

**Submission
No 28**

**INQUIRY INTO USE OF E-SCOOTERS, E-BIKES AND
RELATED MOBILITY OPTIONS**

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Inquiry into the use of e-scooters, e-bikes and related mobility options

Thank-you for the opportunity to make a submission regarding the use of e-transport, specifically the use of electric unicycles.

I live in regional NSW, work full-time in sustainability in the agriculture sector, have a master's degree in business administration and own an electric unicycle.

I regularly ride my electric unicycle legally on public roads and footpaths in other States due to my frequent personal and work-related travel. As the committee is aware, Personal Mobility Devices (PMDs) are legal, or will imminently be, in all jurisdictions of Australia except NSW, having been recommended and endorsed to be included in the Australian Road Rules in May 2021.

I have found the electric unicycle in particular, to be a remarkably simple and efficient form of personal transport. While travelling interstate, I use it regularly for local transport instead of driving a vehicle. Although most people assume the electric unicycle to be novel and not a legitimate transport option, it is similar to learn as a bicycle as it is stabilised and self-balanced through the use of gyroscopes. The rider controls speed by leaning forwards or backwards, and steers by tilting the unit side to side in a very natural and intuitive motion. If given the opportunity to use electric unicycles in NSW as in other jurisdictions, I am sure the popularity of the device will increase.

Electric unicycles and other small PMDs provide a significant opportunity to reduce congestion on our roads and have been shown in multiple overseas studies to remove a portion of motor vehicle use from the road network. Small enough to be carried on public transport, electric unicycles can play a real role in the first and last mile of transport. If permitted in NSW, I would certainly avoid taking my car on short trips in favor of a PMD. As a new rider of electric unicycles for the past 18 months or so, in my experience the risks and safety issues are similar to bicycle use, and pragmatically could be regulated in a similar way.

I find it perplexing that the NSW Government continues to treat a small personal mobility device such as an electric unicycle as motor vehicle under the Road Transport Act 2013, including using our valuable police and court resources to prosecute alleged offences, despite the Australian Road Rules amendments in 2021 and every other jurisdiction in Australia introducing legislation to enable PMDs.

Moving forward in the years to come, electric vehicles including PMDs will play a significant role in removing congestion, addressing climate change and this arguably should be no different in the State of NSW. Safety and risk are matters which can and should be addressed through pragmatic regulations similar to bicycle use and it's important in my view not to overstate them. Outright bans on these devices, as is currently the case in NSW, are in my view shortsighted and are limiting the freedom of everyday citizens. Importantly it is also

removing a very valid electric transport option which is part of the solution to reducing transport-related emissions.

Thanks again for the opportunity to make a submission and I hope the NSW Government takes a pragmatic approach to this issue moving forward.

Simon Campbell