

**Submission
No 174**

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

Organisation: Ashfield Bicycle Users Group (AshBUG)

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NSW Parliament

Legislative Council

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

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing, on behalf of Ashfield Bicycle Users Group (AshBUG) in support of the growth in the availability and use of e-bikes. Our personal experience leads us to believe that e-bikes are making it possible for many people to ride, who would otherwise not do so, due to fitness, age or convenience, and so enabling a shift to active transport.

E-bikes, and particularly cargo bikes, offer a value proposition that is different to an ordinary bicycle by delivering the convenience and economy of an ordinary bicycle without excessive rider effort. Ride2Work Day statistics show the average commuting distance in Australia, by bike, lies between five and ten kilometres (Bauman et al, 2008). A single battery charge, which can now be completed in a few hours, will power most commuting e-bikes for a working week. Over these distances the value proposition offered by e-bikes has the potential to draw many new riders away from other modes and into active transport.

The growth of e-bike use will stall, however, without adequate infrastructure. Geoffrey Moore, (Moore G.A., 2014), suggested that innovative and disruptive products reach a point in their early life cycle when initial sales are interrupted by limitations in technology and a way must be found to drive sales across this gap or the product will fail. This idea can be used to explain the position of Australian e-bike sales, in comparison to Europe, when personal perception of safety is accepted as the causing the gap in Australian sales. There are early adopters in the market, but e-bikes will not be taken up by the larger majority until there is enough infrastructure, integration and cultural change in place for new riders to feel safe. The infrastructure, facilities and bicycle transport culture that has grown from the integrated transport plans in many European cities have supported the engagement of new riders.

The recent webinar conducted by Austroads, Increasing Active Transport Mode Share, discussed the need for a network of quiet streets in suburbs created by modal filters which restrict the movement of motor vehicles; the need for separated bicycle paths to ensure a perception of safety; and the need for these facilities to be built with destinations in mind, such as schools, parks, retail centres and particularly railway stations. Participation in active transport will not increase without an increase in both the reality and the perception of personal safety that is created by adequate infrastructure.

Australian jurisdictions originally adopted 'European Standard EN 15194:2009 and EN 15194:2009+A1:2009: Cycles – Electrically power assisted cycles – EPAC bicycles' and created a common standard and definition Australia wide (NSW, 2015). e-bikes that incorporate pedelec, limited at 25kph, with motors limited to 250watts of consistent output were allowed. Throttle only operated e-bikes do not align to this standard and the unregulated importation of these models has created a situation open to abuse and conflict with other cyclists, pedestrians and motor vehicle drivers. We do not support the introduction of throttle only operated e-bikes.

We recommend:

1. Increase funding of active transport to 5% of the transport budget.
2. The creation of a network of quiet streets across active transport routes that lead to practical destinations.
3. Ban the importation of throttle only operated e-bikes.

We see the growth of e-bikes in a city and state striving to move towards increased active transport as necessary and advantageous, but, contingent on adequate infrastructure.

Kind regards

President

Ashfield Bicycle Users Group (AshBUG)

Austrroads, *Increasing Active Transport Mode Share*, 2024, webinar, viewed on 22 July 2024 at <https://austrroads.com.au/publications/active-travel/web-r711-2-24>

Bauman A., Rissel C., Garrard J., Ker I., Speidel R., Fishman E., 2008 *Cycling: Getting Australia Moving: Barriers, facilitators and interventions to get more Australians physically active through cycling*, Cycling Promotion Fund, Melbourne

Moore, G. A., 2014, *Crossing The Chasm; Marketing And Selling Disruptive Products To Mainstream Customers*, 3rd. ed., Harper Business, New York.

NSW Government, 2015, *Roads and Maritime*, Unregistered Vehicles, viewed on 14 September 2015 at <http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/roads/registration/unregistered.html>