ARATA statement on the ‘Need for regulation of mobility scooters, also known as motorised wheelchairs’ from Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee Report as tabled on 20 September 2018.

ARATA calls for a good practice approach to Motorised Mobility Device (MMD) regulation and suggests that involvement of key stakeholders is essential to develop an evidenced, nationally consistent regulatory framework. ARATA contributes to the work of Australian Standards ME067 Mobility Appliances Committee in setting product standards and working towards Technical Specifications for safe use of MMDs.

The term MMD's captures a range of different mobility devices ranging from low to high complexity, and may be used on a part-time or full-time basis depending on the user's need. For many users with a disability a MMD may also serve other important functions such accessing their environment through specialty controls, pressure care and postural management through specialty seat functions, and accessing transport options in the community.

MMD’s fulfil our human right to independent mobility and community access. MMD’s enable people living with disability and the effects of ageing to participate in life activities and significantly contribute to health and wellbeing outcomes for both MMD users and their families and communities.

The Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee raises the important topic of safe use of MMD, and the Report contains a range of important findings which could guide a systematic approach to enhanced road safety for MMD users and the community.

Important principles from the Report which are not fully realised in the Recommendations include,

- Well-designed infrastructure and cities which are built to cater for MMD
- Evidence-informed policy, building on the significant body of assistive technology and allied health literature concerning evaluation for safe MMD use, and fitting MMD’s to individuals and to environments of use.
- Multi-stakeholder involvement including bodies such as Australian Standards ME067 Mobility Appliances Committee, ARATA, ATSA, COTA, MMD user groups and university researchers
- Evidence-based public education campaigns and MMD training opportunities
- Funding of systematic data collection and research studies, to inform policy and inform MMD design and development

ARATA encourage Austroads to take an evidence-informed and multi-stakeholder perspective in establishing regulatory frameworks, to ensure a balance of safety and access, for all Australians.