considerations

E-mobility plays an important role in addressing broader societal challenges:

Reducing congestion
Lowering transport costs for households
Minimising environmental impact

With fuel prices rising toward $3 per litre, affordable alternatives are increasingly critical. Restrictive regulation risks pushing people back toward car dependency at a time when diversification of transport is most needed.

7. Technical Clarifications

It is also important that regulations reflect accurate technical understanding:

The 250W motor limit relates primarily to torque, not top speed
Higher wattage (e.g., 500W) often improves hill climbing and load capacity, not necessarily unsafe speed

Misinterpretation of these specifications may lead to ineffective or misdirected policy decisions.

8. A More Balanced Approach

We strongly support a regulatory approach that is:

Targeted: Focused on illegal, modified, and high-powered devices
Enforced: Prioritising compliance with existing laws (helmets, alcohol restrictions)
Proportionate: Reflecting the actual risk profile of compliant e-bikes
Enabling: Supporting adoption of safe, sustainable transport
9. Alternative Policy Suggestions

We encourage consideration of:

Stronger enforcement against non-compliant and modified devices
Investment in cycling infrastructure and separated lanes
Retaining throttle functionality for accessibility
Reviewing path speed limits to support practical commuting
Exploring a tiered system, such as:
Allowing higher-speed e-bikes (e.g., up to 60 km/h) on roads
Introducing a light registration category (lower than motorcycles)

This type of framework would better align regulation with real-world usage and risk.

Conclusion

We fully support the goal of improving safety outcomes. However, we believe the current proposals risk placing unnecessary restrictions on compliant riders while failing to adequately address the true sources of risk.

E-mobility represents a valuable opportunity for Australia's transport future—offering affordability, sustainability, and accessibility. Regulation should enable these benefits while addressing genuine safety concerns through targeted, evidence-based measures.

We appreciate the opportunity to contribute to this process and would welcome further consultation.