QUEENSLAND WALKS

We represent walking for all Queenslanders

Parliamentary Inquiry

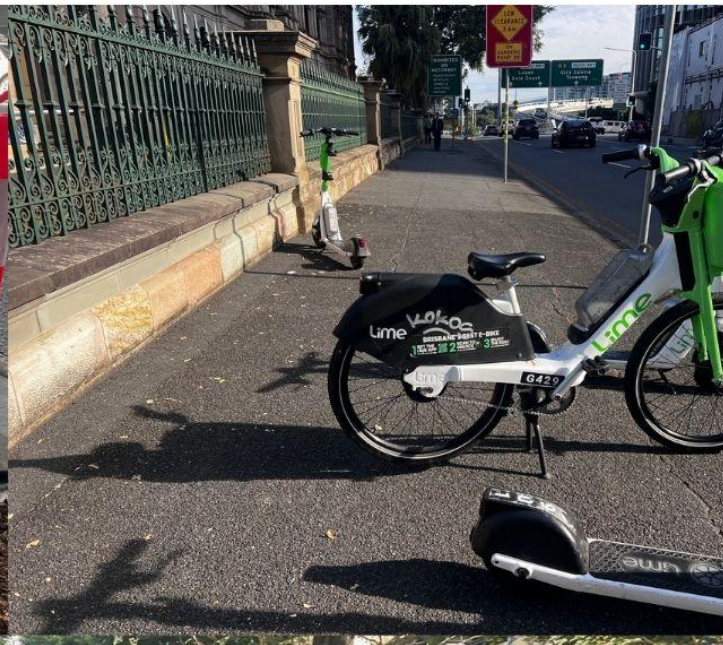
E-mobility safety and use in QLD

Date:

20 June 2025

Prepared By:

Anna Campbell, Executive Officer



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QUEENSLAND WALKS

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Friday 20 June 2025

The Hon Brent Mickleberg MP
Minister for Transport and Main Roads
GPO Box 2644
Brisbane QLD 4001

Dear Hon Minister Mickelberg

Re: Congratulations on initiating the E-Mobility Inquiry

On behalf of Queensland Walks, we would like to support and congratulate you on initiating the E-Mobility Parliamentary Inquiry. As an organisation committed to advancing walkability and improving pedestrian safety across Queensland, we welcome this Inquiry as a meaningful platform to address the impacts of e-mobility devices on people walking, rolling and strolling.

Queensland Walks is dedicated to fostering good quality walking environments. By working together with community members, organisations, government, and policymakers, we aim to create a healthy and active Queensland where walking, rolling and strolling is an option for everyone.

As road users, people who walk, run, roll and stroll ('pedestrians') are the most vulnerable to injuries and fatalities of all road users, and are overrepresented in hospital admissions, short and longer-term injuries and through lives lost. **Pedestrians consistently make up 14% of the total road fatalities in Queensland** (21% motorcycling, 14% pedestrians in lives lost in Queensland to road trauma). According to the Department of Transport and Main Roads, Personal Mobility Device users account for a small but growing percentage of road fatalities and injuries.

Whilst we have much more to be done to protect e-mobility users from harm to themselves and harm to others, **we would like to ensure that an increasing focus is spent on preventing pedestrian injury and fatalities.**

We have continued to advocate and raise our concerns with state and local governments about the unintended consequences of e-mobility on Queenslanders who walk, run, roll and stroll (pedestrians) as part of the vital discussion about improving road safety for everyone and especially pedestrians.

This Inquiry therefore is a timely and important step toward addressing the challenges, concerns and opportunities presented by the increase in popularity and use of e-mobility devices in our transport network. **We acknowledge the work previously undertaken by Transport and Main Roads,** specifically the Licensing, Automated Vehicles & Registration team who formed the **Personal Mobility Devices safety and parking advisory group of which Queensland Walks has been a founding stakeholder and contributor.**

Please note in our submission, we will refer to all Personal Mobility Devices (PMDs) as referred to by Transport and Main Roads as 'e-mobility devices' generally, however we will be more specific to the device type when necessary.

We note that e-mobility devices have become a valued and viable transport choice which can:

- help to improve mobility for all
- support people with disability to travel further and more easily
- can help reduce congestion and the transport cost burden to government and individuals
- help increase and sustain public transport use by providing alternative first and last mile solutions particularly in heat and weather events
- and help to increase road safety and reduce injuries and fatalities incurred by easing our reliance on heavier and faster moving domestic vehicles.

Queensland Walks highlights 3 key points relevant to the Inquiry:

1. **Footpaths are provided for people walking, rolling such using devices that aid walking (wheelchairs, prams etc) and strolling, and these users should continue to have first priority for footpaths, rather than being crowded out or less safe by the current usage by mobility devices.**

2. **Proper infrastructure investment for emerging transport like e-mobility is key to their best contribution to our communities. E-mobility plays an important role in Queensland.**

3. **Clear rules for their safe use and parking of devices, and enforcement of those rules, and data collection are key to their successful integration into our communities.**

We refer to our Position Statement on e-mobility (Attachment 1.)

We understand that the Inquiry will focus on certain aspects of e-mobility:

1. Benefits of e-mobility for Queensland
2. Safety issues associated with e-mobility use, including increasing crashes, injuries, fatalities, and community concerns
3. Issues associated with e-mobility ownership, such as risk of fire, storage and disposal of lithium batteries used in e-mobility, and any consideration of mitigants or controls
4. Suitability of current regulatory frameworks for PMDs and e-bikes, informed by approaches in Australia and internationally
5. Effectiveness of current enforcement approaches and powers to address dangerous riding behaviours and the use of illegal devices
6. Gaps between Commonwealth and Queensland laws that allow illegal devices to be imported and used
7. Communication and education about device requirements, rules, and consequences for unsafe use; and
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.

Queensland Walks will focus on responding to items 1, 2, 5, 7 and 8 which includes:

- E-mobility benefits
- safety
- enforcement
- data collection
- communication, and
- pedestrian perspectives.

We especially commend your recognition to review regulation on the sale of devices in unison with the federal government, and the need for infrastructure to keep pace with innovation. We emphasise that the safety and accessibility of public spaces for people who walk must remain a priority as new technologies emerge and allowing the safe parking of devices off footpaths is a high priority for Queensland Walks and our members.

We recognise that e-motorbikes have recently emerged in our recreational and commuting corridors, and in some cases on our footpaths. We have growing concerns about the use of unregistered e-motorbikes illegally accessing footpaths and shared paths as well as the age of riders and lack of experience of these younger riders who are using high-powered devices both capable of causing or experiencing harm.

Queensland Walks looks forward to contributing to the Inquiry by sharing the perspectives of those most affected by changes to footpath use—especially older adults, people with disability, parents and carers, and others who rely on safe, clear, and predictable walking environments. Queensland Walks works in unison and partnership with the Queensland Walking Alliance who represents more than 2 million Queenslanders, Transport and Main Roads and state departments and local government authorities.

We would like to take the time to recognise our Queensland Walking Alliance partners in their submissions and support their recommendations, including but not limited to:

- Queenslanders with Disability (QDN)
- Council on the Ageing Queensland (COTA – Q)
- RACQ
- Bicycle Queensland
- Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA)
- Heart Foundation.

Thank you again for your leadership in bringing this important issue forward for public discussion and evidence-based decision-making.

Yours in health and walking,

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Greg Vann President, Queensland Walks

Key issues for people walking, running, rolling and strolling

1. Pedestrian safety on footpaths and shared paths

Queensland Walks regularly hears from community members who feel unsafe or have experienced near-misses with e-mobility devices on footpaths. Whilst rider behaviour seems to have improved since the introduction of speed restrictions on pathways, shared path use is creating unsafe conditions, particularly for:

- Older adults
- People with vision, hearing or cognitive impairments
- Wheelchair users and people using mobility devices
- Families with young children.

Though footpaths in Queensland are intended and legislated for low-speed e-mobility use (12 km/ hr), some e-mobility devices can exceed safe limits and can be used recklessly in busy pedestrian areas.

People who walk are also finding that many of our shared pathways (which are limited to 25 km/hr) are becoming less comfortable to share due to e-mobility users going faster than a safer speed of 25 km/ hr, and with some riders weaving between walkers and runners. In some locations, the volume of e-mobility users along a corridor is limiting use for people who would like to walk, run or stroll.

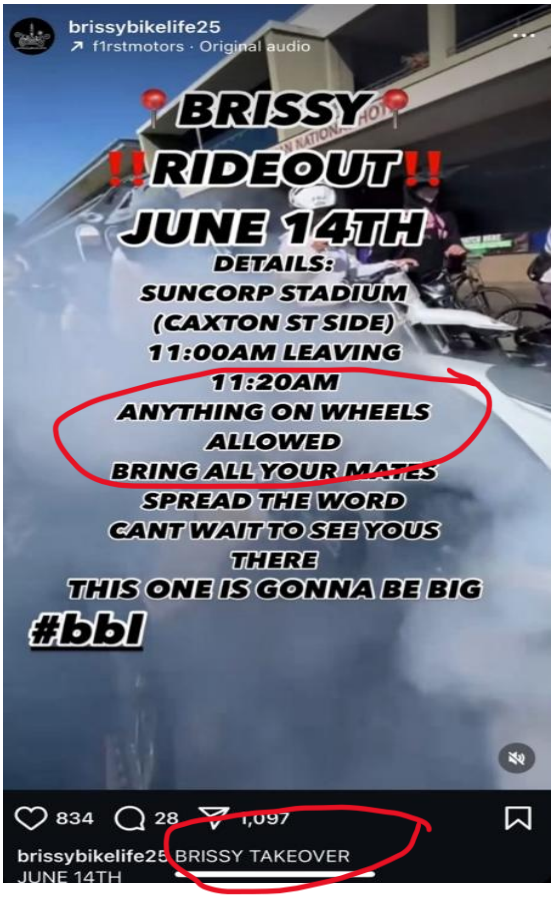
Through our online 2021 survey '*E-mobility and walking in Queensland, tell us what you think*', Queenslanders told us that since e-scooters emerged on footpaths, they have:

- changed the location of where they walk (60% of respondents)
- changed the time of day they walked to (42% of respondents)
- changed the purpose of their walks, especially in busy locations
- tripped and fallen over poorly parked devices or experienced a safety issue (46%)
- had not seen Queensland Police Service pull over an e-mobility users behaving poorly (93%)
- been advised by CBD retailers to be careful of being struck by speeding riders as they step out of the shop
- 7% of respondents reported an injury as a result of an e-mobility device.

Whilst much has changed since 2021 as far as legislation and fines, with some improvements made, some issues continue to cause problems to the pedestrian environment.

Recommendations:

- Minimise or restrict e-mobility use on footpaths in high-pedestrian areas (e.g., CBDs, near transport hubs, and shopping precincts) by **investing in separated e-mobility infrastructure for riding and parking which is <u>located off the footpath or is safely separated from people walking.</u>**
- Mandate parking that doesn't obstruct, impinge on footpath movement or increase clutter
- Enforce e-mobility speed limits in various locations of reported concern, not just at river crossings. Engage with stakeholders on locations of concern.
- Increase user education requirements focused on pedestrian safety and shared path etiquette, bell use, and parking.



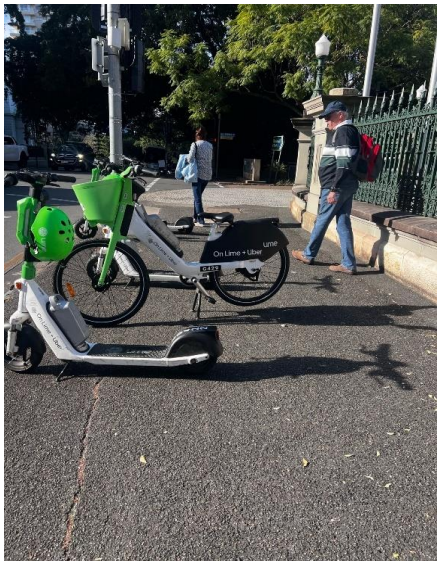
Instagram post to promote an event that encourages e-motorbikes and higher powered e-bikes in Brisbane.

2. Obstructive and dangerous parking

Footpath clutter caused by parked or discarded e-mobility devices presents daily hazards for people who walk, run roll and stroll — especially those who are low vision or blind or use mobility aids including wheelchairs and mobility scooters and for people using prams, wheeling luggage and deliveries. In city environments the footpaths are intended to service a higher volume of foot traffic, especially during peak morning and afternoon, and during events.

Current parking practices often fails to respect pedestrian priority and impede access to:

- Footpaths and kerb ramps
- Bus stops and train station entrances
- Shopfronts and public seating areas
- Tourism, sporting and entertainment precincts.



Recommendations:

- Require operators to implement designated parking areas as part of their business plan and statutory requirement and prohibit indiscriminate parking seen regularly in the examples above in Brisbane City Council area
- Introduce penalties to councils or asset owners who continue to allow the footpath to be blocked in contravention of DDA Action Section 23
- Legislate and enforce e-mobility parking spaces and legislate parking fines through Queensland Government and local legislation
- Introduce mandatory penalties to asset owners and device hirers for poor parking, enforceable by state, local councils and supported by operators
- Footpath allocation to e-mobility may reduce the opportunity to provide shading, seating and other amenities for pedestrians. We therefore recommend a prioritisation of pedestrian infrastructure which will help shape our cities and suburbs and build welcoming Queensland cities for 2032
- Enforce councils to uphold basic human rights and adhere to the Disability Discrimination Act (1992) of allowing access in public spaces.

3. The need for transparent incident reporting

There is a concerning lack of transparency in incident reporting regarding e-scooter and e-motorbike incidents involving pedestrians. Many injuries and near-hits are unreported, and no centralised data exists to help all levels of governments and advocacy organisation to inform policy and safety improvements. Queensland Walks continues to request data collection and a rigorous incident reporting platform so that we can advocate on behalf of pedestrians and ensure that we have the right level of investment in active and e-mobility corridors.

Recommendations:

- Mandate the reporting of all e-mobility incidents involving pedestrians, including injuries, near hits, and general complaints (including parking issues)
- Fund an independent audit of pedestrian safety outcomes related to e-scooter usage
- Support councils and state agencies to track and publish accessible data on e-mobility impacts.

Serious e-scooter collision with pedestrian, Springfield Cen

QPS Media on Apr 15, 2023 @ 1:42pm

A child pedestrian has been seriously injured after being struck by an e-scooter carrying two riders in Springfield Central on Wednesday, April 5.

Detectives from Ipswich Child Protection and Investigation Unit appeal for the riders involved to come forward, with the incident taking place just after 6.30pm near a restaurant dining precinct of a major shopping complex on Main Street.

Initial information indicates the four-year-old male pedestrian was struck by the pair and was transported to hospital with serious head injuries.

The riders were thrown from the e-scooter and both fled the scene without assisting the boy, with one running alongside the other who rode the e-scooter toward the Lagoon and carpark area.

The riders are believed to be Caucasian teenage boys, one wearing a grey-hooded jumper with black pants and bum-bag across the chest, the other with a long dark sleeved shirt with white stripe detail on the sleeves, with grey shorts and a dark cap.

Detectives appeal for any witnesses to come forward, especially multiple bystanders who stopped to help the injured child.

Nearby businesses with CCTV or anyone else with information that may assist investigators are urged to make

QPS Media on Apr 15, 2023 @ 1:42pm

This was published 3 years ago

Woman who can 'barely dress' herself after being hit by e-scooter lashes out

Jocelyn Garcia
September 2, 2021 – 6.05pm

Save Share A A A 33 View all comments

A Brisbane woman who can "barely dress" herself after she suffered a nose bleed, bruised face and a badly sprained wrist when she was hit by an e-scooter rider has criticised authorities for allowing the vehicles on footpaths.

Robyn Abell was on her way to meet her family at the Montague Markets in West End on Thursday, August 26 when she was hit by one of two riders on Beam e-scooters.

Guiding principles for e-mobility integration

Queensland Walks supports a multimodal transport network, but it must be built on **pedestrian-first principles to protect the safety of all road users**. E-mobility devices, are an important transport mode, however, should not diminish the rights of people to be able to walk safely and comfortably. Footpaths and shared paths should be safe environments to traverse; however we note that with significant development and footpath closures and now footpath parking of devices, that walking on footpaths in Queensland is challenging for many, and especially for older Queenslanders, parents with prams and people with disabilities.

We recommend the Committee adopt the following principles:

- **Safety for pedestrians and universal access above all else**
- **Infrastructure that encourages and separates e-mobility devices from pedestrians**
- **Transparent and accessible data collection by Queensland Police, by all Hospital and Health Services and a publicly available dashboard to access data**
- **Clear accountability of operators, asset owners, and users**
- **Mandate and support for Queensland Police Service and local government enforcement and management.**

Conclusion

Walking, rolling and strolling is the most fundamental, inclusive, and sustainable form of transport and a transport and recreational choice by many. **As Queensland works toward healthier and more active communities and invites more people to our state for tourism and events, protection of pedestrian spaces and the places where we walk must remain a priority to all levels of government.**

Queensland Walks urges the Committee to strengthen regulation and enforcement of riding, parking and the sales of e-mobility devices to ensure pedestrian safety is not compromised by e-mobility and new technology usage. **A future-focused transport system must work for everyone, be responsive to new visitors unfamiliar with our cities in 2032, and a transport system that starts by protecting people who walk, run, roll and stroll.**

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Attachment 1. Queensland Walks: Position statement on e-mobility and e-motorbikes

Queensland Walks Position Statements

Queensland Walks: Position statement on e-mobility and e-motorbikes

June 2025

How to make walking safer with increasing e-mobility device use in Queensland

E-mobility plays an important role in the way we move people around our cities and suburbs. The introduction of e-scooters, e-bikes and e-motorbikes (e-mobility devices) to Queensland has presented great opportunities and challenges in the urban environment.

Many of these challenges can be alleviated with the right attention to new and safe infrastructure for people walking and people riding, including:

- appropriate off-footpath parking
- prioritising the needs of more vulnerable transport users
- policy development
- incentives and infringements to users, suppliers and asset owners
- data collection of incidents and transparent reporting of crashes, hospital presentations, injuries and fatalities and infringements
- ongoing consultation with stakeholders like Queensland Walks.

Every e-mobility user is a pedestrian at the start and end of their journey, but not all pedestrians benefit from this technology. In some cases, the introduction of e-scooters to cities like Brisbane, without allocated space for the devices has made walking less easy, less safe, less convenient and less enjoyable for people walking. It is a top priority for the success of our cities and suburbs, and for future events that walking to public transport, to events and to work and school is encouraged. To achieve this, safe footpaths are critical.

Queensland Walks continues to see careless and dangerous footpath parking, despite some changes in road rules and compliance by the Queensland Transport and Main Roads Department (TMR). Greater efforts around enforcement and safety are needed to encourage more walkers. We have not yet found the right balance to create or maintain safe spaces for people walking.

> *'The visitor survey data indicates e-scooters assisted with tourist dispersal, encouraged tourist spending,* ***replaced some car and ride hailing trips (27.14%), and a sizable amount of walking trips (60.71%)****...'*
>
> Leung, A. Zhuy, X,. Nurke, M. Yang, E, Kaufman, B., Griffith University. 2022.

What are the main concerns for walker safety and e-mobility devices?

E-mobility devices have the potential to reduce the reliance and need for using a private vehicle, but they must also improve safety for people walking. In some cases, research has shown (Leung, A. Zhuy, X,. Nurke, M. Yang, E, Kaufman, B. 2022) that people are choosing to ride a device rather than getting the benefit from walking which can have an impact to local business who rely on foot traffic.

Queensland Walks knows that choosing e-mobility rather than walking may be more attributable to the footpath design (e.g. unshaded, uneven surface, gradient not suitable, lack of widths), or the footpath has not been adequately maintained (footpath closure, trip hazards, clutter on path etc). We therefore recommend that increasing investment is directed to footpath upgrades, shaded paths and safe crossings. We refer to our Queensland Walking Alliance recommendations Accessible and Inclusive Streets, and Safer Streets Now.

Queensland Walks has significant concerns about the safety of environments used for walking *and* e-mobility devices including:

- the erosion of footpath and walking spaces due the *number* of devices
- e-mobility users parking the devices in places that significantly:
    - narrows footpaths
    - blocks kerb ramps or
    - blocks entry and exit points or fire escapes and make it especially dangerous and difficult for people using prams or wheelchairs, people with balance or other mobility issues or residents who are low vision or blind.
- people feeling unsafe, anxious and unprotected in places where they walk
- high speeds on shared paths and footpaths
- intoxicated or undesirable riding behaviour
- younger riders using powered devices who are not yet familiar with road rules
- reduced foot traffic for local activation, business and successful placemaking.

> *'Pedestrian and disability interest groups have expressed concerns dockless shared e-devices can create trip hazards or block footpaths. Such concerns are valid, and addressing them will require careful management by scheme operators and local authorities.'*
>
> Leung and Bland, 2022. The Conversation.

> *"I don't mind eScooters I just dislike them being **dumped everywhere**, and trying to walk around them. I also find it not enjoyable to go for a stroll and feel as though people on scooters are riding particularly close or I have to move off the pathway into grass/dirt/mud whilst walking."*
>
> **So, what do you think about eScooters and eBikes?** Understanding visitor and resident experiences and perceptions with micromobility in Brisbane 37
>
> Buning,R., Pham, W., Chen, M. University of Queensland. 2023

Footpath parking of e-devices where we walk

Problem: We continue to see e-scooters parked in inappropriate places on the footpath - regardless of the supplier. Inappropriate parker continues to occur in entertainment, education and employment precincts and left on paths or on shared spaces and near public transport hubs.

Solution: Inappropriate parking can be alleviated by parking off the footpath, and designated parking bays located off the footpath, on street or specific allocated parking. We will rarely recommend footpath parking, particularly in a CBD setting where wide footpaths are necessary to carry peak and event capacity.

We encourage councils with e-mobility service agreements to require contractors who benefit financially from existing infrastructure to be contributing to the budgets of footpath and cycling infrastructure, maintenance and overall improvement of the walking and riding spaces.

DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT 1992 - SECT 23
Access to premises
It is unlawful for a person to discriminate against another person on the ground of the other person's disability:

(a) by refusing to allow the other person access to, or the use of, any premises that the public or a section of the public is entitled or allowed to enter or use (whether for payment or not); or

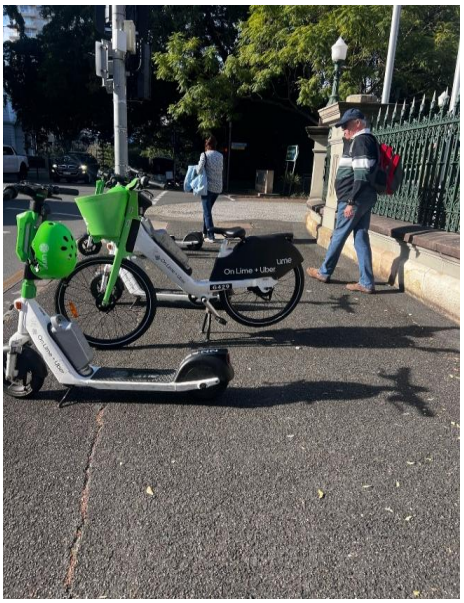
(b) in the terms or conditions on which the first - mentioned person is prepared to allow the other person access to, or the use of, any such premises; or

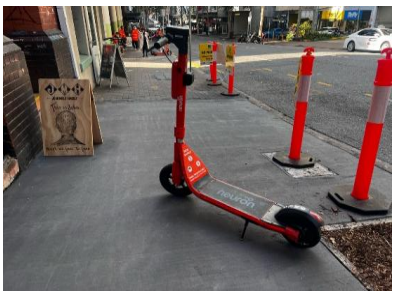
(c) in relation to the provision of means of access to such premises; or

(d) by refusing to allow the other person the use of any facilities in such premises that the public or a section of the public is entitled or allowed to use (whether for payment or not); or

(e) in the terms or conditions on which the first - mentioned person is prepared to allow the other person the use of any such facilities; or

(f) by requiring the other person to leave such premises or cease to use such facilities.





Rider behaviour of e-devices in areas where we walk

Problem: Some riders are still travelling faster than 12.5km/hr on the footpath, and faster than 25 km/hr on shared paths - weaving in between people walking, doubling, and using the devices under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Solution: We support Qld Police Service (QPS) and recommend allocating resources to the policing of speed, behaviour and drug or alcohol use. Injuries or death to pedestrians because of new technology is extremely concerning. We support the work of the Jamieson Trauma Institute research, and we look forward to TMR further funding pedestrian research as they have done with e-mobility, Mobility as a Service and more.

Transport and Main Roads have taken leadership on legislative changes and consultation via the Personal Mobility Devices Safety and Parking advisory group, and we encourage local councils to ensure that the needs of people walking are met with safe and connected footpaths, crossings, shading and more, regardless of any new technology.

E-motorbikes

Problem: Queensland Walks is aware of the increasing popularity of e-motorbikes. We are concerned that these bikes appear to be more like e-bikes when they are technically e-motorbikes and are being used on footpaths, and on shared paths where motorbikes are not permitted. We are equally concerned that Queensland parents are purchasing e-motorbikes from Queensland and online retailers for children without being aware of the requirements to hold a motorcycle licence.

Due to the variety and range of e-bikes, especially fat tyred e-bikes, it is increasingly difficult for Queensland families to navigate what can be legally purchased and ridden on a footpath, or what children are legally able to ride.

Solution: Better checks and balances to ensure that importation guidelines are clear and only legal devices can be sold in Australia and in Queensland, and that all owners are giving a buyer beware document of where e-motorbikes can be ridden, and where they are not legally allowed to be used.

Note: It is critical that Queensland Police, Transport and Main Roads and all media are careful in their definition of e-bikes and e-motorbikes. In the images below, the heading reads 'E-bike Laws and Dangers', when the article and images depict e-motorbikes.

E Bike Laws and Dangers

Inspector Corey Allen on Feb 5, 2025 @ 7:08am

Queensland Police Police (QPS) is reminding residents of rules and safety surrounding e-scooters and e-bikes.

Inner West Police have identified an increased prevalence of e-bikes, e-scooters and e-motorbike use on pedestrian footpaths, bike lanes and roadways in contravention of Queensland road rules.

Senior Constable Chris Tetley from the Bellbowrie Community Beat says there has been a noticeable increase in these vehicles after the Christmas period as parents have unwittingly bought their kids high powered electric bikes.

"People are riding these vehicles and putting themselves and other pedestrians at risk," Senior Constable Tetley said.

In conclusion Queensland Walks recommends:

1. That the Sustainable Transport User Hierarchy is used in all situations to ensure that people walking are prioritised (safety, infrastructure design and more)
2. That state government and councils allocate budget and provide appropriate separation between people walking and people moving on bikes, e-bikes, and skateboards and scooters where identified as high- need and high-volume precincts (pedestrian areas, active transport commuter routes)
3. Appropriate policing and fining of e-scooter riders that are travelling too fast on footpaths, riding dangerously or are under the influence of drugs and alcohol
4. Develop a central reporting mechanism housed with State Government to report and respond to hired e-scooters that are parked in inappropriate areas rather than to each individual company
5. Councils to have higher expectations of contractors who provide e-scooter and bike hire services. Failure to comply must result in infringements or fines so that the hire company is responsive
6. An escalation in the response to managing and policing inappropriate use of e-motorbike riding in urban Queensland locations.

We encourage all forms of active transport that reduces our reliance on private motor vehicles however the uptake of e-mobility should not inhibit the safety and comfort of people who walk, run, roll and stroll, **and we encourage everyone to make people walking a priority in Queensland.**

Queensland Walks

Queensland Walks is dedicated to fostering good quality walking environments. By working together with community members, organisations, government, and policymakers, we aim to create a healthy and active Queensland where walking, rolling and strolling is an option for everyone. Join us in making Queensland walkable for everyone in our community.

*Walking: When Queensland Walks refers to walking, we're talking about walking, rolling and strolling – often called a 'pedestrian'. The word 'pedestrian' can be dehumanising, so we prefer to say people who walk, roll or stroll. When we refer to walking, we use the Queensland Government's definition of walking, rolling and strolling: 'When we talk about walking, we also include jogging, running and moving with the help of a mobility device (such as a wheelchair, mobility cane or a walking frame).' https://queenslandwalks.org.au/what-is-walking/

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