

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

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

In my opinion, an e-bike which can be propelled without the rider needing to pedal, is a motorcycle. As such it should be subject to the existing rules and regulations for motorcycles, such as the rider holding a driving licence, compliance inspections, insurance and of course riding only on the road.

It is not usually legal for any bicycle ridden by an adult to be used on the footpath. However in the city our footpaths have become something of a racetrack for delivery riders, who seldom observe the road rules or pedestrian etiquette. Unlike a conventional bicycle, it is difficult for pedestrians to anticipate what e-bike riders are going to do or how fast they can move. None of the conventional signals (such as the rider working to accelerate) exist. e-Bikes are also very quiet and can seldom be heard approaching from behind.

I do not think there is any serious attempt made to police the existing e-bike regulations. I have heard that e-bikes which do not require to be pedalled are not legal, and yet it seems to me that most e-bikes I see being ridden in the city are self-propelled. Perhaps the law needs to be applied.

I appreciate the difficulty in determining the status of a bicycle rider, be it as a pedestrian or something else. e-Bikes which do require pedalling extend this conundrum, as do e-scooters. Personally I think it would be a responsible move to obligate third party insurance cover for any powered means of transport, so that any collision, especially with a person, would be a claimable event. I don't doubt pedestrians have been injured in collisions with e-bikes and e-scooters, and I imagine getting compensation for injuries sustained would be a matter for the civil courts and as such, not likely to be worth the substantial financial risk.

I have also seen some inappropriate behaviour from drivers of four wheel disability scooters and I think insurance should apply to them as well given they are usually used on the footpath and are quite heavy.

It does not help that we live in a society where our safety is assumed to be a given while walking on the footpath. People regularly walk along wearing headphones so that they may be unable to hear what is happening nearby, and with their eyes focussed on their mobile phone so that they are unaware of approaching bodies until the last moment. If we accept this behaviour it seems insurance for the riders or drivers of any sort of machinery which might be used on the footpath should be obligated.

There is the question of speed. I have seen e-bikes and scooters which can travel at the speed of urban traffic. Perhaps we need to distinguish between various classes of e-machinery to ensure that high speed machinery is only used at speed on the road. I don't think I have ever seen a fast conventional cyclist riding on the footpath at speed.