



Hon John Mickel MP
Member for Logan



**Queensland
Government**

Our ref: MC38355

**Minister for Transport, Trade,
Employment and Industrial Relations**

- 6 OCT 2008

Mr Neil Laurie
Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
Corner Alice and George Streets
Brisbane Qld 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for your letter dated 27 August 2008 regarding a petition received by the Queensland Legislative Assembly No. 1092-08.

In 1999 Queensland adopted the *Australian Road Rules* into state legislation. This means that the road rules in all jurisdictions of Australia are essentially uniform. The road traffic authorities in each state or territory must agree to any significant changes to the *Australian Road Rules* in order to preserve that uniformity. Once the *Australian Road Rules* have been amended, these changes are then incorporated in the legislation of each State and Territory. In the case of Queensland, this is the *Queensland Road Rules*.

The definition of a bicycle in the *Australian Road Rules* excludes any vehicle with an auxiliary motor capable of generating a power output over 200 watts. This definition is incorporated into the road rules of all Australian States and Territories. In Queensland the definition of a bicycle is contained in the *Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995*.

In October 2007, the definition of a bicycle in Queensland was amended to exclude any bicycle with an auxiliary motor that is an internal combustion motor. I am advised that the amendment to this definition was not a change of policy; it was simply a clarification of the rule as it has existed in the *Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995* since at least 1999.

Independent engineering advice provided to Queensland Transport with reference to motorised bicycles advised that:

- it is virtually impossible to have an internal combustion motor, suitable for powering a bicycle, whose generated power output was 200 watts or under,
- a typical current technology 30cc two stroke petrol engine is capable of producing between 1000 and 1500 watts, and

Neville Bonner Building
75 William Street Brisbane 4000
PO Box 2644 Brisbane
Queensland 4001 Australia
Telephone +61 7 3237 1111
Facsimile +61 7 3224 4242
Email TTEIR@ministerial.qld.gov.au
ABN 65 959 415 158

- an auxiliary bicycle motor which is claimed to have a power output of 200 watts at the drive spindle would need to have an actual engine output greater than 200 watts because of frictional losses in the transmission.
- the standard braking system fitted to a bicycle may not be adequate to safely stop a vehicle powered by an auxiliary engine capable of more than 200 watts output.

As such, the Queensland amendment to the definition of a bicycle is in accord with the definition of a bicycle in the *Australian Road Rules*.

A bicycle fitted with an internal combustion motor is classified as a motorbike. However, such a vehicle would not comply with Australian Design Rules for motorbikes. To be eligible for registration as a motorbike a vehicle must comply with Australian Design Rules. As such, a bicycle fitted with an internal combustion motor is not eligible for registration.

Queensland Transport is not considering any further amendments to the definition of a bicycle at this stage, nor is Queensland Transport considering registering motorised bicycles. However, Queensland Transport is actively participating in a national review of power assisted bicycles. This review will seek to strike a balance between safety, environmental and health factors.

If you require any further information, please call Mr John Burrill, Land Transport and Safety on (07) 3253 4505.

Yours sincerely



JOHN MICKEL MP
Minister for Transport, Trade,
Employment and Industrial Relations