

**Submission  
No 155**

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

**Organisation:** NRMA  
**Date Received:** 16 August 2024

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16 August 2024

Portfolio Committee No.6 (Transport and the Arts)  
Parliament of NSW  
Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

To the Committee

**Submission to the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into the  
use of e-scooters, e-bikes and related mobility options**

Please find attached a submission from the NRMA to the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into the use of e-scooters, e-bikes and related mobility options.

As the largest mutual in Australia with more than 3 million Members, the NRMA works with government, industry and community to advocate for continued improvements to Australia's road and transport networks to ensure safety, efficiency and equitability.

Building on our commitment to safe and efficient transport solutions, the NRMA seeks to ensure that e-scooters, e-bikes, and related mobility options, along with their supporting infrastructure, are integrated into the broader transport network in a way that optimises safety, planning, utilisation and productivity across the system.

Should further information on the NRMA's submission be required, please do not hesitate to contact

Yours faithfully

**Robert Giltinan**  
Director of Policy & Public Affairs



## **Submission to the Inquiry into use of e-scooters, e-bikes and related mobility options**

The NRMA has concerns regarding the safety challenges posed by the increasing use of e-scooters and e-bikes in our communities.

While these devices offer an innovative solution to urban mobility and help reduce carbon emissions, their growing popularity has also introduced notable risks, particularly concerning pedestrian safety and battery fires.

The promotion of e-scooters and e-bikes as eco-friendly transport options is undoubtedly beneficial, however it is imperative that integration into our transport system does not compromise public safety.

### ***Pedestrian and rider safety***

- The unsafe operation of e-scooters and e-bikes in urban areas has significantly heightened the risks to pedestrian safety. These vehicles, capable of silent operation and considerable speed, frequently surprise pedestrians, resulting in collisions and near-misses.
- The media has reported on numerous incidents of riders and pedestrians being injured by e-scooters and e-bikes, and our Members have also raised concerns.
- Sydney councils continue to receive reports by vulnerable road users on the dangers posed by e-scooters, e-bikes and other micro-mobility devices.
- Community concerns and the trauma from crashes involving micromobility devices highlights the necessity for stringent safety protocols and speed limitations to protect all users.
- To improve pedestrian and rider safety it is crucial to enforce regulations that restrict these vehicles on footpaths. Encouraging responsible riding through public awareness campaigns and displaying prominent signage will assist in educating both riders and pedestrians regarding safety in shared spaces.

### ***Battery fires***

- Fires caused by lithium-ion batteries used in e-scooters and e-bikes is a serious issue to public safety.
- There have been multiple reports of battery explosions or fires during charging, posing severe risks not only to users, but to the general public and property.
- The NRMA commends the NSW Government for their decisive action in implementing stringent product standards, testing protocols and certification requirements to enhance safety.
- It is imperative these measures be adopted nationally, and the NRMA fully support the NSW Government's initiative to place this regulation on the agenda for the next federal and state Consumer Ministers Network meeting, advocating for a unified approach across Australia.

### ***Compensation for victims***

- Victims of e-scooter and e-bike crashes encounter challenges in obtaining appropriate monetary compensation as a result of the lack of mandatory insurance schemes for e-scooters and e-bikes. The implementation of a third-party mandatory insurance scheme or victim compensation fund would assist in protecting riders and pedestrians.



## **NRMA Policy on E-Scooters**

### ***Enhanced Safety Standards, Enforcement and Compliance***

- Mandate adherence to equipment safety standards similar to BS EN 17128 and IEC/EN 60335-2-29.
- Mandate the use of approved helmets, appropriate protective clothing, and equipment adhering to current safety standards, including horns, lights, and reflectors.
- Introduce random breath testing for e-scooter riders, aligned with measures in place for drivers, to address alcohol-related crashes. A drug level of zero, and blood alcohol level in line with current road use legislation should be enforced.
- Appropriate fines to tackle riding with passengers, travelling on restricted pathways, and usage of a mobile phone while controlling an e-scooter.

### ***Uniform Regulatory Framework***

- Develop a national set of regulations for e-scooter use aligning with the National Transport Commission's guidance on speed limits (10km/h on footpaths, and a 25km/h limit on other paths and local roads) and other operational rules.
- Implement consistent age (16 and above) and alcohol/drug consumption restrictions for e-scooter riders across all states and territories.

### ***Infrastructure Improvements***

- Invest in active transport infrastructure to effectively separate micro mobility devices like e-scooters from pedestrian walkways and vehicular traffic, where practical.
- Enhance public infrastructure for safe e-scooter parking, and install charging facilities in transport hubs.

### ***Public Education and Awareness Programs***

- Government-led education campaigns focusing on responsible e-scooter use, safety norms, and the legal implications of non-compliance.
- Encourage shared scooter scheme providers to develop and promote e-scooter safety awareness programs.

### ***Protecting Riders and Pedestrians (Insurance)***

- Implementation of a third-party mandatory insurance scheme or victim compensation fund to assist in protecting riders and pedestrians.

### ***Enhanced Data Collection and Reporting***

- Establish a national database to accurately track e-scooter-related injuries and fatalities, and compare these with other modes of transportation.
- Standardise the classification of e-scooter crashes across states for consistent and reliable data collection.

### ***Technological Interventions***

- Encourage the adoption of advanced technologies like high-accuracy location tracking, geo-fencing, and remote deactivation to enforce safety regulations.
- Support the development of e-scooters with stability features to reduce the risk of crashes.

### ***Battery Safety and Fire Prevention***

- Call for unified national approach to implementing stringent e-scooter battery product standards, testing protocols, and certification requirements across Australia.
- Advocate for consumer education on safe battery handling, charging practices, and storage of e-scooters.



## **NRMA Policy on E-bikes**

### ***Safety and Compliance Standards***

- E-bikes must comply with the EN15194:2017 standard and be repaired by qualified personnel.
- Support for safety standards including helmet use, and use of warning devices and lighting.
- A unified national approach to implementing stringent e-bike battery product standards, testing protocols, and certification requirements across Australia.

### ***Operational Regulations***

- Speed limits of 10km/h on footpaths, and a 25km/h limit on other paths and local roads, as per National Transport Commission's advice.
- Prohibition on operating e-bikes while using a mobile phone, or under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Age restrictions for unsupervised use of e-bikes (16 and over).

### ***Infrastructure Development***

- Government and private investment to support accessible charging infrastructure and device storage.
- Government investment in additional cycleway infrastructure to effectively separate devices like e-bikes from pedestrian walkways and vehicular traffic, where practical.

### ***Enforcement and Accountability***

- Visible enforcement by Police, addressing violations such as riding under the influence of alcohol, helmet non-use, reckless riding, speeding, and illegal modifications.
- Adequate insurance coverage for e-bike riders under the CTP scheme until alternative long-term arrangements are determined

### ***Public Education and Research***

- Public education campaigns for responsible e-bike use, safe charging, and proper storage and care of e-bikes.
- Improved data collection on e-bike crashes to better understand and mitigate injury risks and funding research programs to address knowledge gaps.