

## Victorian Government 12 Month e-scooter trial FAQ Ballarat

### **Is there a minimum age limit or maximum weight limit for riding an e-scooter?**

Neuron's terms of service require that riders be at least 18 years old in Australia. The scooters can carry up to 140kg total weight (i.e. rider and cargo).

### **What are the hours of service?**

The e-scooters are available 24 hours a day.

### **Where will e-scooters be ridden?**

There will be geofencing in place to control where e-scooters can be ridden and parked and how fast they can travel in certain areas. There will be a dictated riding area, no-riding zones, go-slow zones and no-parking zones. This will include a No Riding Zone in bridge mall, which currently doesn't allow bikes or skateboards and a no parking zone around Lake Wendouree. There will also be various slow zones in popular places such as the Armstrong Dining Precinct.

### **How much will they cost?**

Single trips will cost AUD\$1 to unlock the e-scooter and 45 cents per minute thereafter. More frequent users have the option to purchase *Neuron Passes*, a subscription service, available in three-day (AUD\$25), weekly (AUD\$33), or monthly (AUD\$45) options. The packages will allow users to ride as many times as they want for up to 90 minutes per day for a fixed affordable price. This will result in no additional unlocking fees and savings of up to 96%.

### **Where will e-scooters be parked?**

Neuron will establish a number of virtual parking stations; that can be seen in the app. Riders will be rewarded for parking their e-scooter neatly in the designated parking areas.

### **Why are we doing this trial?**

E-scooters have been readily available to buy in Victoria for years but can currently only legally be ridden on private property in Victoria.

The Victorian Government recognises there are potential benefits to allowing higher-power e-scooters on transport network, such as connecting the community to public transport hubs, as an alternative to short car trips, and to reduce carbon emissions.

We are conducting our own trial so we can test these devices on our transport network and see how they could be safely incorporated longer term.

### **Why only four councils? How did the Department of Transport select these councils?**

Department of Transport chose the four councils following a targeted expressions of interest process earlier in the year. Participating councils are City of Melbourne, City of Yarra, City of Port Phillip and City of Ballarat.

Selection criteria for the winning councils was based on several factors, including the council's location and geography (i.e. adequate network of 50km/h roads to access places of interest; and a connected road network with enough bike lanes).

### **Will the company chosen receive payment for the trial?**

The scooter companies will not be paid by Department of Transport or councils to participate.

### **How does this compare to electric bikes? Why are these requirements different when compared to e-bikes which have been allowed on the roads for years?**

Electric bikes can be legally ridden at up to 25km/h on all Victorian roads (they are not restricted to low speed loads).

E-scooters, however, cannot be ridden on public roads without these trial regulations in place, and will continue to be forbidden except in LGAs participating in the trial.

The trial will be administered similarly to the current e-bike share scheme in metropolitan Melbourne, where there is an agreement between the private device provider and the participating councils authorising the public share scheme in their local government areas. The State Government has set the regulatory framework for these devices to operate but is not directly in partnership with the electric scooter companies.

### **Are e-scooters safe?**

Several studies have shown that e-scooters and bicycles (including e-bikes) have similar risks and rates of injury.

There are many factors that contribute the safety outcomes of both e-scooter and bicycle riding. Research shows some of the main risk factors contributing to injury include intoxication, two users per e-scooter, and not wearing a helmet.

These are all banned as part of the trial and any breaches will result in significant penalties.

Another possible safety issue is the interaction between e-scooter riders and pedestrians.

We hope to mitigate this key problem by excluding e-scooter use from footpaths, and instead only allow e-scooters to travel on the same infrastructure as bicycles: roads, bicycle lanes, bicycle paths, and shared paths (not footpaths).

### **Do I need a driver's licence to use the e-scooters?**

No. You don't need a licence; however, drink and drug driving restrictions that apply to other motorists will apply to e-scooter riders, which means you'll need to have a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of less than 0.05 or risk heavy fines and loss of licence (if you have one). The minimum age to ride an e-scooter in the trial is 18 years.

### **Why can e-scooters only travel single file when bicycles can legally travel 2 abreast?**

E-scooters being ridden in the trial are speed limited to 20km/h. This means riders can't speed up to overtake if required, so single file is an additional safety measure.

In addition, average cycling speeds are often faster than 20km/h, so there is a risk that e-scooters could clog up bikes lanes and prevent faster cyclists from overtaking safely.

### **Why is this trial happening if these scooters cannot legally be ridden on Victorian roads/shared use paths?**

The trial will legalise e-scooters in specific LGAs on certain infrastructure (i.e., roads up to 50km/h, bicycle lanes, bicycle paths, and shared paths).

Only e-scooters operated by commercial hire companies will be permitted to travel, with no private e-scooter use permitted.

### **Why are you only allowing commercially-owned e-scooters during the trial and not privately-owned e-scooters?**

The purpose of the trial is to gain essential learnings about how these new devices can integrate into the wider transport network.

The trial will allow us to obtain accurate and controlled data that will include the number of devices deployed in at any one time, number of trips, average trip time, distance, start and end points, and any safety incidents. We cannot obtain this data from privately owned e-scooters. Commercial operators will share this non-identifiable user data with participating councils and Department of Transport.

Private e-scooters remain illegal on public roads and riders risk an \$909 fine for riding an

unregistered vehicle (e-scooters can't be registered).

**Will e-scooter riders be insured during the trial?**

Yes, operators now provide automatic Third-Party Accident Insurance coverage, in addition to Personal Accident Insurance and Public Liability Insurance, to riders as part of any ride.

**How will this trial be monitored and what are the next steps planned after the trial is completed?**

The Minister for Roads and Road Safety has set up an Oversight Panel to provide guidance and make recommendations at the conclusion of the trial.

In addition to the Oversight Panel, the Department of Transport has established a Steering Committee to conduct an evaluation of the trial and report to the Oversight Panel.

Towards the conclusion of the trials, the Oversight Panel will make recommendations to the Minister for Roads and Roads Safety regarding the longer-term regulation potential for these and similar devices.

**How much will this trial cost?**

No additional funding is required – the trial will be managed within existing State Government resources. There is no financial cost to City of Ballarat for the trial.

**How do I contact Neuron?**

If you are a local business looking to connect with Neuron to discuss how the new e-scooter program can help bring customers to your door please contact:

Email: [ballaratsupport@neuron.sg](mailto:ballaratsupport@neuron.sg)

Phone: 03 9034 9666

Website: [www.ridereuron.com](http://www.ridereuron.com).

**Download the Neuron app**



## Important Riding Rules and Safety Tips:

- Neuron riders must be 18 years old and above
- E-scooters cannot be ridden on the footpath
- E-scooters can only be ridden on bicycle lanes, bicycle paths, shared paths, and low-speed roads with a speed limit of 50km/h or less
- Only one rider allowed per e-scooter, and no tandem riding with children
- Wearing a helmet is mandatory, there is one on every e-scooter
- Maintain a safe distance between riders and pedestrians
- Give way to pedestrians and mobility devices (such as wheelchairs) at all times
- Do not ride under the influence of alcohol or any other substance
- Park responsibly, don't obstruct access areas, don't park too close to a junction

## E-SCOOTER USAGE MAP

