

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

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

Hi -

I am retired and live inner Sydney near Chinatown and walk every day or two near Paddy's Markets and George St CBD or elsewhere.

I recently read that it was apparently illegal in NSW for an e-bike to be throttle-only, i.e. to not need pedaling.

This surprised me as for maybe years now the hundreds of food delivery e-bikes I see every day have perhaps 95% been driven by throttle-only and when I see someone moving the pedals it almost seems like a random exercise to stretch the legs after sitting too long rather than being required to move the bicycle.

I understand that to comply with legal requirements e-bike renting shops may store or show e-bikes set up legally, and then perhaps verbally only discuss the secret switch or something to allow throttle-only use.

Similarly for maximum power or speed - which I understand can similarly be easily overcome with simple secret switching arrangements.

I was initially horrified by speeding e-bikes zipping too close to me (within 1m) at speed without warning spiking my adrenaline to almost heart attack, but now most e-bikes seem to 'just' avoid that frequent risk of imminent injury or death to frail old pedestrians.

One problem I noted yesterday in George St was a teenage boy riding a short-term-hired e-bike up the tram tracks while looking at people to his left. If I had not seen him and moved quickly out of his way I would likely have been hit. His response on facing forward and seeing me at the last second was to jerk the handlebars to one side and continue without a care.

Typical confrontation with such offenders has been met with shouted abuse or a middle finger from the rider as they recede into the distance - very frustrating and antagonizing for adult pedestrians put in fear of their safety, if not life, when old age hip fractures can be a virtual death sentence.

One scary common behaviour from e-bike riders though scattered pedestrians, e.g. outside Paddy's Markets - is the rider aiming directly at me as they approach, I expect allowing them to decide last moment if I move, so they can then go the other way. Problem is - I spend several seconds in fear of my life with adrenaline fight-or-flight response rising, as I see a bike aiming straight at me - until last moment when it turns to miss me. That is a health risk - putting someone in fear of imminent personal physical harm - the actual legal definition of assault!

As for e-bikes parked blocking footpaths or discarded damaging gardens - almost every day I find a hire bike placed for maximum visual notice - across and blocking my path - and when I have the energy I will then lift and move it out of the way.

Yesterday we walked past one parked on its stand on the side of the footpath, then a few seconds later heard a loud crash. An older woman behind us had simply pushed it over to crash onto the roadway. Expressing a common feeling !

On rare occasions - perhaps twice in the last year or three - I have seen an e-bike stopped by a policeman who then talked to them. I find this insufficient, especially when most riders are overseas student visas who expect to be able to ignore fines and simply return home and

forget about them (and probably never return to Australia as a tourist expecting their passport would be flagged with the penalty owing).

What I would like to see is offending e-bikes simply confiscated, with charges to the e-bike renting company - I can imagine tricky bike rentals carefully word their contracts as all care and no responsibility, and all costs to be borne by the (poor student?) renter - so that may be a wicked problem.

end rant. Hope you can improve things. Best Wishes !