

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

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

I am making this submission as daily e-bike commuter living and working in Sydney. I have been riding an e-bike to work and back every day, from Glebe to the CBD, for the past 10 years and therefore have a very good understanding of the issues. These issues have really only come about in the past couple of years, however they have got a lot worse quickly.

Good e-bikes are a wonderful way to travel. I use my e-bike to travel to work as well as at weekends if I need to go somewhere quickly and know I'll struggle to park. For instance, I would always prefer to ride my e-bike to Newtown rather than drive, as the parking is impossible in Newtown. As a family, it is effectively used as a second vehicle.

The main points I'd like to make in this submission relate to:

- the increase in dangerous car driving since COVID that is not being talked about or dealt with by Police or policy - any focus on modes of transport should start by addressing this as a priority;
- the big increase in e-scooters, that are not regulated;
- the obstruction and littering caused by share bikes with questionable public benefit; and
- the poorly thought out and maintained bike infrastructure in Sydney.

We all benefit if the number of cars is reduced, which is why I'm an advocate and supporter of e-bikes. They allow people like me to commute to work without worrying about getting changed or struggling up hills. However, at least twice a week, I feel my life is put in danger from a dangerous driver running a red light or even worse, overtaking too close at high speed. I frequently have drivers swear and shout at me which is quite terrifying. Why have I never heard of a driver being fined for this behaviour, yet many friends who regularly ride bikes have been fined for some minor infringement. I'm assuming its simply because they are easier targets. We need a public campaign to remind drivers that red lights are not optional!

In terms of e-scooters, these are posing a safety risk for pedestrians and bike riders alike due to the speed they travel at and the fact that they are clearly not familiar with using shared bike lanes and pedestrian areas. They are zooming about with total disregard for everyone in their path, acting as though rules don't apply to them. As a minimum, e-scooters should be speed restricted to 25kph in the same way e-bikes have to be. However, since they rely totally on a throttle, why are they not banned altogether if e-bikes with throttles aren't allowed? Also, from a safety perspective, if e-scooters are allowed, they should be below a certain weight to reduce the danger to pedestrians. Some of them are the size of a small moped and could kill someone if they hit them at the high speeds they travel at.

In terms of e-bikes, they are a useful means for commuting and are of great benefit to delivery riders. This provides a valuable service to the community who want their food delivered quickly and they make a lot of sense for this purpose. The issue I have is once again, e-bike riders travelling too fast and disregarding safety of other riders, pedestrians and quite often, themselves. If Sydney had safer bike lanes - not shared with pedestrians and not right next to busy pavements where people keep stepping out in front of riders - then delivery riders could travel without causing danger to others. Unfortunately, we don't have such a network and therefore we should be ensuring any bikes on the road are travelling at safe speeds. I think there should also be some limits on the size/weight of e-bikes. When they are the size of a motorbike, they should be only on the road (other than the cargo bikes carrying small kids

that are obviously bigger but these models all seem to comply with the legal speed restriction).

Finally, share bikes. The fleets are in terrible condition, often don't work and so get dumped where ever they happened to break down. They block pavements and accessways and once dumped, it seems to take days before they are moved. Why are private companies allowed to take over our public areas with little benefit to tax payers? Having tried to hire an e-bike on a couple of occasions when I've been in a rush to get across Sydney CBD, both times the bike was faulty and didn't actually work (with no helmet and a basket full of rubbish as well!). This means our pavements are being taken over for a lot less benefit to the public than you might think is occurring. As an experienced e-bike rider, I know that the quality of these bikes is appalling. They are poorly designed e-bikes and very difficult to steer. From experience I can tell you that when you see someone hurtling towards you on a share bike seemingly out of control, it is highly likely that they actually are out of control.

I do not know what the accident rate is, but I hope someone in Government is looking at the injuries sustained by riders of e-scooters and e-bikes and what damage they are causing to others around them. I would be in favour of a requirement to register my e-bike as long as the fee was nominal. The focus should be on having a well maintained and legally compliant bike rather than raising taxes. And I would make it the responsibility of the food delivery companies (not the poorly treated riders) to register their delivery fleets.