The following appeared in a letter to the editor of the *Balmer Island Gazette*.

"On Balmer Island, where mopeds serve as a popular form of transportation, the population increases to 100,000 during the summer months. To reduce the number of accidents involving mopeds and pedestrians, the town council of Balmer Island should limit the number of mopeds rented by the island's moped rental companies from 50 per day to 25 per day during the summer season. By limiting the number of rentals, the town council will attain the 50 percent annual reduction in moped accidents that was achieved last year on the neighboring island of Seaville, when Seaville's town council enforced similar limits on moped rentals."

*Write a response in which you discuss what questions would need to be answered in order to decide whether the recommendation is likely to have the predicted result. Be sure to explain how the answers to these questions would help to evaluate the recommendation.*

Road safety is a very common concern for the governing body in several towns and cities. In the aforementioned letter, the author presents an argument suggesting that restrictions be put on the number of Mopeds that can be rented by Balmer Island’s moped rental companies in order to potentially achieve a 50 per cent reduction in annual moped related accidents in the town. However, the author leaves several pertinent questions unanswered, leading to a weak argument.

The foremost question to be answered would be whether the primary reason for large number of moped related accidents is an excessive number of mopeds on the town’s roads in the summer. The author assumes that the swelling of the population in the town during summer directly translates to a great increase in the number of mopeds and moped related accidents. No evidence has been presented which suggests that the large number of moped related accidents primarily occur in the summer. Even if an inordinately large amount of accidents do occur during the summer, the cause might be substandard roads or negligence on behalf of the pedestrians or moped riders alike. In the former case, budget must be allocated for the improvement of roads, while in the latter, the moped renting companies need to be exhorted to be more stringent while renting the vehicle, rather than simply renting it to fewer individuals.

If it is determined that too many mopeds is the cause for large accident numbers, we need to subsequently determine whether reducing the number of mopeds permitted to be rented by each company per day from 50 to 25 would cause a substantial decrease in the number of mopeds on the roads of the town. It might simply lead to the proliferation of more moped renting companies, leading to no effect on the number of mopeds on the streets of Balmer Island, having no ameliorating effect on the number of accidents.

Lastly, the author uses the example of nearby Seaville Island to assert that his suggestion would be effective. Before arguing that the law would have a similar effect in Balmer Island, the author needs to answer a very pertinent question - how similar are the two islands in various aspects relevant to the issue at hand? The Seaville Island town council could have done it’s due diligence and determined incontrovertibly that taking the steps it took would be effective. The implementation of similar steps in Balmer Island could have minimal or even no positive results whatsoever. The author must also inform the readers about whether Seaville Island’s town council implemented any supplementary steps along with the reduction in number of mopeds that can be rented by each company during the summer.

Hence, it is clear that the author leaves several questions unanswered in the argument, begging the question about whether the suggestion presented would have any substantial effect whatsoever.