



ACT
Government

ACT ROAD SAFETY FORUM

**Regulating the Personal
Use of E-Scooters and
Other Similar Devices in
the ACT**

ACT Legislative Assembly

3 September 2019

As part of the Road Safety Action Plan 2016-2020

the ACT Government committed to exploring options to advance the role of sustainable transport in Canberra, recognising its role in improving road safety. Electric scooters (e-scooters) and other similar devices have the potential to provide an innovative, zero-emission transport option for people who would otherwise drive.

The Justice and Community Safety Directorate (JACS) conducted public consultation on the regulation of e-scooters from 25 June to 19 July 2019. 679 submissions were received. A summary of this consultation can be found <https://www.yoursay.act.gov.au/e-scooters>

JACS held a Road Safety Forum (the forum) on 3 September 2019, organised by the ACT Chapter of the Australasian College of Road Safety (ACRS) and opened by the Minister for Justice, Consumer Affairs and Road Safety, Shane Rattenbury.

The forum was focussed on regulatory and safety issues associated with e-scooters and provided key stakeholders with an opportunity to further discuss issues and options arising from the consultation process. Forty-five representatives attended including key ACT stakeholders, industry manufacturers and suppliers, external road safety experts and regulatory organisations.

JACS presented the results from the public consultation process to the forum.

For a summary of community views on the key consultation issues of location, speed and other user restrictions, you can view the What We Heard Report online at www.yoursay.act.gov.au/e-scooters

The key speakers at the forum included Professor Narelle Haworth of the Centre for Accident Research & Road Safety – Queensland (CARRS-Q) who has been reviewing the introduction of regulatory frameworks for these devices in Queensland and elsewhere, and Tim Davern who is managing the National Transport Commission's project, *Barriers to the safe use of innovative vehicles and mobility devices*.

Professor Haworth presented on domestic and international regulations for e-scooters, and shared her findings from an observational study of e-scooters in Brisbane. Professor Haworth noted that there is limited safety data around micro mobility devices, and noted very little observed conflict between e-scooters and pedestrians. In the observational study, no collisions were witnessed, and avoidance action was taken only in about 1% of cases, where e scooters were within one metre of a pedestrian.

You can view a copy of Professor Haworth's research study online at <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.5694/mja2.50275>.

Tim Davern gave a summary of the NTC's project and proposed options and timelines for consultation. Further information is available at <https://www.ntc.gov.au/transport-reform/ntc-projects/Barriers-to-the-safe-use-of-innovative-vehicles-and-motorised-mobility-devices>. Public consultation on the NTC process is being undertaken between October and December 2019.

Attendees were encouraged to participate in discussions throughout the forum and the following points were raised:

- As the introduction of these devices in Australia is very much in its infancy, relevant data is limited, and it is hard to predict the future take up of these devices. As such it is important to continue to collect data.
- The dimensions of e-scooters could present issues in relation to their carriage on public transport and there were some general concerns about dimensions.
- Concerns were raised about the upper weight limit of 60kg proposed by the NTC in the context of a collision with a pedestrian.
- It is important to ensure ongoing education on the rules and safe use of these devices.
- The importance of the road infrastructure being capable of safely accommodating these devices.

The Government recognises, and it was reinforced by the Forum, that any new regulatory framework must focus on the safety of users, other road users and the community, using the best available data and evidence. The framework also needs to appropriately facilitate increased mobility without being unnecessarily restrictive. The framework must be easily understood and enforceable.

Essential elements of the regulatory framework will include the wearing of bicycle helmets, no alcohol consumption while riding, no riding while under the influence of alcohol and no use of mobile phones. Further regulatory elements are under consideration and will be announced at the end of 2019.

Overall the Forum provided useful information for the Government, allowed attendees to provide their views and feedback, and will inform the Government's finalisation of a regulatory framework for e-scooters and similar devices.



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