QDN E-Scooter and E-Bike Safety Online Forum – Findings Report

**Date:** Tuesday, 3 June 2025
**Time:** 3:00 - 4:00 PM
**Platform:** Online (QDN Member Forum)
**Organised by:** Queenslanders with Disability Network (QDN)

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## About Queenslanders with Disability Network (QDN)

Queenslanders with Disability Network (QDN) is a statewide organisation by, for, and with people with disability. With a network of 3,000+ members and supporters, QDN ensures that lived experience informs policy, services, and systemic advocacy.

Guided by co-design, collaboration, and innovation, QDN works alongside communities, service providers, businesses, and government to create inclusive, sustainable solutions that empower individuals and amplify the voices of people with disability.

Through 32 Peer Support Groups and a powerful network, QDN drives change, connecting people, supporting future leaders through the Emerging Leaders Program, and influencing government policy through targeted advocacy.

QDN engages diverse communities, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse groups, and rural and remote populations. We believe Queenslanders with disability must be empowered, active, and valued citizens, fully included in all aspects of life - economic, social, civic, and cultural.

## Purpose of the Forum

Over the past two decades, QDN members have been actively involved in informing and shaping the communities where they live, travel, and participate. In recent years, there has been a rapid increase in the use of personal mobility devices, and QDN members have contributed significantly to key initiatives, including the QLD Walking Strategy, the Motorised Mobility Device Discussion.

The purpose of this forum was to gather insights from QDN members regarding the safety, accessibility, and regulation of e-mobility devices - including e-scooters and e-bikes - in Queensland. It was held in the context of the current Parliamentary Inquiry into E-Mobility Safety and Use in Queensland, which seeks community perspectives on the benefits, risks, and policy effectiveness surrounding personal mobility devices (PMDs).

The discussion sought to explore:

* What is currently working well.
* What challenges exist.
* Suggestions for improvements to ensure e-mobility is safe, inclusive, and sustainable

For this forum QDN defined “emobility devices” as Personal Mobility Devices (PMD’s) including e-scooters, e-skateboards, solo wheels and similar devices.​

Also, electric bikes, also known as an e-bike, is a type of vehicle and can be assisted by power when riding.

**The current rules in QLD were discussed:**

* Wearing a helmet​
* Not using your phone while riding​
* Don’t drink and ride​
* Stay at the scene of a crash​
* Speed limit of 25km/hr​

**Some additional rules apply to PMD’s such as:​**

* 12km speed limit on footpaths​
* No doubling​
* People are required to park their devices safely

**Areas QDN sought to explore included:**

1. Benefits of e-mobility​
2. Safety issues – Injuries, crashes​
3. Ownership – risk of fire, storage of batteries​
4. Current regulatory frameworks – what's working in other places​
5. Current enforcement about dangerous riding, illegal devices and parking ​
6. Communication and education about rules and consequences

## Summary of Key Findings

### Benefits of E-Mobility

* E-scooters and e-bikes offer greater independence and mobility options, particularly for people with mild mobility impairments.
* Environmental benefits include reduced noise and emissions.
* When properly managed, PMDs could play a positive role in accessible and inclusive transport.

### Safety and Accessibility Concerns

* Reports of instability at low speeds, inappropriate parking, and unsafe riding near pedestrians - particularly affecting people with vision impairments.
* Injuries and fatalities have increased; infrastructure gaps contribute to these risks.
* Personal testimonies highlighted the lived impact of unsafe or inconsiderate use of scooters, especially for people with disability.

### Regulatory & Enforcement Challenges

* Current rules are unclear, inconsistently applied, and poorly communicated to users.
* Enforcement is limited, especially for private scooters (most devices).
* Modified scooters can exceed safe speed limits (e.g. up to 70–90 km/h), and there is no mechanism for registration or roadworthy checks.

### Infrastructure Gaps

* Participants consistently pointed to a lack of separated infrastructure as a major risk factor.
* Moving scooters off footpaths without offering alternative safe routes shifts the danger rather than solving it.
* There is a need for investment in inclusive active transport infrastructure (e.g. shared paths, separated lanes).

### Education & Communication Deficiencies

* There is no standardised or proactive education about PMD laws.
* Users, particularly young people, often operate devices without knowing the rules or risks.
* The contrast with bicycle safety campaigns (e.g. 1m/1.5m passing laws) was noted as a missed opportunity for PMD regulation.

## Key Themes Identified

* **Infrastructure First**: Safe e-mobility depends on accessible, separated infrastructure that accommodates all users.
* **Inconsistent Regulation**: Current rules are unclear and inconsistently applied.
* **Education Gaps**: Lack of formal training or public awareness campaigns leaves users uninformed.
* **Equity and Accessibility**: People with disability are disproportionately affected by unsafe PMD use. Inclusive planning is essential.
* **Enforcement Limitations**: Private devices lack enforceable standards. No registration or competency checks.
* **User Responsibility**: Stories from members highlighted how user behaviour—whether respectful or reckless—significantly affects community safety.

## Suggestions from Members

Participants made practical suggestions, including:

* Co-designing mobility options and regulations with people with disability.
* Clearer, accessible signage and education around scooter use and rules.
* Infrastructure upgrades: more bike racks, shared pathways, and speed-controlled zones.
* Consider implementing registration or certification for private scooter use.
* Launching statewide education campaigns like those for bicycles.
* Trialling adaptive devices and promoting inclusive e-mobility options in public schemes.

## Conclusion and Next Steps

This forum reinforced that while e-mobility offers promising benefits - such as enhanced independence, improved sustainability, and affordable transport options - it also introduces critical safety and accessibility challenges for people with disability. From unclear regulations to infrastructure gaps and limited enforcement, participants shared thoughtful, experience-driven insights that highlight the urgent need for more inclusive policy, design, and education.

QDN remains committed to ensuring that people with disability are not only considered but actively involved in shaping the future of e-mobility in Queensland. The findings from this forum will directly inform our formal submission to the Queensland Parliamentary Inquiry into E-Mobility Safety and Use. Importantly, these insights strengthen the call for co-designed approaches that place lived experience at the centre of reform. Together, we can help shape safer, more inclusive transport systems that work for all Queenslanders.