

TO: THE COMMITTEE SECRETARY
SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON RURAL & REGIONAL AFFAIRS & TRANSPORT

The severe injuries caused to the wife of NSW Senator John Williams should lead to an examination of the expanding use of motorised scooters.

These vehicles with a weight of over 200kg (including driver) can often be seen driven erratically or at excessive speeds on footpaths, roads, in shopping centres & through public parks.

The risk of death or severe injury to pedestrians of all types, but particularly children, dogs & the elderly are obvious. Anyone who has been confronted by one of these monstrosities hurtling around a blind corner on a footpath in a public park will know what I mean.

By definition, the drivers suffer from a combination of mental, physical & visual disabilities.

I am sure there are many accidents that never get reported or collated.

To compare these vehicles to a pram or jogger, as has been done, is simply silly.

Mrs Williams & others could face bills of thousands of dollars for medical care & rehabilitation as well as the **risk of lifelong suffering & disability.**

As these scooters become more prevalent there is urgent need for regulation.

At the very least, **applicants should be assessed** periodically for mental, physical & visual ability to safely operate these vehicles.

There should be **motor governors** to prevent them travelling at more than a safe walking speed, about 5 km/hr.

I am not sure if they are fitted with a **warning device**, such a horn or bell, as I have never seen or heard one ever being used.

They should be registered with **licence plates** so that dangerous drivers can be identified & held responsible for damage to property or persons.

Since the injuries to property & people by a 200kg vehicle are potentially serious & expensive, there should be some form of mandatory **insurance** as with cars.

There may be need for legislation to ensure that driving such a vehicle while under the influence of **alcohol or other drugs** or while mentally impaired is subject to criminal penalties as with driving a car.

The need for mobility by disabled people does not give them an unfettered right to disable others.

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