

Dear members of the legal group,

I thank you for your effort to get clearer definitions of small motor vehicles. From a pedestrian's point of view it is of course important to have optimal regulations for safe vehicles, but this is only one aspect of our concern. We see that many new types of small motor vehicles suddenly may become fashionable long before the authorities have them defined. Therefore a rigid rule should be that anyone using a motor-vehicle is obliged to wear a helmet, unless the respective type of vehicle is classified explicitly exempted from that duty. This may make it less attractive to use motor-vehicles for fun on public roads (and on sidewalks).

Many of the small types of vehicles have been designed and sold, because of the parking problems in the cities. The police usually does not enforce the parking of small motor vehicles on sidewalks (pavements).



This picture shows a sidewalk which is usually being used by a motor cycle rental firm to display the quads for rent, even though the no stopping sign addresses all vehicles, and certainly all motor vehicles.



Moped designed to contain a wheelchair. This type of vehicle may be admitted on surfaces designed for walking.

For us pedestrians, it is important that the only category of motorised vehicles which may be admitted to use walking-surfaces for locomotion (and for parking, unless a very large) have to be used by handicapped persons. Usually the obvious design for this type of users makes it unattractive for the normally mobile persons, but a clear classification of vehicles for use by handicapped persons would be more important than the number of wheels. Similarly it, is not really important if a vehicle is driven by electric or fuel power.

The question how many wheels a vehicle has is equally not a crucial one. There may even motor vehicles be coming, which have no wheels at all, but one ball. Recently a robot has been developed that keeps its equilibrium like a Segway by compensating simultaneously any inclination with a movement.

see <http://robots.stanford.edu/isrr-papers/hollis.pdf>

It is easy to imagine (possibly more difficult to construct) a vehicle that could work this way:

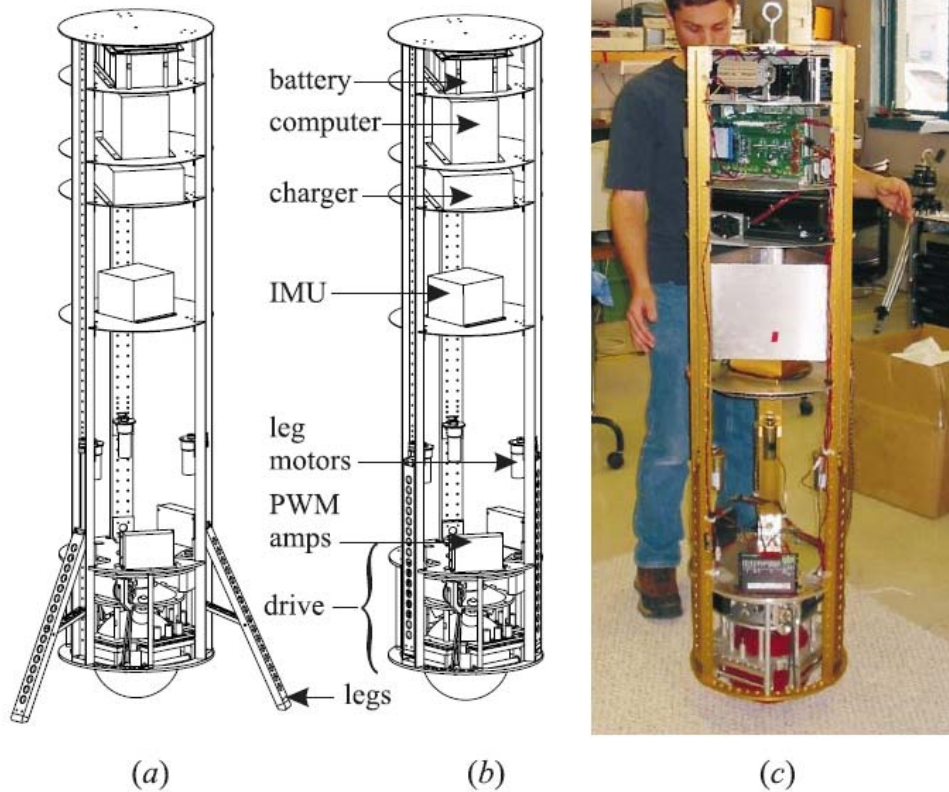


Figure 1: Ballbot design and realization: (a) with three legs deployed, (b) with legs retracted into body, (c) balancing and station keeping.

It should be a standard in all countries that a mobile device with a motor used for locomotion vehicle is a motor vehicle, no matter how refined it is. Laws and decrees should be designed in a way that they always include the new types of vehicles that may appear.

I hope you will be able to integrate these considerations into the definitions.

Best wishes,

Christian M. Thomas
International Federation of Pedestrians