

NON-REGISTERED MOTORISED VEHICLES

Organisation: Singleton Council

Date Received: 26/04/2013

Joint Standing Committee on Road Safety (Staysafe Committee)
Inquiry into non-registered motorised vehicles
Submission Singleton Council April 2013

Singleton Council Community Services team conducted consultation with Council staff, and local service providers and community members, both face-to-face and through email. Most participants felt that they could not offer detailed comments on the items of the Terms of Reference, however, some general comments were made:

- a) Status of non-registered motorised vehicles and road safety problems – there was recognition of road safety problems occurring as a result of operators using the roads, rather than footpaths. Issues identified were: sighting issues for road users; “clash” of users, whether pedestrian or vehicular; incompatibility of speed (with pedestrians on footpaths and vehicles on roads); extra space needed on either footpaths or roadways to accommodate these vehicles, and on roadways this would also impact on space allocated for parking. These vehicles could have designated space on roadways, as is allocated for cycleways, but there would be safety issues in allowing them to use cycleways alongside non-motorised bicycles. If these vehicles are to operate on footpaths, this would have severe infrastructure implications, especially in country towns, or on older streets with limited space.
- c) Standards requirements – electric bicycles under a certain wattage/motor size should be treated the same as a normal bicycle, as there is no real discernible difference between the electric bike and a normal bike.
- d) Education - Community-wide education is essential. This includes not only people selling and purchasing a non-registered motorised vehicle, but also pedestrians, motorists, health and rehabilitation staff, and the community as a whole. A checklist could be provided at the point of sale that includes information on whether the vehicle can be safely transported in a taxi, whether it is speed-controlled, as well as information on how to maintain the vehicle and who to call if it breaks down while being used.
- e) Insurance - issues surrounding the use of these vehicles needs to be made clearer.
- f) Regulation – RMS should have responsibility, local government doesn't have the resources. It was recognised that there should not be additional costs or barriers placed on people wishing to purchase a non-registered motorised vehicle, as those barriers could result in increased levels of social isolation; however some method of regulation, not necessarily registration, is essential. In terms of mobility it was felt that, if a person is no longer allowed to drive a registered motorised vehicle, then they should not be allowed to drive a non-registered motorised vehicle. There has to be a balance between ensuring people's access to transport and mobility and ensuring they are safe.
- g) Other - The need to have a service like NRMA for breakdowns was thought essential. With our ageing population, the use of motorised wheelchairs is likely to increase, which will have implications for planning and infrastructure such as wider roads/footpaths, parking requirements, access into buildings, designated routes.



Lindy Hyam
General Manager