

REVIEW OF ACTIVE MOBILITY REGULATIONS FOR SAFER PATH SHARING

Recommendations by the Active Mobility Advisory Panel

Submitted to:

Coordinating Minister for Infrastructure and Minister for Transport

Mr Khaw Boon Wan

on 27 September 2019

Contents

1. Executive Summary	3
2. Background.....	5
3. Stakeholder Engagement.....	7
4. Panel’s Recommendations.....	12
5. Conclusion	15

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Active Mobility Advisory Panel (AMAP) released its first set of recommendations on the rules and code of conduct for cycling and the use of personal mobility devices (PMDs) in March 2016. Active mobility includes walking, cycling and the use of PMDs and personal mobility aids (PMAs).
- 1.2 Over the past three years, the Panel has observed the growing popularity of such active modes of transport, facilitated by expanding active mobility-friendly infrastructure and other supporting facilities. However, the uptake in active mobility device usage has also led to growing concerns on path safety due to a rise in reported accidents on public paths. In August 2018, the Panel introduced a set of measures to improve path safety, including mandatory registration of electric scooters and lowering the speed limit on footpaths. These were implemented in January and February this year. The Government has also stepped up on enforcement and education, to cultivate a safer path-sharing culture.
- 1.3 Some have called for a complete ban of PMDs in Singapore. However, at the same time, many other Singaporeans have come to rely on these active modes of transport as a way of life. For example, some use it during their daily commute to get to school or the office. Others have found that such devices offer them greater mobility and independence moving around their community. It is also a means of livelihood for people like food delivery riders, who have in turn brought convenience to many Singaporeans.
- 1.4 Recognising this, the Panel has been assessing if additional refinements to the regulations are required to enhance safety on public paths, taking into consideration the needs of pedestrians and active mobility users.
- 1.5 The Panel sought views from the communities that they represent, considered findings from focus group discussions and industry engagements, as well as regulations in other jurisdictions. After extensive deliberation, the Panel has decided to put forth the following key recommendations:
 - (a) To mandate, as a start, that businesses procure third-party liability insurance to cover e-scooter riders who are riding in the course of work. In the year ahead, the Panel will actively monitor the situation and prepare the industry and community to move towards mandatory insurance for all e-scooter users.
 - (b) To impose a minimum age requirement of 16 to use an e-scooter on public paths. Those below the age of 16 can continue to ride under adult supervision.
 - (c) To mandate a theory test requirement for e-scooter users, prior to being able to ride on public paths.

- (d) To disallow the use of mobile phones when riding an active mobility device¹ on public paths, unless the mobile phone is mounted or used in a hands-free manner.
- (e) To introduce a Code of Conduct to guide pedestrians on how to share paths safely with other pedestrians and active mobility device users.

1.6 The growing popularity of active mobility devices, occurring not only in Singapore but also in other countries, shows the role that they can play in the shift towards greener and more car-lite cities. It is in light of this that the Panel continues to support the take-up of such devices. At the same time, the Panel is cognizant that it is necessary to put in place further safeguards to ensure that all Singaporeans can enjoy the benefits of walking, cycling or use of PMDs and PMAs.

¹ Active mobility devices refer to bicycles, power-assisted bicycles, PMDs as well as PMAs.

2. Background

- 2.1 AMAP was set up in July 2015 to deliberate on regulations that govern the active mobility landscape in Singapore, which includes walking, cycling and the use of PMDs and PMAs. The Panel reviews these rules and guidelines regularly to ensure that they remain relevant in a changing environment. The Panel comprises representatives from key active mobility stakeholder groups including seniors, youths, cyclists, motorists, PMD and PMA users, as well as grassroots leaders.



Members of the Active Mobility Advisory Panel

- 2.2 Since the Panel made its last round of recommendations in August 2018, the Panel has noticed the continued growth in e-scooter usage, with over 90,000 e-scooters registered with LTA. This registration process has facilitated the identification of errant riders. LTA has also stepped up on education and enforcement efforts, with over 57,000 participants in the Safe Riding Programme², and over 4,900 active mobility offences detected by enforcement officers. LTA has also taken to task errant riders and errant retailers. On the insurance front, three major food delivery companies – Deliveroo, GrabFood and FoodPanda – have purchased third-party liability insurance coverage for their active mobility delivery riders, ensuring that victims of accidents involving delivery riders will have access to compensation, and their delivery riders will be protected against third-party claims.
- 2.3 In August 2019, the Government announced that they will introduce a mandatory inspection regime for registered e-scooters, to ensure that all registered e-scooters are compliant to

² The Safe Riding Programme is a 90-minute theory and practical session to educate active mobility device users on essential safe riding practices, proper use of active mobility infrastructure, and the active mobility rules and code of conduct.

device requirements set out in terms of width, weight, speed, and UL2272 certification. On 1 September 2019, 15 Town Councils effected a ban on the use of active mobility devices in void decks and common property areas.

- 2.4 The Panel has been monitoring the situation closely, and has been studying potential new regulations to enhance safety on public paths. Noting feedback from the ground, the Panel's review in 2019 considered additional user requirements as well as regulations on user behaviour.

3. Stakeholder Engagement

3.1 The Panel conducted focus group discussions (FGDs) and engaged relevant industry players and experts to better understand ground concerns. The Panel also studied active mobility developments in other countries, including conducting study visits to Japan and Korea, to understand how other cities have promoted the safe use of active mobility devices.

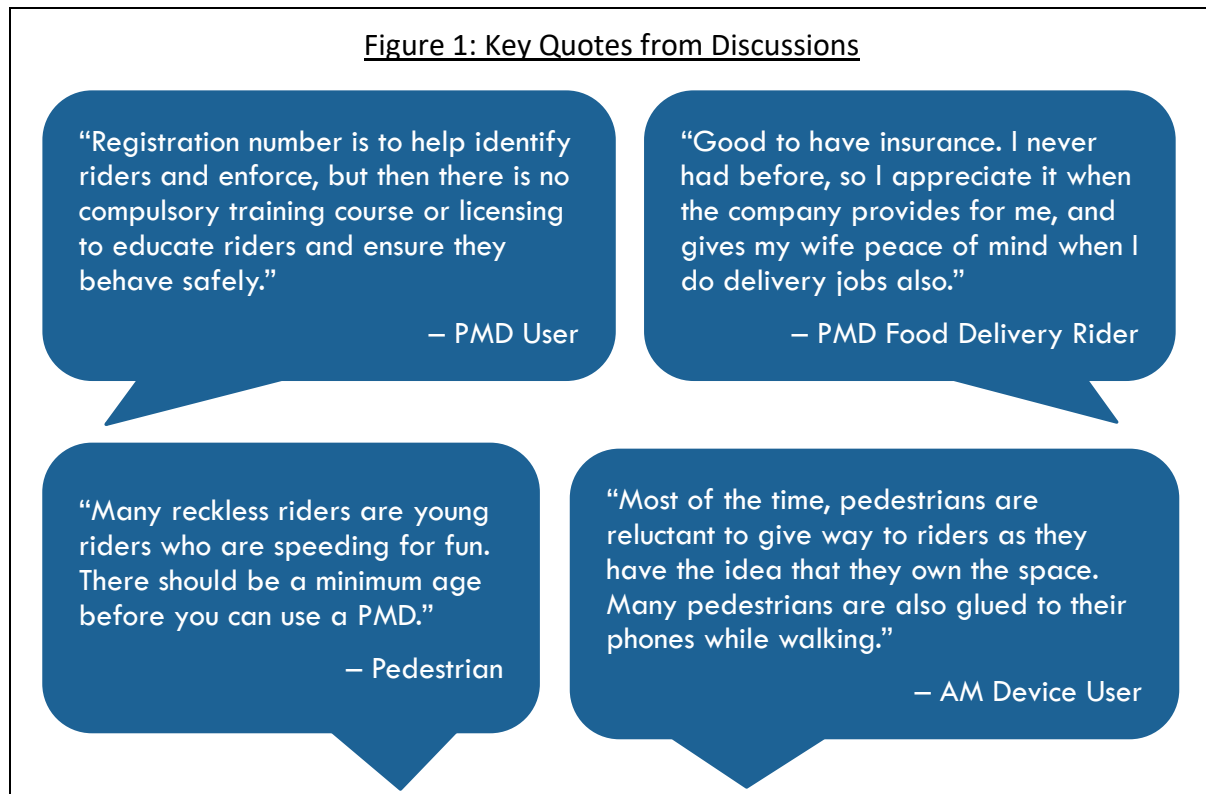
i. Focus Group Discussions

3.2 The Panel organised several FGDs in end 2018 and in 2019, and invited pedestrians, cyclists, PMD/PMA riders, as well food delivery riders to share their views and suggestions on how to improve path safety.



(From top left) AMAP Chairman Senior Parliamentary Secretary Faishal Ibrahim welcoming participants to an FGD session; FGD participants sharing their views during small group discussions; (Bottom right) AMAP members observing FGD discussions

Figure 1: Key Quotes from Discussions



ii. Engagement with Food Delivery Companies and Insurance Providers

- 3.3 The Panel engaged food delivery companies such as Deliveroo, FoodPanda and GrabFood on measures to improve the safety behaviour of their riders. These include organising the Safe Riding Programme for their delivery riders and monitoring the safe behaviour of their riders. Following several rounds of engagement with FoodPanda and GrabFood, they joined Deliveroo in providing third-party liability insurance coverage for their riders.
- 3.4 The Panel also continued working with the General Insurance Association to engage the insurance industry on diversifying third-party liability insurance products for active mobility riders. In particular, there were discussions on exclusion clauses within insurance products today where compensation may not be paid out if the insured party had committed an offence or was riding in the course of work. The Panel also sought views from the industry on whether insurance requirements would be more effectively imposed on companies or individuals.

iii. Study Trip to Japan and Korea

- 3.5 The Panel visited Japan and Korea to study how they have promoted the safe adoption of active mobility, as well as the considerations behind their policies and initiatives. The topics discussed include how Japan has implemented mandatory third-party liability insurance for cyclists, and how both Japan and Korea conduct educational programmes to encourage safe riding behaviour, regulate PMDs, as well as support an active mobility-friendly landscape.

Both our Japanese and Korean counterparts shared with the Panel that they were similarly trying to figure out how to deal with the new trend towards active mobility devices, and that they saw Singapore as a leading authority on active mobility device regulation.



(Left) Meetings with Kyoto and Hyogo Prefectural Governments; (Right) AMAP delegation with representatives from Seoul Metropolitan Government and Korea Transport Institute

Figure 2: Key Takeaways from Japan

Education

- In Japan, safe riding education starts young. There are national cycling competitions held at junior high and senior high schools, where students compete in bicycle handling and how to ride safely across road intersections.
- There is a strong emphasis that traffic safety is everyone's responsibility. This is reflected in their educational materials, which contains guidelines for all user groups, including pedestrians.
- Aside from the local governments, insurance companies also play a big role in educating cyclists on rules for riding.

Insurance

- Selected prefectures in Japan have recently started mandating third-party liability insurance requirements for cyclists. The Hyogo Prefectural Government was the first to do so in 2015.
- Uniquely, there are no penalties for non-compliance with the third-party liability insurance requirement. Officials shared that this is due to difficulties in tracking and monitoring compliance in the absence of a bicycle registration system. Nevertheless, there is generally a high level of compliance with the requirement, which officials attributed to the "Japanese culture of obeying rules".
- In addition, there have been a number of high profile civil suits where the courts had ordered large amounts of compensation (close to ¥100 mil, approximately S\$1 mil) to be paid out. Where the rider had been unable to pay, he/she had to declare bankruptcy. Officials shared that this may have pushed more cyclists to purchase insurance to cover themselves from third-party claims.
- The Japanese Prefectural Governments had first mandated insurance for businesses before imposing the requirement on individuals.
- Prior to implementation, the Japanese Prefectural Governments had also consulted the public and worked with local insurance companies to roll out affordable and easy-to-purchase insurance products. For example, the Hyogo Prefectural Government worked with Sompo Japan Hyogo Branch to develop a stand-alone third-party liability insurance product for cyclists, at an affordable yearly premium of just ¥980 (or S\$13). Individuals can also purchase insurance products from machines in 7-Eleven convenience stores.

Figure 3: Key Takeaways from Korea

- In Korea, PMDs are growing in popularity. Korea has also seen a huge increase in the number of PMD-sharing operators.
- The Korean Government is still deliberating on the regulations to impose on PMD usage. They recognise the benefits that PMDs can bring to commuters as well as society as a whole, and they are keen to legalise PMD usage. Nevertheless, the Korean Government has also noted public feedback on safety concerns with PMDs, as well as devices parked indiscriminately.
- To support the uptake of active modes, there have been ongoing efforts to reclaim road space to widen sidewalks and provide more dedicated and physically separated bicycle lanes. This is to provide device users with more space and address safety concerns.
- The Korean Government has close partnerships with research institutes and associations to carry out studies on safe PMD designs, e.g. fire safety standards and roadworthiness standards. They are also prototyping PMDs with obstacle detection capabilities.

4. Panel's Recommendations

- 4.1 The Panel took into consideration views from communities represented by Panel members, findings from FGDs and industry engagements, as well as takeaways from its study trip to Japan and Korea. After much deliberation, the Panel makes the following recommendations to further improve safety on public paths.

A. THIRD-PARTY LIABILITY INSURANCE

- 4.2 In 2018, the Panel had recommended that the Government work with large employers of active mobility device users to encourage them to take up third-party liability insurance. The Panel notes public feedback that delivery riders using e-scooters tend to go faster as they rush to make deliveries. FGD participants also called for such insurance to be made compulsory for delivery riders using e-scooters, given that they ride more frequently and thus potentially have a higher risk of collision.
- 4.3 The Panel considered whether to mandate coverage only for businesses that involve the use of e-scooters or to impose this requirement on all riders.
- 4.4 Businesses using e-scooters on public paths have been able to grow their business because such device usage has been legalised in Singapore and facilitated by the active mobility regulations introduced by the Panel and the Government. Businesses therefore have a responsibility to protect the safety of riders and members of the public even as they conduct their business. One way of doing so is to provide third-party liability insurance coverage for all riders who work for the business.
- 4.5 For individuals, the Panel will still need to work more with the insurance industry to come up with suitable products. Many e-scooter riders may find current products, priced at about \$100 per year, significant compared to the cost of an e-scooter, especially because insurance premiums are incurred yearly. In addition, current products available to individual riders have certain exclusions, where compensation would not be paid out should the individual be riding in the course of work or have contravened a rule. This would undermine the intention to ensure access to compensation for victims of accidents.
- 4.6 Learning from Japan, we can adopt a staged approach, starting with imposing the insurance requirement on businesses before extending it to individuals. This will give the insurance industry time to adjust and develop more affordable and comprehensive third-party liability insurance products without overly restrictive payout terms. These could be stand-alone insurance products, or add-ons to personal accident or vehicle insurance products.
- 4.7 Therefore, on balance, the Panel recommends to make it mandatory for businesses first to procure third-party liability insurance to cover e-scooter riders who are riding in the course of work. This will include businesses such as food delivery companies. At the same time, the Panel recommends that the Government lay the foundation for widespread insurance

adoption, and continue working with the insurance industry to develop and promote the uptake of affordable and comprehensive third-party liability insurance products for individuals. In the year ahead, the Panel will actively monitor the situation and prepare the industry and community to move towards mandatory insurance for all e-scooter users.

B. MINIMUM AGE

- 4.8 FGD participants, including e-scooter users themselves, have observed that many young riders appear to be riding more recklessly. Therefore, in order to address this issue, the Panel recommends imposing a minimum age of 16 years old for the use of e-scooters for a start. This is aligned to the minimum age to register an e-scooter today. The Panel will continue to monitor the situation to determine if it is necessary to impose a higher minimum age in future.
- 4.9 However, the Panel also recognises that there are families who use e-scooters as a bonding activity, and is of the view that we should continue to facilitate such activities. Therefore, we recommend allowing individuals below the age of 16 to use e-scooters under adult supervision. This places the responsibility on adults to impart safe riding practices to youths, and is similar to current rules in Queensland, Australia³.

C. MANDATORY TRAINING

- 4.10 While over 57,000 people have participated in the Safe Riding Programme since February 2018, the number of e-scooter riders who have participated remains low. FGD participants suggested introducing a compulsory course for riders to ensure that riders are aware of safe riding rules and practices before allowing them to ride on public paths. The Panel recommends mandating a theory test requirement for e-scooter users, to ensure that all e-scooter riders are aware of the active mobility rules, regulations and code of conduct for riding an e-scooter on public paths.
- 4.11 While the Panel acknowledges the impact this requirement would have on e-scooter sharing operators and rental shops, safety is paramount. Given this, the Panel recommends for the Government to engage such businesses on how best to implement this requirement for shared or rental e-scooter users, to put in place similar safeguards while minimising impact on their businesses.
- 4.12 For other types of PMDs such as electric hoverboards and unicycles, the Panel does not see the need to impose a mandatory test for users of these devices at present, as there are fewer of them in Singapore. The Panel will continue to monitor the situation and determine if this requirement should be extended to more devices in the future.

³ In Queensland, PMDs are allowed to be used on public paths. Riders must be at least 16 years old, or 12 years old with adult supervision.

D. USE OF MOBILE PHONES WHILE RIDING

4.13 Using mobile phones while riding is a potential distraction that may impair a rider's ability to be alert to his or her surroundings and react to sudden changes. Moreover, hand-held mobile phones prevent riders from keeping both hands on the handlebar, thus affecting their ability to control the device. Therefore, for safety reasons, the Panel recommends making it an offence to use mobile phones while riding an active mobility device on public paths. This is similar to regulations on cyclists in countries such as Japan, Germany, New Zealand and Canada, and similar to regulations on motorists in Singapore. Nonetheless, an exception should be made for situations where the mobile phone is mounted and/or used in a hands-free manner, as is the case for motorists in Singapore.

E. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PEDESTRIANS

4.14 The Panel wishes to emphasize that safety is a shared responsibility, borne by all path and road users. With the increased use of mobile phones in today's connected society, there are also safety concerns, as pedestrians are often seen using their mobile phones while walking or crossing the road, instead of paying attention to their surroundings. These were concerns reflected by both pedestrians and device users during FGDs.

4.15 Today, the Highway Code contains a section to guide pedestrians on safe behaviour, for example on how to cross roads safely. Therefore, for pedestrians' own safety and to cultivate gracious sharing behaviour on public paths, the Panel proposes to introduce a Code of Conduct to guide pedestrians on how to share paths safely with other path users, including other pedestrians and active mobility device users.

- **Keep left:** Keep to the left while walking on paths, unless overtaking.
- **Keep to footpaths:** Walk on footpaths whenever there are footpaths next to cycling/shared paths.
- **Be alert:** Pay attention to your surroundings. Plugging in to audio devices or continuously using mobile devices means that you are less able to detect any oncoming obstacles.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 The Panel's recommendations in this report are focused on improving safety on public paths, taking into consideration heightened concerns with the use of e-scooters. The following recommendations, if accepted by the Government, should be implemented as soon as possible. The Panel would also like to stress that safety is a shared responsibility amongst all path users, including pedestrians, cyclists and PMD/PMA users. We can all do our part to make the paths safer.

Summary of AMAP's Recommendations in 2019

- (a) To mandate, as a start, that **businesses procure third-party liability insurance** to cover e-scooter riders who are riding in the course of work. In the year ahead, the Panel will actively monitor the situation and prepare the industry and community to move towards mandatory insurance for all e-scooter users.
- (b) To impose a **minimum age requirement of 16 to use an e-scooter** on public paths. Those below the age of 16 can continue to ride under adult supervision.
- (c) To mandate a **theory test requirement for e-scooter users**, prior to being able to ride on public paths.
- (d) To **disallow the use of mobile phones when riding an active mobility device on public paths**, unless the mobile phone is mounted or used in a hands-free manner.
- (e) To introduce a **Code of Conduct** to guide pedestrians on how to share paths safely with other pedestrians and active mobility device users:
 - **Keep left:** Keep to the left while walking on paths unless overtaking.
 - **Keep to footpaths:** Walk on footpaths whenever there are footpaths next to cycling/ shared paths.
 - **Be alert:** Pay attention to your surroundings. Plugging in to audio devices or continuously using mobile devices means that you are less able to detect any oncoming obstacles.