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LGA submission **Personal Mobility Devices** **and e-bikes**

August 2026

lga. South
Australia

Executive summary

Local governments manage approximately 75% of Australia's road network and are responsible for a significant proportion of the pedestrian, cycling and shared-use infrastructure that supports active transport across the South Australia¹. Councils play a critical role in road safety, local infrastructure delivery, community education and awareness and creating well-managed, accessible places.

As the frontline interface between communities and government, councils are often the first to receive complaints, respond to emerging safety concerns and identify local infrastructure and operational challenges associated with new and evolving transport modes.

LGA welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the Review of Personal Mobility Devices (PMDs), including e-scooters, and e-bikes². The review is timely, given the rapid growth in PMD use and significant regulatory and policy developments occurring nationally. It provides an opportunity to draw on emerging evidence and lessons from other jurisdictions to support a consistent and effective regulatory framework.

LGA broadly supports the continued use of PMDs and compliant e-bikes as part of a safe, sustainable and connected transport system. These devices can provide important mobility benefits, improve first and last kilometre connections to public transport, support tourism and recreation and contribute to South Australia's broader active transport and emissions reduction objectives³.

Feedback from LGA member councils highlights the following key issues:

- **Increasing use of high-powered and/or modified devices:** Councils are reporting growing numbers of devices that may not comply with existing requirements, creating safety, enforcement and community concerns.
- **Rider behaviour and enforcement:** Excessive speed, failure to give way to pedestrians and other unsafe behaviours are emerging concerns. Greater clarity regarding enforcement responsibilities, supported by coordinated education and compliance activities, is required.
- **Limited data:** Current road safety data does not provide sufficient information to identify the causes, circumstances and risk factors associated with PMD and e-bike crashes. Improved data collection and sharing is needed to inform evidence-based policy and infrastructure decisions.

¹ [Roads and infrastructure – ALGA](#)

² [Review of Personal Mobility Devices \(including e-scooters\) and e-bikes | YourSAy](#)

³ [South Australia's Transport Strategy 2025](#)

- **Infrastructure capacity and safety:** Continued investment in safe, connected and accessible active transport infrastructure will be essential as use increases. Infrastructure should be designed to accommodate a broader range of users while minimising conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and PMD users.
- **Lithium-ion battery risks:** The management, storage, charging and disposal of lithium-ion batteries associated with PMDs and e-bikes is creating significant safety, environmental and financial challenges for councils, particularly in relation to waste management and fire risks.
- **Local flexibility:** Councils should retain mechanisms to seek restrictions or other controls in specific locations where evidence demonstrates significant safety, accessibility or operational concerns.

The successful integration of PMDs and e-bikes into South Australia's transport network will require a coordinated approach across government. This should include clear and nationally informed regulation, effective and appropriately resourced enforcement, improved crash and usage data, investment in safe and connected infrastructure, community education and ongoing collaboration between state and local government.

Importantly, councils should be recognised as key stakeholders within the ongoing PMD framework, given their direct knowledge of local conditions, infrastructure and community concerns. Any future changes should involve consultation with local government to ensure local perspectives and impacts are appropriately considered.

Recommendations

Considering the issues and feedback outlined above, LGA recommends that the review consider the following:

1. That South Australia adopt the European Standard (EN 15194) as the compliance standard for e-bikes, including transitional arrangements for existing e-bikes that are currently lawful under South Australian requirements but do not meet EN 15194, enabling their continued safe use on the road network.
2. That the State Government establish stronger regulatory frameworks to effectively enforce changes to e-mobility legislation. Enforcement arrangements should clearly define responsibilities and ensure local governments are not required to undertake enforcement activities without adequate powers, funding, and/or operational support.
3. That the State Government creates a visible, clear and consistent public education and community awareness program to improve the safe use of e-bikes and PMDs in the community. This would include a focus on:

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- Road rules and rider responsibilities
 - How to recognise compliant and non-compliant devices
 - Clarification of compliance roles for the Department for Infrastructure and Transport (DIT) and partner agencies, like the SA Police (SAPOL)
 - Opportunities to consult with individual councils to possibly support this campaign
4. That the State Government establish a mechanism (such as Queensland's Operation Yankee Surety⁴) for the collection and analysis of data relating to e-bikes and PMDs, to inform ongoing improvement to the legislative framework.
 5. That the State Government continue investing in active travel infrastructure, strengthening the evidence base to better provision for increasing uptake of active travel modes.
 6. That the State Government integrates development of improvements to the PMD and e-bike regulations together with the development of a product stewardship scheme, to better achieve broader circular economy outcomes.
 7. LGA continues to support retaining mechanisms that allow councils to seek restrictions or prohibitions on PMD and e-bike use in specific locations where there is evidence of significant safety risks, accessibility issues or operational concerns.

⁴ [Police launch targeted crack down on e-mobility devices - Queensland Police News](#)

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About us

The Local Government Association of South Australia (LGA) is the peak body representing 68 councils across South Australia and the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara.

Our purpose is to help local government build stronger communities by advocating for the interests of our members and supporting councils to respond effectively to the challenges facing their communities.

LGA works across state and federal levels to influence policy, coordinate sector responses, build local government capability and provide practical solutions that deliver value for councils and their communities. Through our policy and advocacy, training and development, risk and insurance services and procurement solutions, we support councils to deliver sustainable, effective and responsive services for South Australians.

LGA welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission to the Review of Personal Mobility Devices, including e-scooters and e-bikes. LGA supports the development of a transport system that is safe, sustainable, accessible and responsive to changing community needs.

Local government has an important role in supporting the safe integration of emerging transport modes into South Australia's communities. LGA looks forward to working constructively with the Government and other stakeholders to strengthen transport outcomes and deliver safe, connected and livable communities for all South Australians.

Submission

Introduction

PMDs and compliant e-bikes are increasingly important components of the active transport network, providing affordable and low-emission transport options, enhancing connectivity to public transport, supporting tourism and recreation, and contributing to broader sustainability objectives.

The State Government has recognised these benefits through the legalisation of PMDs and a commitment to ensuring that the framework remains fit-for-purpose, safe and enforceable.

LGA's submission draws on feedback from councils in South Australia, together with emerging national evidence and policy developments.

While councils broadly support the continued use of PMDs and compliant e-bikes, significant concerns have been raised regarding safety outcomes, enforcement limitations, the increasing

prevalence of illegal and modified devices, infrastructure pressures and the allocation of risk and responsibility.

LGA considers that the long-term success of micromobility in SA will depend on a balanced regulatory approach that supports innovation and transport choice while maintaining community safety and confidence.

Discussion and recommendations

Non-compliant devices

The distinction between compliant and non-compliant devices is becoming increasingly important as e-bike uptake grows. Stakeholders across Australia have raised concerns that the increasing availability of imported high-powered devices and aftermarket modification kits are undermining public confidence in e-bike regulation and creating challenges for enforcement agencies.⁵

Council feedback shows they are receiving increasing complaints regarding e-bikes and their use. Many complaints to councils involve devices that exceed legal power and speed limits or have been modified after purchase.

Some devices operating within public spaces bear greater resemblance to unregistered motorcycles than bicycles and can travel at speeds far beyond those intended by current legislation.

LGA notes that in 2021, the Commonwealth implemented the *Road Vehicle Standards Act 2018*, replacing the previous *Motor Vehicle Standards Act 1989* regime and removing the former EN15194-linked importation framework for power-assisted bicycles.⁶

After this change, we understand that the Federal Government received continued reports of poor-quality products which didn't meet minimum standards for speed and power.⁷

In addition, there were other significant safety risks observed, such as thermal runaway fires caused by non-compliance e-device batteries (e.g. unregulated lithium-ion batteries) in NSW, Queensland, and Victoria.⁸ This led to several State based Parliamentary inquiries and new regulations in these jurisdictions.

⁵ [Bicycle sector calls on Government to take control of unsafe e-bike imports | We Ride Australia](#)

⁶ [Road Vehicle Standards laws | Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts](#)

⁷ [Import rules crackdown to halt 'overpowered' e-bikes coming to Australia - ABC News](#)

⁸ [Illegal and unsafe e-bikes – background information & media invitation | We Ride Australia](#)

LGA also notes that in December 2025, the Federal Government re-introduced importation standards for e-bikes, which again must conform to the relevant European Standard (EN15194).

The EN15194 is current global practice and addresses aspects of e-bike power and safety standards for electrical and mechanical parts (e.g. brakes). EN15194 also introduces an anti-tampering protocol, meaning brands must do whatever is practical to prevent their e-bikes from being modified by consumers.⁹

In parallel, LGA acknowledges and supports the work progressing nationally, through the Infrastructure and Transport Ministers' Meetings (ITMM), to create a national regulatory framework for e-mobility devices.¹⁰ A nationally consistent standard would improve consumer understanding, simplify compliance, support enforcement and reduce regulatory ambiguity. It would also assist in more readily identifying compliant and non-compliant e-bikes.

However, the effectiveness of any new regulations for e-bikes and PMDs, including a transition to the EN15194 standard, will depend on a coordinated, statewide enforcement program led by SAPOL and other relevant agencies. For example, Queensland Police Service, as part of their recent review on e-bikes and PMDs, have launched Operation Yankee Surety for compliance.¹¹

Recommendation 1- adopt EN15194 for e-bikes and transition existing devices

LGA recommends the State Government adopt the European Standard (EN15194) for e-bikes. Any changes made to the regulations on the compliant devices need to include transitional arrangements for e-bikes which conform to the current legislative framework.

Recommendation 2- strengthen regulations for compliance on new e-mobility laws

LGA recommends that the State Government establish stronger regulatory frameworks to effectively enforce any changes to e-mobility legislation. Enforcement arrangements should clearly define responsibilities and ensure local governments are not required to undertake enforcement activities without adequate powers, funding, and operational support.

Rider behaviour

Feedback from councils demonstrates that community concerns are primarily focused on rider behaviour rather than the existence of PMDs or non-compliant e-bikes themselves.

Councils report increasing complaints relating to excessive speed, near misses, failure to give way to pedestrians, riding in crowded public spaces, multiple riders on devices and the

⁹ [Import rules crackdown to halt 'overpowered' e-bikes coming to Australia - ABC News](#)

¹⁰ [itmm-communique-29-may-2026.pdf](#)

¹¹ [Police launch targeted crack down on e-mobility devices - Queensland Police News](#)

operation of high-powered devices in locations with significant pedestrian activity. Complaints are most common in shared-use environments, foreshore precincts, reserves, recreational trails and activity centres.

These concerns are particularly relevant for children, older people and people living with disability, who are at-risk users of shared-path infrastructure.

Feedback from councils also reports that where unsafe behaviours occur, due to the lack of clarity on the enforcement, members of the public frequently expect councils to intervene.

LGA considers that behavioural issues should continue to be addressed by the State Government through a combination of enforcement, public education, community awareness campaigns, infrastructure design, and targeted compliance activities for high-risk behaviours.

Recommendation 3- public education and community awareness

LGA recommends a targeted public education and community awareness program to improve the safe use of e-bikes and PMDs, with a particular focus on:

- Road rules and user responsibilities for e-bike and PMD riders, including education on appropriate speeds, shared-path etiquette, pedestrian priority, and safe operation. Consideration should be given to incorporating road safety education into school-based learning programs.
- The distinction between compliant and non-compliant devices, including information on applicable standards, legal requirements, and the safety and enforcement implications associated with non-compliant devices.
- Clarification on compliance roles between state agencies (e.g. DIT and SAPOL)
- Consult with individual councils on possible opportunities to support targeted community awareness on safe use and rider behaviour. This includes guidance and support on advisory signage, and locations where riding may be inappropriate.

Road safety data

The number of serious injuries increased against the five-year average for e-bike and PMDs.¹² This has been highlighted in the discussion paper for this review.¹³ While this is concerning, the available data does not provide sufficient detail to identify the underlying causes of these crashes or the behaviours most closely associated with serious injury outcomes. In particular, the data:

- Does not differentiate between compliant and non-compliant devices

¹² [Road Safety Data - THINK! Road Safety](#)

¹³ [E-bikes \(power assisted bicycles\) in South Australia](#)

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- Does not differentiate the person (device users) responsible for the road crashes
- Does not consider crash severity outcomes that are attributable to improper helmet use or non-use of a helmet
- Does not report the age of the device user (e-bikes and PMDs)
- Does not report the location of the reported incidents, for example, whether the road crash occurred on the road, or dedicated bike lane, or on shared paths
- Does not report the cause of the road crash, for example, if it is due to being under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or speeding, or distracted driving, or lack of road rules understanding, or lack of active transport amenities (such as infrastructure, or segregated pathways)

The importance of data is recognised in the recent Inquiry into E-mobility Safety and Use in Queensland,¹⁴ the report examined key risk factors such as speed, riding under the influence, helmet non-use, private versus shared mobility schemes, and illegal devices, while also highlighting the need for more comprehensive data collection.

A 2025 PMD observational study done by Adelaide University showed that, helmet non-compliance was the most prevalent unsafe behaviour, with 35% of riders travelling without a helmet. Non-compliance was substantially higher among hire scooter riders (54%) than private scooter riders (13%).¹⁵

While these findings indicate that helmet compliance remains a challenge, they do not provide evidence of the extent to which helmet non-compliance contributes to crash risk or injury severity. Accordingly, LGA supports the introduction of nationally consistent helmet regulations to enhance road safety outcomes and provide greater regulatory clarity for e-mobility users.

LGA acknowledges the anecdotal reports of road safety concerns associated with e-bikes and PMDs. LGA also acknowledges that e-bikes and PMDs are relatively new modes of transport, and as such, sufficient data may not yet be available to fully assess the gaps identified above. Hence, prior to any proposed regulatory changes or enforcement measures, the State Government should consider appropriate monitoring and data collection mechanisms for new and emerging e-mobility devices, such as Queensland's Operation Yankee Surety as a data gathering mechanism along with regulatory enforcement program. This will support evidence-based policymaking and help ensure that regulation does not inadvertently discourage the uptake of safe, sustainable, and accessible transport options.

Overly restrictive regulations, without evidence-based policymaking, may reduce uptake of these transport modes and undermine other objectives under South Australia's Transport

¹⁴ [Report No. 21, 58th Parliament - Inquiry into e-mobility safety and use in Queensland](#)

¹⁵ [CASR- PMD Observational study Adelaide University](#)

Strategy¹⁶ and Active Travel Design Guide¹⁷, which seek to encourage active and sustainable transport.

Recommendation 4- evidence-based assessment of e-bikes and PMD road safety risks

LGA recommends that the State Government establish mechanisms (such as Operation Yankee Surety) for the collection and analysis of data relating directly to e-bikes and PMDs, including factors such as rider age, speed, crash causation, compliance with road rules, and the effectiveness of current licensing and enforcement arrangements.

Active transport and infrastructure

Cycling participation has also grown, with the 2021 National Walking and Cycling Participation Survey reporting that cycling participation increased to 38.3%, representing an 8.5% increase from the previous year.¹⁸ It also noted that there is a growing interest in cycling, particularly following COVID-19.¹⁹

Existing transport networks can struggle to accommodate the rapid growth in micromobility use. The absence of safe, connected and dedicated infrastructure can result in riders sharing space with motor vehicles or pedestrians, increasing the potential for conflict and crash risk.²⁰

Councils have also observed varying levels of conflict by users seeking to use infrastructure for straight commuting purposes (i.e. travelling at high speed, on both traditional 'push' bicycles and now with advent of e-bikes) versus those seeking use for recreational purposes (e.g. dog walkers, young children, old and vulnerable users etc).

In response, many councils have adopted active transport strategies, walking and cycling plans, climate adaptation strategies and regional climate partnership initiatives that seek to increase active travel and reduce transport emissions. However, the success of these initiatives depends on ongoing support from the State Government, including leadership in policy implementation and sustained investment in the infrastructure required to meet growing active transport demand.

In particular, councils are concerned where PMD and e-bike networks cross local government boundaries and State Government-managed roads, highlighting the need for coordinated land use planning and clear responsibilities across jurisdictions.

¹⁶ [South Australia's Transport Strategy 2025](#)

¹⁷ [Active Travel Design Guide - Department for Infrastructure and Transport - South Australia](#)

¹⁸ [NWCPS SA \(2021\) v2.0.docx](#)- executive summary

¹⁹ [Cycling Strategy Refresh Draft_11022022.pdf](#)

²⁰ [Report No. 21, 58th Parliament - Inquiry into e-mobility safety and use in Queensland](#)- Page 49

PMDs and compliant e-bikes have the potential to contribute positively to these objectives by supporting first and last kilometre connections, reducing private vehicle dependency and expanding transport options for a broader range of users.

LGA acknowledge the current work being undertaken by DIT on developing a State Active Transport Strategy (Strategy). Further, we appreciate the opportunity provided by DIT to have an active role in the development of this Strategy, through the working group which has now met twice.

Safe infrastructure, complemented by education and enforcement, provides the strongest foundation for maximising the benefits of PMDs and e-bikes while minimising adverse safety impacts.

The Strategy should include investment in safe, connected and fit-for-purpose infrastructure, including the provision of separate facilities for e-bike riders, PMD users, pedestrians and motorists where appropriate.

Where shared paths are used by e-bike riders, PMD users and pedestrians, consideration should be given to appropriate road safety measures, including speed management, signage, path design and user education, to minimise conflict and improve safety outcomes.

Recommendation 5- investment in active travel infrastructure

LGA encourages the State Government to continue investing in active travel infrastructure and strengthening the evidence base to better understand travel patterns, road crash causation, and the infrastructure requirements associated with increasing uptake of active and micromobility transport modes.

Lithium-ion batteries, waste streams and product stewardship

As uptake of PMDs and e-bikes increases, local government is becoming increasingly concerned about the end-of-life management of lithium-ion batteries and associated waste streams.

As shown in the figure 1, Councils are already challenged by the disposal of damaged, degraded or illegally dumped lithium-ion batteries, which can create significant fire risks within kerbside collection systems, transfer stations, material recovery facilities and landfill operations.²¹

²¹ [Accelerating SA's transition to a circular economy: South Australia's waste strategy 2025–2030](#) (see page 53 – 'Batteries')



Figure 1- lithium-ion battery fire on a recently rebranded waste truck advertising that batteries should not be disposed of in household bins

The growth in PMDs and e-bikes is expected to increase the volume of lithium-ion batteries entering waste systems over coming years.

It is noted that product design is driven by regulatory requirements and should support circular economy outcomes, including repair, refurbishment, recycling and recovery where possible. While standards such as EN15194 incorporate anti-tampering and safety requirements, they might not adequately address repairability, battery replacement, product disassembly or end-of-life recovery.

LGA encourages both State Government and ITMM to consider whether there are regulatory and stewardship measures that could support repair and recovery pathways while maintaining appropriate safety and anti-tampering protections, reducing unnecessary disposal of devices to landfill. This could include manufacturer responsibility, retailer take-back programs, battery recycling initiatives, consumer education, end-of-life management requirements, and alignment with emerging state and national battery stewardship arrangements.

Councils are concerned that current arrangements place responsibility for managing these risks largely on local government despite limited opportunities for recovery of associated costs of management and disposal, and strongly believes that the cost of poorly managed e-mobility devices should not be borne by councils.

LGA has been consistently working collaboratively with relevant State Government agencies, the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) and Green Industries SA (GISA), in developing a product stewardship framework.

Recommendation 6- integrate of PMD and e-bike regulations with product stewardship frameworks

LGA recommends that the proposed PMD and e-bike regulations and associated schemes be developed within the context of a broader product stewardship framework. Likewise, the development of the product stewardship framework, committed to in the 2026 South Australian Budget²², should consider the proposed PMD and e-bike regulatory framework to ensure a coordinated and complementary approach.

Street amenity for hire schemes

LGA acknowledges the role that shared mobility schemes can play in supporting tourism, improving first and last-mile connections to public transport, and reducing reliance on private vehicles. However, councils have consistently raised concerns regarding the impact of poorly managed shared devices on public amenity, accessibility and pedestrian safety.

Improperly parked or abandoned hire devices can obstruct footpaths, building entrances, bus stops, disability access routes and pedestrian crossings, creating challenges for people living with disability, older people, parents with prams and users of mobility aids. The Queensland Parliamentary Inquiry heard evidence regarding the adverse impacts of device clutter and the importance of operator responsibility, designated parking arrangements and enforcement mechanisms to minimise impacts on public spaces.²³

South Australia's current PMD rules already require riders to park responsibly in a manner that does not disrupt pedestrians or create safety hazards, reflecting the importance of maintaining accessible public spaces.²⁴

Where shared mobility schemes operate, councils support regulatory settings that provide clear accountability for operators. Importantly, the operational costs associated with managing commercial shared mobility services should not be transferred to councils or ratepayers. Commercial operators should bear responsibility for addressing the impacts associated with their services, including monitoring, compliance, redistribution and device retrieval activities.

²² [2026-27-Agency-Statements-Volume-2.pdf](#)- page 164

²³ [Report No. 21, 58th Parliament - Inquiry into e-mobility safety and use in Queensland](#)

²⁴ [SA.GOV.AU - Personal mobility devices](#)

Council requests to restrict use in specific areas

The State Government has a formal process by which councils may apply for prohibitions where device use is considered unsuitable or unsafe. The guidance recognises that restrictions may be appropriate in locations with high pedestrian volumes or other site-specific risks and requires applications to be assessed against established safety and operational criteria.²⁵

Local government is uniquely placed to identify locations where local conditions may warrant additional controls. These may include:

- high pedestrian activity areas
- busy shopping precincts
- constrained shared-use paths
- tourism and hospitality precincts
- event and festival spaces
- foreshore promenades
- locations with high numbers of complaints
- locations where safety incidents or conflicts between users have been identified.

Councils have generally supported the availability of this process because it provides flexibility to respond to local circumstances while maintaining a consistent statewide regulatory framework. LGA supports maintaining the existing DIT process but notes that applications should remain practical, timely and proportionate to the risks being managed.

A one-size-fits-all approach is unlikely to meet the needs of South Australia's diverse urban, regional and tourism environments. The regulatory framework should therefore continue to enable councils to address localised safety and amenity concerns while ensuring that restrictions are evidence-based and do not unnecessarily limit the use of active and micromobility transport options. This balanced approach is consistent with broader State Government objectives to encourage active travel while maintaining safe and accessible public spaces.

Recommendation 7- retain mechanisms for councils to make some access decisions

LGA supports retaining mechanisms that allow councils to seek restrictions or prohibitions on PMD and e-bike use in specific locations where there is evidence of significant safety risks, accessibility issues or operational concerns.

²⁵ [Wheeled Recreational Devices](#)

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