



PWdWA FOURTH RESPONSE TO 2022 REVIEW OF THE - DISABILITY STANDARDS FOR ACCESSIBLE PUBLIC TRANSPORT 2002

People with Disabilities (WA) Inc would like to thank the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communication and the Arts (Australia's Federal Government) for the opportunity to provide a response on the current discussion paper on 2022 Review of the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002 (Transport Standards).

Chair: Yhana Lucas

Acting Chief Executive Officer: Andrea Surman

Author:.. Siyat Abdi PhD.

Reviewer: Brian Cooper MSW(PQ) Social Demographer NEDA

People with Disabilities (WA) Inc.

City West Lotteries House, 23/2 Delhi Street West Perth WA 6005

Email: admin@pwdwa.org

Tel: (08) 9420 7279

Website: <http://www.pwdwa.org>



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People with Disabilities WA (PWdWA)

Since 1981 PWdWA has been the lead member-based disability advocacy organisation representing the rights, needs, and equity of all Western Australians with a physical, intellectual, neurological, psychosocial, or sensory disability. PWdWA does this via individual and systemic advocacy. They provide access to information and independent individual and systemic advocacy, focusing on the most vulnerable. PWdWA is run by and for people with disabilities and strives to be the voice for all people with disabilities in Western Australia.

Introduction

Systemic advocacy is an important part of PWdWA's work. PWdWA is committed to ensuring the voice of their members and people with disabilities in WA are heard and represented. PWdWA appreciate the opportunity to participate in the fourth review of the disability standards for accessible public transport 2002 (Transport Standards).

PWdWA recognises what the Transport Standards are, their purpose, and the constant need to review. This review is important to evaluate how access to public transport standards are working to support people with disability participate in the community, travel to work or study, connect with others and access vital services.

The review of the Transport Standards provides the opportunity for people with disabilities to be accorded equitable access without discrimination. The Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA) seeks to eliminate discrimination, as far as possible, against people with disability. Public transport is a service covered by the DDA.

The DDA is supplemented by a series of disability standards that detail the rights and responsibilities regarding equal access and opportunity for people with a disability to live their lives as equal citizens engaging in education, employment, social, economic, political, spiritual and cultural pursuits alongside their peers.

Survey Results

In preparing this submission, PWDWA conducted a survey of people with disabilities to gain their feedback on accessibility of transport and their views and ideas for the review.

Characteristics of the respondents and Identity of the respondents:

The total number of people who participated in the survey was 18 respondents. Their responses are significant because they are directly affected by disability legislation and can reliably contribute useful insights on how it can be improved. The respondents were distributed as per the table below:

Table 1: Identity of Respondents

Category of respondents	Number	Percentage
Persons living with a disability	17	89.47%
Carers/Family members	2	10.53%
Total	19	100.00%

Notes:

The question allowed respondents to choose more than one option. Hence although the respondents were 18, there were 19 responses.

Most of the respondents were people living with disability.

The primary disability

The primary disability of the respondents reported in the survey is indicated in the table below:

Table 2: Primary Disability

Primary disability	Number	Percentage
Blind or Vision Impaired	3	16.7%
Developmental and/or Learning Disability	1	5.6%
Neurological Disability	4	22.2%
Autism	3	16.7%
Physical Disability	7	38.8%
Total	18	100.0%

Notes:

Physical disability had the highest number of respondents, followed by neurological disability. However, the survey had diverse primary disabilities represented.

The age of the person with disability

The age of persons with disability was as shown on the table below:

Table 3: Age Profile

Age Bracket	Respondents	Percentage
0-7	0	0.0%
8-14	0	0.0%
15-25	1	5.6%
26-35	2	11.1%
36-45	3	16.7%
46-55	7	38.8%
56-65	3	16.7%
Over 65	2	11.1%
Total	18	100.0%

Notes:

Most respondents fall within the 46-55 age bracket.

Gender-cultural diversity of our respondents

Of the 4 respondents who responded to the question on diversity, the responses are indicated in the table below:

Table 4: Gender Cultural Diversity

Diversity group	Number	Percentage
Culturally and Linguistically Diverse	1	25.0%
LGBTIQA+	2	50.0%
Non-binary/ Gender diverse	1	25.0%
Total	4	100.0%

Notes:

Among those who responded to the question on gender diversity, only 22.2% or 4 out of 18 respondents answered. People identifying as LGBTIQA+ were half of the 4 respondents.

Challenges or barriers

Challenges or barriers that prevent the disability community from being involved in public transport planning and procurement processes.

Table 5: Challenges or Barriers

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Lack of opportunities to participate	11	61.1%
Lack of information	4	22.2%
Lack of resources	3	16.7%
Total	18	100.0%

Notes

The main obstacle to the participation of the disability community in transportation planning and procurement processes is a lack of participation opportunities. The limited chances for participation and increased isolation caused by disabilities can have an unfavorable impact on people's ability to engage in socio-economic activities. Equitable participation and levelling the playing field are made possible by increased mobility and accessibility. People who isolate themselves and construct complex protective cocoons around themselves are less likely to take advantage of possibilities for socio-economic growth. Planners and those in charge of transportation often ignore people with disabilities, who are valid transportation stakeholders. Planners have consistently disregarded the demands of people with disabilities when determining transportation demand and the resources available¹.

¹ http://www.transed2012.in/common/uploads/poster/289_paper_transedabstract00166.pdf

Involving people with disability community in public transport planning and procurement

Recommendations on what could be done to encourage greater involvement of people with disability in public transport planning and procurement processes.

Table 6: Recommendations to encourage greater involvement

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Provide more information about opportunities to participate	11	61.1%
Provide more funding for disability organizations	4	22.2%
Offer training or support	3	16.7%
Total	18	100.0%

Notes

Providing more information about opportunities to participate is the most preferred means of promoting the involvement of people with disability in transport planning and procurement processes.

To fully take part in society and the economy, people with disabilities need access to transportation. According to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the National Disability Strategy, Australia offers accessible public transportation. People with disabilities perceive Australia's progress towards fully accessible public transportation as slow, despite the two strong international and domestic goals that guide the country towards a more equitable community.

The disability community owes it to persons with disability to support programmes that let them participate in the national conversation around accessible transportation. The only means to ensure that the Transport Standards are being implemented is to file a complaint. People with disabilities must start this process individually, identical to those under the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992. (DDA). "A fundamental issue with the transport standards relates to enforcement, or the ability to enforce the standards, and these are the same restrictions with the enforcement of the Disability Discrimination Act, which many of you will be familiar with, but there are not many enforcement mechanisms other than through individual complaints overall. Access to dependable public transportation continues to be a crucial issue for women with disabilities because policies regarding the physical environment, including transportation, information, and communications, and other facilities and services open or provided to the public, do not take gender or disability into account—the need for explicitly including women with disabilities in planning and policy-making processes for public infrastructure².

² https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/sites/default/files/migrated/transport/disabilities/files/36-Australian_Federation_of_Disability_Organisations.pdf



Recommendations on how people with disability would like to be engaged and consulted on public transport planning and procurement processes

Table 7: Recommendations on engagement

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Online surveys	12	66.7%
Focus groups	4	22.2%
Public meetings	2	11.1%
Total	18	100.0%

Notes

An online survey is the most preferred means of engaging people with disability in transport planning and procurement processes.

Most people with disabilities use equipment, aids, or assistance to help them interact with the community or the public transportation system. Using that piece of equipment is the main concern; "I should be able to board this transport on my own". For example, to accommodate blind or deaf public transportation passengers and provide a uniform approach for wheelchair users, changes to the Transport Standards are necessary. Wheelchair tiedown and occupant restraint systems should be used independently and safely, and they should be able to tolerate low levels of functional mobility and dexterity while still offering a high level of safety. Respondents reported "I would think that I will rely on human interaction at some point throughout practically every journey. If I had an App that was linked to that autonomous vehicle, it would simply alert me to the stop I'm about to arrive at, such as "The next stop is Flinders Street."

When using public transportation, many people with disabilities rely on direct help. The Transport Standards omit some tasks that drivers generally perform yet are crucial for people with disabilities³.

³ <https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/dsapt-cav-main-report.pdf>

Accessing Public Transport

In your experience, has public transport in your local area been accessible and accommodating to people with disabilities?

The responses to this question were as follows:

Table 8: Public transport accessible in local area

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	14	93.3%
No	1	6.7%
Total	15	100.0%

Notes

The majority of respondents said that local public transportation was not accessible or accommodating to those with impairments. Studies conducted in overseas locations, where interviewees highlighted multiple barriers, confirm this perspective on service access.

Recommendations about changes to improve accessibility and accommodations for people with disabilities on public transport

The respondents who answered "No" in the previous question gave the following feedback:

- Not all buses are equipped for wheelchairs in my area additionally trains in my area still use fluorescent lights which trigger photosensitivity, seizures and migraines for me (and likely others with my condition)
- Bus ramps are terrifying in a wheelchair, most trains are not the same height as platforms, and most stations are extremely difficult, if not impossible, to get around in a wheelchair. Stirling Train Station needs a second larger lift and to reduce/narrow the gap between the carriages and the platform so mobility chairs with small wheels are not trapped.
- I use a mobility scooter because it suits my needs best. There is not enough room on buses especially when they buy buses that force you to leave by the front door so you have to turn it around. Impossible while it is moving without injuring someone or damaging your scooter.
- ACROD bays⁴ need to be nearer entrances of train stations. Buses should 'kneel' prior to opening the door as a standard.
- There are difficulties walking to the nearest bus stops. Local train stations are difficult to get to, particularly Bayswater
- Provide bus shelters and seating not just bus 'stands'
- Allow people to BYO NDIS therapy dogs onto public transport. Skip expensive assistance dog PAT certification paperwork/qualifications. Therapy dogs have to

⁴ <https://acrod.org.au/>



be doctor (GP) or psychologist approved.

- All buses to have a ramp, and the bus drivers to put this ramp out all times. Better education for drivers when dealing with passengers with disabilities.
- A quiet zone would help - like trains in most other global cities⁵
- Many bus seats and shelters have been taken away so people are exposed to the elements⁶.
- There are less bus stops resulting in the need to walk longer distances. Provide seats for people with a disability and the elderly.
- It can be difficult to follow timetables.
- Signs are required at train stations explaining in clear language the process of catching a train.
- Fund programs to upgrade existing facilities to be accessible and not just fund new development.

Have you ever experienced inadequate information when using public transport as a person with a disability?

The responses to this question are as indicated in the table below:

Table 9: Experienced inadequate information

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	13	86.6%
No	2	13.4%
Total	15	100.0%

Notes

Most respondents believed they had experienced inadequate information when using public transport as a person with a disability. This a common issue identified in Australia⁷ and internationally⁸. The inadequate and inappropriate provision of transport information created barriers to accessing transport.

⁵ <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/disability-rights/australian-human-rights-commission-accessible-bus-stops-guidelines>

⁶ <https://www.perthnow.com.au/community-news/stirling-times/doubleview-residents-call-for-bus-shelters-return-months-after-it-was-removed-for-accessibility-c-844885>

⁷ <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/23800127.2020.1827557>

⁸ <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/02646196231167072>



What kind of information do you find most important when using public transport as a person with a disability?

The responses to this question are indicated in the table below:

Table 10: experienced inadequate public transport information⁹

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Timetables and schedules	3	21.4%
Information about accessible features on the vehicle (e.g., ramps, lifts, accessible seating)	6	42.9%
Information about alternative routes or modes of transport	3	21.4%
Other (please specify)	2	14.3%
Total	14	100.0%

Notes

The respondents who answered "other" specified the following

- Changes or shutdown of train and buses
- Clear instructions on catching a train. The Perth station is so confusing. I have to ask people where to go

Acknowledging the pre-journey travel information needed to meet the travel requirements of distinct populations is essential. Disabled persons, depending on the type of disability, will require specific classes of information to plan their journey. People with disabilities frequently request more extensive travel information than public transport organisations typically provide. Groups of disabled people have different information needs. They are curious about practical information, such as where to stand and walk, and information on building and vehicle accessibility. The focus is on factual information that will not hinder the journey but will enhance the traveller's knowledge of what to expect. Different disability subgroups have narrow information needs. The requirements are more stringent because the answers to the queries will enable the decision that the journey is possible. Depending on the capacity of each subgroup's aptitude for navigating the public transportation system, different subgroups have varying degrees of need for travel information. The information required for each subgroup is likewise more tailored to the particular impairment and the travel-related difficulty it causes.

⁹ <https://trid.trb.org/view/890830>



Have you ever encountered difficulties accessing or understanding public transport information as a person with a disability?

The responses to the question are as indicated in the table below:

Table 11: Encountered difficulties accessing or understanding public transport information

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	10	66.6%
No	5	33.4%
Total	15	100.0%

Notes

Most respondents were of the opinion that they had encountered difficulties accessing or understanding public transport information as a person with a disability¹⁰.

Accessibility is crucial in everyday life, particularly when interacting with the internal and external environments. Most public transportation hubs still lack adequate design and amenities. Persons with disabilities are acknowledged to have fewer opportunities and a lower quality of life than people without a disability. When poor accessibility is added, travelling and using public transportation for people with disabilities presents even more obstacles and hurdles. Thus, it becomes more and more challenging to neglect the needs of people with disabilities while utilising the features of public transportation.

Some note that as the population ages, which also includes those with disabilities, presents a substantial transportation difficulty. Most will depend heavily on accessible and appropriate public transportation. Besides the transportation infrastructure, which unquestionably can play a vital role in supporting ageing and increasing the growth population of people with disabilities, will require attention to accessibility and mobility difficulties.

¹⁰ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877042812003783>



What were the main difficulties you encountered in accessing or understanding public transport information as a person with a disability?

Table 12: Main difficulties understanding or accessing public transport information

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Lack of clear and concise information	5	31.25%
Information not provided in accessible formats (e.g., braille, audio, large print)	2	12.50%
Inadequate signage or way-finding	5	31.25%
Other (please specify)	4	25.00%
Total	16	100.00%

Notes

The respondents who answered "other" specified the following

- Accessibility information is often hidden away in websites or the user needs to search for it
- I was unaware the trains would be unavailable – need better forms of communication
- Bus drivers who refuse to kneel the bus and put the ramp out, expect me to lift my walker (and myself) in and out of the bus
- poor communication and impatience by driver

A person's well-being and quality of life depend on their capacity to move around freely and independently to participate in society. Impediments within urban environments and public transportation networks often hinder individuals with disabilities from utilising public transportation. It is not well understood how individuals with disabilities behave while using public transport. People with disabilities may experience various adverse effects if they cannot take part in society because of being prevented from travelling because of hurdles in public transportation¹¹.

¹¹ <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01441647.2021.1955035>

What could be done to improve the accessibility and availability of public transport information for people with disabilities?

The responses to this question were as follows:

Table 13: Improvement of Public Transport Information

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Lack of clear and concise information	5	31.25%
Information not provided in accessible formats (e.g., braille, audio, large print)	2	12.50%
Inadequate signage or way-finding	5	31.25%
Other (please specify)	4	25.00%
Total	16	100.00%

Notes

The respondents who answered "other" specified the following"

- Provide clear unambiguous links on website home page for accessibility
- Improved signage of timetables (bigger font) so it is easier to read

An evaluation was carried out to examine the design standards for accessible transportation in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Hong Kong. They considered how to efficiently and securely move people with various disabilities. After the adoption of accessible design, perceptions of accessibility and safety were improved. Following the implementation of accessible design, public transportation use increased. As access to crucial urban resources improved, the perceived quality of life increased¹².

¹² <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0386111217300444>



Do you think public transport operators and/or governments should be responsible for ensuring that public transport information is accessible and easy to understand for people with disabilities?

Table 14: Should Public Transport operators ensure public transport information is accessible and easily understood

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	14	93.3%
No	1	6.7%
Total	15	100.0%

Notes

Most respondents were of the opinion that public transport operators and/or governments should be responsible for ensuring that public transport information is accessible and easy to understand for people with disabilities¹³.

Unlike other types of travelling information, which is essential only to travellers, impairment severity also affects how important travelling information is. There is travelling information for disabled individuals. Providing older adults and people with disabilities with the general travel information they require depends on the limitations that a person's disability causes when using public transportation. Different subgroups have different information needs.

The public transportation system's increased environmental demands necessitate stricter information requirements for travellers, making travel information more critical. Travel information is necessary for specific subgroups, including older adults and those with disabilities, whose intended uses may vary. Impulsive travel by older and disabled passengers via local public transportation requires substantial enhancements.

It is important to consider the needs of older and disabled passengers while travelling. To provide proper travelling information, one must have a solid grasp of how to present that information to the travellers.

¹³ https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Nina-Waara/publication/41382419_Older_and_disabled_people's_need_and_valuation_of_traveller_information_in_public_transport/links/5d5123f8a6fdcc370a8ed0ae/Older-and-disabled-peoples-need-and-valuation-of-traveller-information-in-public-transport.pdf



How would you rate the current accessibility and availability of public transport information for people with disabilities in your local area?

The responses were as follows:

Table 15: Rate accessibility and availability of public transport information

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Very good	0	0.0%
Good	1	7.1%
Fair	7	50.0%
Poor	6	42.9%
Total	14	100.0%

Notes

Half of the respondents were of the opinion that the current accessibility and availability of public transport information for people with disabilities in their local area was fair.

It's critical to incorporate transport accessibility demand data to assess the effectiveness of current transportation systems, identify service gaps, and identify locations for infrastructure investment. It is essential to focus on drivers of demand and accessibility for the development of disability policy. A demand index is required for Australia where identified regions with an acute need for public transportation services based on economic and sociodemographic data, and a composite accessibility index detected accessibility levels and service delivery issues. Accessibility measures should be developed so that local factors are used to model the demand for transit service, and the model linked the predictability of various access indicators to the need for transit service¹⁴.

¹⁴ <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.3141/2217-19?journalCode=trra>



What specific changes or improvements would you like to see in the accessibility and availability of public transport information for people with disabilities in your local area?

The following responses were reported:

- Apos are more accessible often they don't easily handle me zooming text only to be easier to read.
- There would need to be a massive redesign including looking at bus ramps (or raising all bus stops), height of trains, and how inaccessible stations are.
- Improve Transperth website, advertise changes such as if transperth ever update train platforms, ramps and lifts.
- There was no clear information about the closure of the South Perth ferry jetty for people that have mobility disabilities and no recommended alternatives for the period of time of the modifications.
- I no longer try to use public transport in my area. I have to find my own way to the trains and go from there.
- All buses to kneel before opening the door. Timetables available in larger text.
- Big timetable display on main bus stops.
- Clear signs about the process. I've had trains leave because I was standing at the door to get on but didn't know they don't always open automatically. I've had people laugh at me for missing the train because of this.

It is possible to design public transportation networks that are safe and convenient for everyone, including those with special needs. Public transport in Australia is designed for those who do not have a disability. It is possible to create a public transport system based on the principles of an intelligent highway-based public transportation system. This approach aims to improve accessibility and safety for people with special needs. Sensors, mobile communications systems, and positioning systems are just a few examples of the components used in the system's deployment that are frequently found in transportation infrastructure. The system is not just for urban areas; it can also function in non-urban transportation scenarios where there may not be reliable infrastructure like electrical grids and communications, such as in remote rural areas. The system could be built using the concepts and methods from ambient intelligence and ubiquitous computing. The system would offer various services, such as a surveillance system, to guarantee accessibility at bus stops in the first case or a route helper for the visually impaired in the second case¹⁵.

¹⁵ <https://www.mdpi.com/1424-8220/15/8/20279>



A lack of understanding by public transport staff

Have you ever experienced a lack of understanding by public transport staff when using public transport as a person with a disability?

Table 16: experienced a lack of understanding by public transport staff

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	12	80.0%
No	3	20.0%
Total	15	100.0%

Notes

Most of the respondents had experienced a lack of understanding by public transport staff when using public transport as a person with a disability.

The perceptions of interpersonal discrimination experienced by people with disabilities when using public transportation experience bullying, intimidation, receiving unwanted physical assistance, and competitions for accessible seating are just a few examples of interpersonal prejudice that have occurred in public. The disability of the person comes under scrutiny by transport staff, which often results in hostile exchanges and verbal abuse. Interactions arise from a lack of knowledge about disabilities, whether they are apparent, ignorant of the needs of people with disabilities, and the gender and age of the person engaging in discriminatory behaviour. They claimed that because of their prejudiced experiences, the disabled social and economic participation in their communities decreased. Many disabled will encounter instances of interpersonal prejudice by both travelling members of the public and workers in the transportation industry. Interpersonal prejudice constrained some young people's freedom of movement as they sought to avoid contact with derogatory words and discriminatory attitudes. An increase in worries about travelling safely to and from events impacts the disabled willingness to use public transit for their regular activities¹⁶.

¹⁶ <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09687599.2020.1822784>

What specific aspects of the lack of understanding by public transport staff have impacted you the most when using public transport as a person with a disability?

The responses provided included:

Table 17: impact of lack of understanding by public transport staff

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Inadequate assistance in boarding or alighting the vehicle	4	22.2%
Insufficient information provided about accessible features on the vehicle (e.g., ramps, lifts, accessible seating)	2	11.1%
Insufficient knowledge of disability-related issues and needs	10	55.6%
Other (please specify)	2	11.1%
Total	18	100.0%

Notes

The respondents who answered "other" specified the following

- I've seen people on scooters get stuck on the train, unable to alight at their station.
- Once a train station attendant said "oh, so you can walk" when I stood up out of my mobility scooter/chair because the lift wasn't working.
- Laughing at me because I couldn't work out how to get out of Perth station

Have you ever felt discriminated against or excluded by public transport staff because of a lack of understanding of your disability-related needs?

Table 18: felt discriminated against by Public Transport staff

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	10	66.6%
No	5	33.4%
Total	15	100.0%

Notes

Most of the respondents had felt discriminated against or excluded by public transport staff due to a lack of understanding of your disability-related needs.

What could be done to improve the level of understanding by public transport staff regarding the needs of people with disabilities?

The suggestions given were as indicated below:

Table 19: Improvement of understanding of public transport staff

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Provide disability awareness training for staff	8	44.4%
Increase the number of staff who have experience with disability-related issues	3	16.7%
Develop better communication systems between staff and people with disabilities	5	27.8%
Other (please specify)	2	11.1%
Total	18	100.0%

Notes

The respondents who answered "other" specified the following"

- Have staff available to help people get on and off public transport
- Conduct satisfaction surveys for PWD using PT. Publish them.
- Employ people with disabilities.
- Definitely train staff to understand anxiety and social phobia can make it difficult to function in busy crowds

How would you rate the current level of understanding by public transport staff regarding the needs of people with disabilities in your local area?

Table 20: Rating of level of understanding by public transport staff

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Very good	0	0.0%
Good	0	0.0%
Fair	7	50.0%
Poor	7	50.0%
Total	14	100.0%

Notes

Half of the respondents were of the opinion that the current accessibility and availability of public transport information for people with disabilities in their local area was fair while the rest said it was poor.

What specific changes or improvements would you like to see in the level of understanding by public transport staff regarding the needs of people with disabilities in your local area?

The recommendations provided included:

- Transperth need cultural awareness training and accessibility should be part of every new training initiative
- With regard to buses- not all drivers lower the bus as well as activate the ramp.
- Greater understanding and empathy of the difficulties. Have found people to be lacking empathy when voicing difficulties experienced
- Disability awareness training
- Education, employment of volunteers living with disabilities on public transport & environments so everyone can interact with each other to gain greater knowledge of the situation to be better equipped to deal with it.
- Better bus signage. All buses to have ramps.
- Definitely upskill staff that anxiety and social phobia can make it difficult for people with disability to function in busy crowds

Individuals with disabilities rely heavily on public transport to facilitate their movement and independence. However, a lack of awareness on the part of public transport employees regarding the unique demands and obstacles experienced by disabled individuals has had a significant impact on their experiences when utilising public transportation in Australia.

The inaccessibility of public transport is a particular factor that has had a negative effect. To efficiently utilise public transportation, individuals with impairments require accessible facilities.

Inaccessible infrastructure and services have frequently resulted from a lack of awareness and comprehension by public transportation workers. This includes inaccessible ramps or lifts, narrow doorways to allow wheelchairs or mobility aids, and inadequate signage or information for those with visual impairments. In addition, the lack of disability awareness training for public transportation personnel exacerbates these problems. Without sufficient training and sensitivity, personnel may not be qualified to assist disabled individuals or understand their special requirements. As a result, individuals with disabilities confront substantial obstacles and limitations when utilising public transportation. These obstacles might range from physical barriers that impede passengers with mobility impairments from boarding or disembarking safely to communication barriers that prevent passengers with sensory impairments from obtaining vital information or assistance. Disabled individuals' emotional health and self-assurance are negatively affected by a lack of comprehension by public transportation personnel.

Rail platform access issues

Have you ever experienced rail platform access issues as a person with a disability?

The responses were as follows:

Table 21: Experienced rail platform issues

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	10	66.6%
No	5	33.4%
Total	15	100.0%

Notes

Most of the respondents had experienced rail platform access issues as a person with a disability.

Accessibility of rail platforms is a vital feature of transportation infrastructure, especially for those with disabilities. One respondent reported “As a person with a disability, I have actually encountered access challenges to train platforms. One of the most significant problems I've encountered is the lack of accessible facilities and design on train platforms, particularly for travellers with disabilities”. Despite breakthroughs and upgrades to the public transportation system, many rail platforms still lack the necessary accessible elements. When utilising public transportation, these accessibility issues can provide substantial problems and obstacles for those with disabilities. According to an examination and comparison of accessibility levels in foreign nations, infrastructure accessibility can be evaluated using a two-stage model that takes into account crucial areas and their significance for impaired individuals.

In recent years, barrier-free access to rail platform access has improved dramatically, according to an analysis. This progress is attributable to the procurement of new or renovated diesel multiple units, electric units, and wheelchair-accessible passenger vehicles built for long-distance travel. Despite these improvements, a great deal of work must be done to ensure that rail stations are fully accessible to those with disabilities¹⁷.

¹⁷ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0386111221000042>

What specific rail platform access issues have prevented you from undertaking successful journeys by rail as a person with a disability?

The responses given included:

Table 22: Specific issues prevented successful completion of rail journey

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Inadequate ramps or lifts to access the platform	8	44.4%
Insufficient space to manoeuvre a mobility device on the platform	2	11.1%
Inadequate or poorly marked accessible seating on the platform	3	16.7%
Other (please specify)	5	27.8%
Total	18	100.0%

Notes

The respondents who answered "other" specified the following

- Gaps between trains and the platform, steep gradients
- Mobility Chair wheels get stuck in gap between the carriage floor and platform
- No back up system when lifts are out on the Northern line.
- People standing in the doorways and sitting in designated seating

What could be done to improve rail platform access for people with disabilities?

Table 23: Improve rail access

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Provide better accessibility features, such as ramps or lifts	8	44.4%
Increase the number of accessible seating spaces on the platform	3	16.7%
Develop better signage and way-finding	5	27.8%
Other (please specify)	2	11.1%
Total	18	100.0%

Notes

The respondents who answered "other" specified the following

- Have people about to assist with getting on and off the train or at least holding the train to allow people on and off with mobility aids
- Narrow the platform gaps to a uniform standard regardless of which station you are at
- Sometimes only one lift servicing a huge population is not enough. You are competing with people with prams and bikes etc.

How would you rate the current level of rail platform access for people with disabilities in your local area?

The responses were as follows:

Table 24: Rate access to rail platform

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Very good	1	7.1%
Good	2	14.3%
Fair	4	28.6%
Poor	7	50.0%
Total	14	100.0%

Notes

Half of the respondents were of the opinion that the current accessibility and availability of public transport information for people with disabilities in their local area was poor.

What specific changes or improvements would you like to see in rail platform access for people with disabilities in your local area?

Respondents had the following recommendations:

- Address gap between train and platform
- Stop building stations with a steep incline
- Provide more lifts that are well maintained
- Have people on platforms that can help either with getting on and off or holding the train to allow more time to get on and off
- Provide more elevators
- Provide ramps
- Provide ramps from the start not stairs leading to a ramp as is in the case of some stations

Have rail platform access issues ever prevented you from undertaking a journey by rail?

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	7	50
No	7	50
Total	14	100



If you answered "Yes" to the previous question, how did this impact your travel plans and/or experiences?

The following feedback was given:

- I avoid trains and certain stations that I know are difficult/impossible to get around
- I made it in the end but it was frightening getting stuck in the doorway.
- Missed the train waiting for the lift
- No access currently and the following station has now reduced parking and the ones available are very far to walk
- If the lifts are not working then you cannot get on and off a train.
- could not wait with no shade - went home

Bus access issues

Have you ever experienced bus access issues as a person with a disability?

The responses were as follows:

Table 25:experienced access issues to buses

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	10	76.9%
No	3	23.1%
Total	13	100.0%

Notes

Most the respondents had experienced bus access issues as a person with a disability.

Bus accessibility is a vital transportation feature in Australia for those with impairments. For accessing buses and enjoying public transportation, disabled Australians encounter several obstacles and problems. Multiple sources, including investigations on the accessibility of public transportation, show that individuals with disabilities, particularly those with blindness or low vision, psychiatric disabilities, chronic health conditions, and multiple disabilities, have reported having more difficulty accessing public transportation than individuals in other disability groups. These individuals face obstacles in their ability to access buses and public transportation services. The lack of accessibility of buses and public transportation facilities is a significant obstacle for people with disabilities. Many public transportation terminals lack the amenities and layouts necessary to accommodate all passengers, particularly those with impairments. Inadequate design and amenities in public transportation terminals compound the difficulties faced by disabled users. These obstacles include issues with cost, dependability, scheduling, and safety.

Besides limited accessibility, disabled individuals in Australia also suffer more significant travel and public transportation issues. We cannot overlook these obstacles since they impact the accessibility and inclusion of public transportation for people with disabilities. The government has attempted to provide accessible public transportation for disabled citizens. However, these facilities still have shortcomings.

What specific bus access issues have prevented you from undertaking successful journeys by bus as a person with a disability?

The responses were as follows:

Table 26: access issues prevented undertaking journey by bus

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Inadequate ramps or lifts to access the bus	4	25.0%
Insufficient space to manoeuvre a mobility device on the bus	6	37.5%
Inadequate or poorly marked accessible seating on the bus	2	12.5%
Other (please specify)	4	25.0%
Total	16	100.0%

Notes

The respondents who answered "other" specified the following"

- People refusing to move
- With regard to buses- not all drivers lower the bus as well as activate the ramp.
- Insufficient time between bus & train transition
- I simply can't follow timetables and there are no seats or shelters

What could be done to improve bus access for people with disabilities?

The responses provided were as follows:

Table 27: improvement to bus access

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Provide better accessibility features, such as ramps or lifts	8	44.4%
Increase the number of accessible seating spaces on the bus	5	27.8%
Develop better signage and way-finding	2	11.1%
Other (please specify)	3	16.7%
Total	18	100.0%

Notes

The respondents who answered "other" specified the following"

- Public awareness
- Make it a standard requirement that all buses 'kneel' prior to opening the front door
- Let NDIS GP approved therapy dogs allowed on public transport.

How would you rate the current level of bus access for people with disabilities in your local area?

The respondents rated the service as follows:

Table 28: rate access to busses in local area

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Very good	1	7.7%
Good	0	0.0%
Fair	9	69.2%
Poor	3	23.1%
Total	13	100.0%

Notes

More than half of the respondents were of the opinion that current level of bus access for people with disabilities in their local area was fair.

What specific changes or improvements would you like to see in bus access for people with disabilities in your local area?

The following recommendations were provided:

- All buses should accommodate wheelchairs and be able to lower passengers on wheelchairs to board.
- The ramps should be improved in order to serve their purpose effectively.
- Buses should allow persons with disability to leave by the back door so that they do not have to try to turn a scooter or wheelchair around on a moving bus.
- It should be a standard requirement that all buses 'kneel' prior to opening the front door
- Therapy dogs should be allowed
- Bus signage needs to improve and all buses to have ramps, and the bus drivers to put these ramps out.
- Provide appropriate signage, seating, shelter

Have bus access issues ever prevented you from undertaking a journey by bus?

Table 29: bus access issues prevented access

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	7	58.3%
No	5	41.7%
Total	12	100.0%

Notes

More than half of those who responded to the question reported that bus access issues had prevented them from undertaking a journey by bus.

If you answered "Yes" to the previous question, how did this impact your travel plans and/or experiences?

The responses were as follows:

- There are few busses in my area and I'm extremely nervous about the ramps
- Very upsetting and discriminating. It had a flow on effect to the people I was meeting with.
- I no longer even try to catch buses. I have to get myself to the train by taxi or using my own transport.
- I couldn't get in the bus
- Not getting to an event as the bus was running late.
- I've never caught a bus because no one has offered to teach me or accompany me. I attempted to go alone and anxiety and confusion prevented me actually taking the journeys

Issues when using community transport

Have you ever experienced issues when using community transport as a person with a disability?

The responses were as follows:

Table 30: experienced issues community transport

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	8	72.7%
No	3	27.3%
Total	11	100.0%

Notes

More than 72% of those who responded to the question had experienced issues when using community transport as a person with a disability.

What specific issues have prevented you from undertaking successful journeys on community transport as a person with a disability?

The responses were as follows:

Table 31: specific issues preventing community transport usage

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Inadequate accessibility features on the vehicle	3	25.0%
Insufficient space to maneuver a mobility device	4	33.3%
Inadequate or poorly marked accessible seating	2	16.7%
Other (please specify)	3	25.0%
Total	12	100.0%

Notes:

The respondents who answered "other" specified the following

- Phobia
- lack of understanding and co-operation by driver
- Social anxiety, not understanding the processes involved, lack of support, fear of accidentally setting off alarms based on past experiences

What could be done to improve accessibility on community transport for people with disabilities?

The responses included:

Table 32: improved accessibility to community transport

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Provide better accessibility features, such as ramps or lifts	3	25
Increase the number of accessible vehicles	4	33.3
Develop better signage and way-finding	2	16.7
Other (please specify)	3	25
Total	12	100

Notes:

The respondents who answered "other" specified the following

- Increase staff awareness of need.
- Public transport phobia therapy free
- Have support

How would you rate the current level of accessibility for people with disabilities on community transport in your local area?

The respondents who answered this question rated the level of accessibility as follows:

Table 33: current accessibility of community transport

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Very good	0	0.0%
Good	0	0.0%
Fair	5	62.5%
Poor	3	37.5%
Total	8	100.0%

Notes:

- More than 60% of those who responded rated the current level of accessibility for people with disabilities on community transport in their local area as fair.

What specific changes or improvements would you like to see in accessibility for people with disabilities on community transport in your local area?

The recommendations from the respondents was as follows:

- I need to know more about community transport
- Taxi Users Subsidy Scheme TUSS should also be available when using Uber, Didi, etc.
- There needs to be more tolerance and patience with invisible disabilities. Places to learn the processes.

Have issues with community transport ever prevented you from undertaking a journey?

The responses were as follows:

Table 34: issues with community transport preventing journey

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	5	62.5%
No	3	37.5%
Total	8	100.9%

Notes

More than 60% of those who responded to the question reported that issues with community transport had prevented them from undertaking a journey.

If you answered "Yes" to the previous question, how did this impact your travel plans and/or experiences?

The respondents reported that:

- Accessibility for those with mobility issues
- My son is autistic he ended up with PTSD now he has public transport phobia from seeing students behaving in an unruly manner at bus stops, in the bus & train. Additional security is required and allowing dogs on transport would help
- I literally stayed home for 3 years when I could no longer drive.

Issues when using buses

Have you ever experienced issues when using buses as a person with a disability?
The responses were as follows:

Table 35: experienced issues with buses

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	12	92.3%
No	1	7.7%
Total	13	100.0%

Notes

More than 90% of those who responded to the question had experienced issues when using buses as a person with a disability.

What specific issues have you faced when using buses as a person with a disability?
The responses included:

Table 36: specific issues with buses

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Inadequate accessibility features on the bus	7	38.9%
Insufficient space to maneuver a mobility device	4	22.2%
Inadequate or poorly marked accessible seating	1	5.6%
Other (please specify)	6	33.3%
Total	18	100.0%

Notes:

The respondents who answered "other" specified the following

- People refusing to move
- Not all bus drivers lower the bus as well as activate the ramp.
- The jerking movement of buses - the way they brake so hard can cause my neck joint to subluxate.
- Rude staff who don't understand that people may require more time entering and exiting
- Cannot afford service dog
- Can't follow timetable, soaking wet and exhausted because no bus arrived after waiting an hour

Improving accessibility on buses

What could be done to improve accessibility on buses for people with disabilities?
The responses included:

Table 37: improve accessibility to buses

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Provide better accessibility features, such as ramps or lifts	6	33.3%
Increase the number of accessible seating spaces	5	27.8%
Develop better signage and wayfinding	1	5.6%
Other (please specify)	6	33.3%
Total	18	100.0%

Notes:

The respondents who answered "other" specified the following

- Improve lighting conditions on buses
- Education campaign
- Staff awareness
- Better driver training
- Privatization and outsourcing has brought the level of service and driver skills way down
- Public transport law change let GP therapy dog on public transport for NDIS individuals.
- Better education of authorities on invisible disabilities
- more help for passengers

How would you rate the current level of accessibility for people with disabilities on buses in your local area?

The respondents who chose to answer this question rated the level of accessibility as follows:

Table 38: rating of accessibility to buses

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Very good	1	7.7%
Good	0	0.0%
Fair	7	53.9%
Poor	5	38.4%
Total	13	100.9%

Notes:

- More than 50% of those who responded rated the current level of accessibility for people with disabilities on buses in their local area as fair.

What specific changes or improvements would you like to see in accessibility for people with disabilities on buses in your local area?

The responses given were as follows:

- There are very few buses in my area and I'm nervous of the ramps
- Access to back doors
- Too far to walk due to mobility issues
- Therapy dog & service dog
- bus signage and all buses to have ramps, and all bus drivers to put out the ramps.
- More bus stops, seats and shelter

Have accessibility issues on buses ever prevented you from undertaking a journey?

The responses were as follows:

Table 39: accessibility of buses

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	9	75.0%
No	3	25.0%
Total	12	100.0%

Notes

More than 70% of those who responded to the question reported that accessibility issues on buses had prevented them from undertaking a journey.

If you answered "Yes" to the previous question, how did this impact your travel plans and/or experiences?

The respondents reported that:

- They avoid certain parts of the CBD. They avoid them because they can only access them via bus and, especially at peak hour which is not a pleasant experience.
- They cannot connect to the local train station via bus
- They take an earlier bus so that they do not have to deal with unruly students
- It was regrettable and frustrating.
- They did not travel on buses.



In your opinion, what could bus operators and/or governments do to better meet the needs of people with disabilities when using buses?

The respondents proposed the following:

- Get better buses that have back doors with ramps. Teach drivers how to drive without throwing the passengers around the bus so much. Teach drivers to put the ramp out as soon as they see someone with any kind of walking aid. The new buses steps are actually higher than the old ones before they had ramps.
- Allow accessibility for mobility scooter parking
- Foresight
- Buses to have better signage, all buses to have ramps, and all bus drivers to put these out ramps.
- A lot more patience and understanding
- Be patient, Not everyone understands what you're saying.
- Allow cash payment.

Issues when using taxis

Have you ever experienced issues when using taxis as a person with a disability?

The responses were as follows:

Table 40 experienced issues with taxis

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	10	71.4%
No	4	28.6%
Total	14	100.0%

Notes

More than 70% of those who responded to the question had experienced issues when using taxis as a person with a disability.

What specific issues have prevented you from undertaking successful journeys on taxis as a person with a disability?

The responses included:

Table 41: issues that prevent using taxis

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Inadequate accessibility features on the vehicle	1	5.5%
Insufficient space to maneuver a mobility device	0	0.0%
Inadequate or poorly marked accessible seating	1	5.5%
Negative reactions from taxi drivers or other passengers towards your disability	9	50.0%
Other (please specify)	7	39.0%
Total	18	100.0%

Notes:

The respondents who answered "other" specified the following

- Drivers didn't believe my portable mobility scooter folds up like a small suitcase... eventually only got one driver who was curious.
- Lack of understanding of TUSS¹⁸ system and subsidies.
- Failed to arrive on time.
- The new taxi APP does not cater for people with TUSS vouchers.
- Being propositioned by 2 drivers, and not being driven by the most direct route.
- Taxi drivers not picking up a person who has a guide dog and drivers refusing a person with a disability that has a taxi subsidy book.

What could be done to improve accessibility on taxis for people with disabilities?

The responses included:

Table 42: improvement of accessibility to taxis

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Provide better accessibility features, such as ramps or lifts	1	5.5%
Increase the number of accessible vehicles	7	39.0%
Develop better policies and guidelines for taxi operators	9	50.0%
Other (please specify)	1	5.5%
Total	18	100.0%

Notes:

The respondents who answered "other" specified the following

- Gender specific cab driver
- Taxi drivers to pick up a person with a disability.

How would you rate the current level of accessibility for people with disabilities on taxis in your local area?

The respondents who chose to answer this question rated the level of accessibility as follows:

Table 43: rating of accessibility to taxis

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Very good	0	0.0%
Good	2	16.7%
Fair	3	25.0%
Poor	7	58.3%
Total	12	100.9%

Notes:

¹⁸ Taxi User Subsidy Scheme (WA) <https://www.transport.wa.gov.au/aboutus/taxi-user-subsidy-scheme.asp>

- More than 50% of those who responded rated the current level of accessibility for people with disabilities on taxis in their local area as poor.

What specific changes or improvements would you like to see in accessibility for people with disabilities on taxis in your local area?

The responses given included:

- Attitude training, better taxis
- Someone needs to fix the APP
- Cost is high
- taxi drivers should not refuse a person who is blind that has a guide dog. As well as a person that has a taxi subsidy scheme book.
- Better communication if the taxi is late as there is currently none.
- Stop relying on Apps because some find phone calls easier,
- Take most direct route,
- Refrain from discussing inappropriate subjects such as sex or sexualising,
- Understand a lot of consumers suffer anxiety

Have issues with taxis ever prevented you from undertaking a journey as a person with a disability?

The responses were as follows:

Table 44: issues with taxis preventing journey

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	10	83.3%
No	2	16.7%
Total	12	100.0%

Notes

More than 80% of those who responded to the question reported that issues with taxis had prevented them from undertaking a journey as a person with a disability.

If you answered "Yes" to the previous question, how did this impact your travel plans and/or experiences?

The responses included:



- The person was made to feel uncomfortable and not safe in the taxis and now avoids them
- The person got home eventually but the whole effort of waiting for a taxi with a flat battery was exhausting.
- Two non-wheelchair taxis in a row who refused to take the respondent when they saw her taxi voucher book. The respondent was very fatigued but ended up driving herself to the appointment which she was very late for. She was not using her scooter that day.
- The respondent was forced to stay home
- The respondent missed the event.
- The respondent stopped using taxis.
- The respondent was too afraid to get a cab for many years after being propositioned and inappropriately touched

Issues when travelling with a companion animal

Have you ever experienced issues when travelling with your companion animal on public transport as a person with a disability?

The responses were as follows:

Table 45: companion animal issues with taxis

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	2	28.6%
No	5	71.4%
Total	7	100.0%

Notes

More than 70% of those who responded to the question had not experienced issues when travelling with their companion animal on public transport as a person with a disability.

Transporting companion animals on public transportation, taxis, and ridesharing services in Australia is an important matter that deserves attention. Transporting companion animals on public transport in Australia presents several concerns and obstacles. The lack of explicit legislation and norms for companion animals' transportation is a significant problem. This regulatory deficiency makes passengers and animals susceptible to dangers and discomfort during transportation. The limited availability of public transit for companion animals is a further concern. In most Australian cities, only registered service animals or small, caged animals may accompany passengers on public transportation. These regulations, especially in low-socioeconomic areas, hinder many pet owners from using public transportation with their animals. The limited availability of public transportation for companion animals has a considerable influence on the mobility and independence of their owners, especially those who rely on public transport as their primary form of transit¹⁹.

Public health measures have increased the difficulties experienced by companion animal owners who rely on public transit, such as ridership capacity restrictions and health dangers associated with enclosed indoor spaces. During the COVID-19 epidemic, public health protocols limited passenger capacity and discouraged non-essential travel. Because of limited transportation choices, it was difficult for companion animal owners to access veterinary services. During the lockdown, participants explained how they felt compelled to conduct exhaustive research on alternative modes of transportation to make it to important veterinary appointments. Because of restrictions on household interaction, they could not request a ride from friends. The high costs associated with taxis and ridesharing services often hindered their transportation alternatives²⁰.

¹⁹ <https://scite.ai/reports/the-impact-of-the-social-8GryZjEY>

²⁰ <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fvets.2021.644556/full>

What specific issues have you faced when travelling with your companion animal on public transport as a person with a disability?

The responses included:

Table 46: companion animals issues public transport

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Lack of understanding or awareness from transport staff	1	25.0%
Inadequate accessibility features for companion animals on public transport	0	0.0%
Negative reactions from other passengers towards your companion animal	1	25.0%
Other (please specify)	2	50.0%
Total	4	100.0%

Notes:

The respondents who answered "other" specified the following

- They are not allowed on public transport as they are not recognized as service animals²¹.
- Cannot take the animal on public transport. Therapy dog not certified. Only assistance/service dog can be on bus train plane boat ship etc. Owner/handler needs public access test paperwork qualifications. NDIS will not pay \$50k for a service dog, nor pay \$2.5k +private dog trainer to get PAT certification.

²¹ <https://www.dlgsc.wa.gov.au/departments/publications/publication/assistance-dog-approvals-policy>



What could be done to improve accessibility for companion animals on public transport for people with disabilities?

The responses included:

Table 47: improvement of accessibility for companion animals

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Increase awareness and education for transport staff and the public about the importance of companion animals for people with disabilities	1	25.0%
Develop better accessibility features for companion animals on public transport	1	25.0%
Develop better policies and guidelines for transport operators on companion animals	0	0.0%
Other (please specify)	2	50.0%
Total	4	100.0%

Notes:

The respondents who answered "other" specified the following

- Loosen animal policy within reason, be like Europe²²
- Law change therapy dog yes public transport for NDIS individuals

²² <https://www.servicedogcertifications.org/guide-for-traveling-with-a-service-dog-in-europe/>

How would you rate the current level of accessibility for companion animals on public transport in your local area?

The respondents who answered this question rated the level of accessibility as follows:

Table 48: accessibility of public transport for companion animals

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Very good	0	0.0%
Good	0	0.0%
Fair	3	60.0%
Poor	2	40.0%
Total	5	100.0%

Notes:

- 60% of those who responded rated the current level of accessibility for people with disabilities on taxis in your local area as fair.

Transportation is a fundamental component of daily living, allowing persons to access a variety of essential services and opportunities. Nonetheless, the accessibility of public transportation in many local locations is inadequate for individuals with disabilities who rely on companion animals for support and assistance. Various studies indicate that public transportation plays a crucial role in the lives of people with disabilities by allowing them to reach their desired destinations and participate fully in society. Unfortunately, authorities in most places in the United States and Australia only allow registered service animals or small animals in cages on public transit, limiting the access of people with disabilities who require a companion animal. Pet owners, particularly those in low-socioeconomic areas, are placed at a significant disadvantage by this legislation, which almost completely prohibits them from using public transportation with their pets. The limited accessibility of companion animals on public transportation causes substantial obstacles and hinders the mobility and freedom of disabled individuals²³.

²³ <https://scite.ai/reports/affordability-feasibility-and-accessibility-companion-PQdwZerK>



What specific changes or improvements would you like to see in accessibility for companion animals on public transport in your local area?

The respondents suggested the following:

- Any reasonable pet owner should be able to take their pet with them on public transport without discrimination.
- Allow companion animals like it is done in the UK and US
- Companion animals should not be allowed on public transport
- More space should be provided for companion animals.
- Education is vital because so many people are only used to guide dogs not other support animals

Have issues with travelling with your companion animal ever prevented you from undertaking a journey on public transport?

The responses were as follows:

Table 49: companion animal issues prevented the journey

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	2	50.0%
No	2	50.0%
Total	4	100.0%

Notes

50% of those who responded to the question reported that issues with travelling with their companion animal had prevented you from undertaking a journey on public transport.

If you answered "Yes" to the previous question, how did this impact your travel plans and/or experiences?

- Can't take your animal to the vet or to a picnic or anywhere without your own transport.
- 0 PAT certification.



In your opinion, what could transport operators and/or governments do to better meet the needs of people with disabilities travelling with companion animals on public transport?

- Within reason reduce the need for permits
- Legal terms: Public transport law GP Therapy dog & handler yes can use public transport
- Taxi drivers not refusing guide dogs.
- Allow animals, even if not service animals.



Alternative or "equivalent access" transport solutions

Do you believe that transport operators and providers should be provided greater certainty when considering alternative or "equivalent access" solutions for people with disabilities?

The responses were as follows:

Table 50: alternative access alternatives

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	11	91.7%
No	1	8.3%
Total	12	100.0%

Notes

More than 90% of those who responded to the question reported that transport operators and providers should be provided greater certainty when considering alternative or "equivalent access" solutions for people with disabilities.



In your opinion, what are some of the most significant barriers faced by transport operators and providers when attempting to provide alternative or "equivalent access" solutions for people with disabilities?

The responses included:

Table 51: barriers faced by transport operators

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Cost	6	33.3%
Lack of technical knowledge	7	39.0%
Lack of guidance from government or regulatory bodies	4	22.2%
Other (please specify)	1	5.5%
Total	18	100.0%

Notes:

The respondents who answered "other" specified the following

- No one really cares about our problems. They will only do the bare minimum - especially the profit driven organisations.
- Lack of interest because it doesn't affect them



In your opinion, what are some of the most effective ways to provide greater certainty to transport operators and providers when considering alternative or "equivalent access" solutions for people with disabilities?

The responses included:

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Clearer government regulations and guidelines	8	44.4%
Technical assistance and support from disability organizations	3	16.7%
Increased funding for accessible transport solutions	6	33.3%
Other (please specify)	1	5.6%
Total	18	100.0%

Notes:

The respondents who answered "other" specified the following

- Disability awareness for operators.

Do you believe that alternative or "equivalent access" solutions should be permitted for transport providers when it is not technically feasible to provide full accessibility?

The responses were:

Table 52: alternative or equivalent solutions

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	9	81.8%
No	2	18.2%
Total	11	100.0%

Notes

Over 80% of those who responded to the question reported that alternative or "equivalent access" solutions should be permitted for transport providers when it is not technically feasible to provide full accessibility.



Should there be a clear definition of what constitutes "equivalent access" for people with disabilities in transport regulations?

The responses were as follows:

Table 53: clear definition of equivalent access

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	11	100.0%
No	0	0.0%
Total	11	100.0%

Notes

All those who responded to the question reported that there should be a clear definition of what constitutes "equivalent access" for people with disabilities in transport regulations.



In your opinion, how can transport operators and providers be incentivised to provide alternative or "equivalent access" solutions for people with disabilities?

The responses included:

Table 54; transport operators and providers be incentivized to provide alternative

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Government grants or subsidies	7	46.7%
Tax incentives	5	33.3%
Other (please specify)	3	20.0%
Total	15	100.0%

Notes:

The respondents who answered "other" specified the following

- Nationalise the transport system again. It was so much better the way it was run before.
- The taxi subsidy booklet needs to be a card, and the half price to be increased for users so they can get more taxis.
- This is very difficult to answer across the board because you don't interact with a train driver but you have personal contact with taxi drivers

Have you ever encountered a situation where a transport operator or provider attempted to provide an alternative or "equivalent access" solution for people with disabilities that was inadequate or unsatisfactory?

The responses were as follows:

Table 55: alternative solution provided inadequate.

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	3	27.3%
No	8	72.7%
Total	11	100.0%

Notes

More than 70% of those who responded to the question reported that they had not encountered a situation where a transport operator or provider attempted to provide an alternative or "equivalent access" solution for people with disabilities that was inadequate or unsatisfactory.

If you answered "Yes" to the previous question, how did this impact your travel plans and/or experiences?

- Offered a bus when the train station lift was broken but a bus was twice the time and I had a medical appointment
- They made me take a bus with my scooter when the trains were down in spite of my concerns about my neck issues and subsequently my neck subluxated, went into spasm and I had to spend days having to lie on my side. I never get those days back!



Transport Standards should be modernised

Do you believe that the Transport Standards should be modernised to meet the current and future needs of the community?

The responses were as follows:

Table 56: transport standards modernised.

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	12	92.3%
No	1	7.7%
Total	13	100.0%

Notes

More than 90% of those who responded to the question reported that the Transport Standards should be modernised to meet the current and future needs of the community.



In your opinion, what are the most significant challenges faced by people with disabilities when using transport systems that could be addressed through modernising the Transport Standards?

The responses included:

Table 57: transport standards modernised challenges

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Inadequate accessibility features on public transport	9	50.0%
Insufficient signage and way-finding	3	16.7%
Inadequate information provision for people with disabilities	5	27.8%
Other (please specify)	1	5.5%
Total	18	100.0%

Notes:

The respondents who answered "other" specified the following

- Bad design that looks pretty but is inaccessible
- Aggressive architecture, I'll thought out designs
- Lack of awareness by staff. I had a guy scoff at my request for a wheelchair taxi when trains were down due to my neck issue.
- safety issues after dark.
- Education on the less visible disabilities



In your opinion, what are some of the most effective ways to modernise the Transport Standards to meet the current and future needs of the community?

The responses included:

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Conducting accessibility audits of transport systems and services	5	27.8%
Increasing funding for accessible transport solutions	3	16.7%
Engaging with disability organizations and communities to better understand their needs	9	50%
Other (please specify)	1	5.5%
Total	18	100.0%

Notes:

The respondents who answered "other" specified the following

- Prioritise accessibility over aesthetics
- Survey transport accessibility regularly with PWD transport users (including failed attempts) and publish
- Engaging with people with disabilities.
- increase the taxi subsidy scheme and to have a card.
- Identify solutions for safety issues with catching public transport after dark
- Make sure all forms of disabilities are discussed

The modernisation of transportation standards to meet the present and future requirements of people with disabilities necessitates a comprehensive, diverse strategy. Developing information- and communication-based standard transport service systems is one of the most successful methods for modernising transport standards for disabled people. These systems can leverage technology to make transportation services more accessible and efficient for impaired individuals. Transport service providers can give real-time information about accessible routes, available vehicles, and any disruptions or modifications to the transport system by implementing information and communication technology, such as mobile applications and internet platforms. This enhances the autonomy and convenience of individuals with disabilities, facilitating better transportation coordination and planning. In addition, logistic evaluation of transport infrastructure and services for individuals with disabilities is necessary to modernise transport standards. This involves evaluating the accessibility and use of transportation facilities, such as bus stops, train stations, and airport terminals, in order to identify any impediments or improvement opportunities. By conducting logistical evaluations, transport authorities, and service providers are able to make informed judgments regarding the modifications or enhancements required to enable the mobility of impaired individuals. In addition, applying a logistic system model to the service of individuals with disabilities via urban transportation is an efficient method for modernising transport standards²⁴.

²⁴

Do you think that modernising the Transport Standards would require additional resources and/or funding from the government?

The responses were as follows:

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	11	91.7%
No	1	8.3%
Total	12	100.0%

Notes

More than 90% of those who responded to the question reported that modernising the Transport Standards would require additional resources and/or funding from the government.

Modernising transport standards to accommodate the demands of disabled individuals has become an issue of growing significance and concern. Existing transportation networks do not fully accommodate the needs of disabled individuals, resulting in restricted mobility and accessibility. Improving the organisation of the transportation system for people with impairments necessitates a broad, multifaceted approach.

The development of standard transport service systems based on information and communication technologies is of the utmost importance. Such action would cause an increased allocation of government resources and financial assets. There is a need for economic incentive mechanisms and programs to ensure automobile accessibility. In addition, conducting logistic evaluations of objects and implementing a model of a logistic system for serving individuals with disabilities via urban mobility are essential measures for enhancing accessibility. In addition, there is a need to increase the quantity of low-floor passenger vehicles, which would necessitate extra government support. Transportation services for people with disabilities require more significant attention in the existing literature²⁵.

Research conducted in Indonesia showed that the local government had offered some substandard transportation services for disabled citizens. They lacked the technology and did not account for local factors²⁶.

²⁵ <https://scite.ai/reports/intelligent-urban-public-transportation-for-DybzpW>

²⁶ <https://scite.ai/reports/the-paradigm-of-disability-lZ9GXOjE>

In your opinion, what are some of the most important areas that should be addressed through modernising the Transport Standards?

The responses included:

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Improved accessibility features on public transport	7	38.9%
Improved signage and way-finding	3	16.7%
Improved information provision for people with disabilities	7	38.9%
Other (please specify)	1	5.5%
Total	18	100.0%

Notes:

The respondents who answered "other" specified the following

- Better staff training on driving skills and understanding disability issues.
- Education regarding all forms of disability.
- improved access to timetables and live communications.

The modernisation of transport standards for the disabled is an essential issue in need of development. Creating standard transport service systems based on information and communication technologies is crucial to upgrading transport standards for people with disabilities. This would involve utilising technologies, such as mobile applications, GPS monitoring systems, and online booking platforms to improve the accessibility and efficacy of transportation services for individuals with disabilities.

It is essential to address the construction of economic incentive mechanisms and implementing programmes to ensure the accessibility of automobiles. Authorities can implement measures such as offering financial incentives to transportation companies that enhance accessibility to their services and vehicles for individuals with disabilities. They can develop programs that promote accessibility training and awareness among transportation providers. In addition, logistic evaluation of objects is essential for upgrading impaired transportation requirements. The task entails assessing the infrastructure and amenities of transportation centres, such as bus stops, railway stations, and airports, to ensure compliance with accessibility standards for individuals with disabilities. It is vital to implement a model of a logistical system for transporting people with impairments.

This model should be based on a complete analysis of the movement logistics chain for people with disabilities, from their origin to their final destination. Addressing this matter requires careful consideration of several issues, including the provision of ramps, elevators, and designated seating areas for individuals with disabilities, as well as trained personnel or volunteers to assist with boarding and disembarking²⁷.

²⁷ <https://scite.ai/reports/optimizing-the-time-costs-of-NelMkEQ>



Do you believe that the government should involve people with disabilities in the process of modernising the Transport Standards?

The responses were as follows:

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	13	92.9%
No	1	7.1%
Total	14	100.0%

Notes

More than 90% of those who responded to the question reported that the government should involve people with disabilities in the process of modernising the Transport Standards.

Their firsthand experiences and perspectives are invaluable in identifying barriers and designing solutions that can genuinely improve accessibility for all. By including people with disabilities in the decision-making process, the government can ensure that the modernisation of transport standards is inclusive and meets the specific needs of this population. Involving individuals with disabilities can also help promote a sense of ownership and empowerment in this community. This aligns with the recommendation to include individuals with disabilities in standard processes at the policy level, as mentioned in one of the sources²⁸. The government can create policies and initiatives that are more responsive to the needs of individuals with disabilities and promote greater community integration by involving them in modernising transport standards. This inclusion can also help in identifying gaps in accessibility and finding innovative solutions to address them effectively. Involving people with disabilities in modernising transport standards is not just about meeting legal requirements or complying with accessibility guidelines. It is about creating a more equitable and inclusive society where individuals with disabilities have equal access to transportation, allowing them to participate fully in daily activities such as work, education, healthcare, and social interaction.

²⁸ <https://scite.ai/reports/a-study-on-accessibility-of-LegDwNQ>



Regular reviews and updates of the Transport Standards

In your opinion, how important is it to have regular reviews and updates of the Transport Standards?

The responses were as follows:

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Very important	13	92.9%
Somewhat important	1	7.1%
Not very important	0	0.0%
Not at all important	0	0.0%
Total	14	100.0%

Notes

More than 90% of those who responded to the question reported that it is very important to have regular reviews and updates of the Transport Standards.

Regular reviews and updates of the Transport Standards are crucial in today's fast-paced and evolving transportation landscape. These reviews ensure the standards remain relevant, effective, and aligned with the latest technological advancements, best practices, and regulatory requirements. Regular reviews and updates of the Transport Standards are essential to prevent outdated standards from hindering innovation. They encourage industry players to continually improve their operations' energy efficiency and safety measures. Keeping the Transport Standards up to date ensures that industries can adapt and incorporate new technologies and practices that enhance efficiency, safety, and sustainability. Regular reviews and updates of the Transport Standards help address any gaps or challenges that may arise due to changing market dynamics, emerging risks, or evolving customer expectations²⁹.

²⁹ <https://scite.ai/reports/the-impact-of-service-quality-ybAJnAa>



Have you ever encountered a situation where the Transport Standards did not adequately meet your needs as a person with a disability?

The responses were as follows:

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	7	77.8%
No	2	22.2%
Total	9	100.0%

Notes

More than 77% of those who responded to the question reported that they had encountered a situation where the Transport Standards did not adequately meet their needs as a person with a disability.

If you answered "Yes" to the previous question, how did this impact your travel plans and/or experiences?

The responses included:

- No consideration for types of lighting
- They stopped paying for wheelchair taxis when the trains were down and forced us onto 'accessible' buses instead. After the experience, the respondent went to the Human Rights Commission and believes now they will pay for taxis again.
- The respondent could not get to an event since a taxi driver refused him.
- The respondent simply became a recluse and isolated

However, the existing transport standards sometimes do not adequately meet the needs of people with disabilities. For example, there may be a lack of accessible transportation options, such as wheelchair-accessible vehicles or properly designed infrastructure like ramps and elevators. This can pose significant challenges for individuals with disabilities, limiting their ability to access employment opportunities, educational institutions, healthcare facilities, and social interactions. The transportation needs of individuals with disabilities are not homogeneous. There are varying degrees and types of disabilities, each requiring specific accommodations to ensure accessibility and inclusivity.

It is important to address the gaps in transport standards by implementing measures that cater to the diverse needs of individuals with disabilities. Developing and enforcing regulations that require accessible transportation options, including wheelchair-accessible vehicles, accessible infrastructure at stations/stops, and training programs for transportation staff on accommodating individuals with disabilities can address the gaps in transport standards. Collaboration between transportation providers and disability advocacy groups can help identify and address specific challenges faced by individuals with disabilities. Integrating information and communication technologies can enhance the accessibility and efficiency of transport services for individuals with disabilities³⁰.

³⁰ <https://humanrights.gov.au/about/news/speeches/disability-standards-accessible-public-transport-where-are-we>



Recommendations

- Provide more funding for disability organisations to provide training, advocacy and awareness support.
- Provide more opportunities for people with disability to participate in co-design activities promoting the involvement of the disability community in transport planning and procurement processes.
- The taxi Users Subsidy booklet needs to be a digital card consistent with Eastern States and Territories, and the half price subsidy to be increased to access more taxis.
- There should be a clear definition of what constitutes "equivalent access" for people with disabilities in transport regulations.
- Individual States and Territories jurisdictions to conduct accessibility audits of transport systems and services.
- Prioritise accessibility over aesthetics to include everyone accessing public transport.
- Improve accessibility for people with disabilities on public transport by accommodating blind or deaf passengers and provide a uniform approach for wheelchair users.
- Wheelchair tie-down and occupant restraint systems should be used independently and safely, and they should be able to tolerate low levels of functional mobility and dexterity while still offering a high level of safety.
- Discourage using fluorescent lights which trigger photosensitivity, seizures, and migraines for some people with disability.
- Enable people with disability to view signage announcements from their wheelchair or seats even if the transport facility is crowded with standing passengers or when it is dark or very bright.
- Visually and cognitively impaired people should be able to access and rely on auditory messages to understand the actions and instructions in the Public Transport System.
- Provide help on platforms or stop overs in public transport system for connected and automated vehicles as some people with disability may need Passenger Transit Assistance or customer service.
- Innovatively use appropriate App that can link autonomous vehicle (connected and automated) that would simply alert passengers to the right stop and arrival locations.
- Standardise colour schemes towards a nationally consistent colour scheme for all public transport in all jurisdictions. Agree on symbolics of colour controls and signs, for instance red equals emergency, blue equals stop, green equals opening the doors – this should also include: colours of the grab rails, colours of wayfinding signs and audio signature labelling sound tunes at bus stops and train stations.



- Consider the needs of people with disability and consider matters of height, weight, shape, and material in the seating and braille writing design – braille users must be able to read with comfort; curved designs provide more support than flat designs; Pull down chairs need to be easy to pull down; Seatbelt design needs to be flexible to accommodate a variety of people, including children.
- Provide a richer set of information data and journey planning tools in various formats that public transport users can access.
- ACROD bays need to be nearer entrances of train stations, and buses should 'kneel' before opening the door as standard practice.
- Provide bus shelters and seating, not just bus 'stands', to protect public transport users from rain and heat.
- Emergency communication plans and consistent training procedures should exist in case of emergency – people with disability should not be the last to know what happens.
- There should be within the disability standards for accessible public transport provision for companion/assistance animals in the following.
 - An explanation of companion/assistance animals.
 - Certification and identification processes to be nationally consistent and affordable for companion/assistance animals .
 - There should be a nationally consistent protocol for on-demand services, rideshare, and Taxis in booking and ride allocation to those who culturally can take companion animals as passengers.
 - Acknowledgement that some frontline staff may have cultural or religious beliefs prohibiting them from taking a companion/assistance animal in their vehicle.
 - Frontline staff receive certification III-level training standardised nationally for those who provide transportation services for passengers with companion animals.

Conclusion

Without question accessible public transport (PT) enables people with disabilities to live independent lives. However, this should mean people with disability having access to transport services that are available when and where a person wants to travel, being informed about the services, knowing how to use the services, being able to use the services, and having the means to access and pay for them.

What the participants in this survey have responded explains it clearly and unequivocal:

The accessibility of PT involves more than simply boarding and disembarking, but requires access and an understanding of all the elements that make up the travel chain.

It is acknowledged public transport accessibility has improved incrementally, since the third DSAPT review. Nonetheless, from the above survey results, people with disability continue to experience significant disadvantage due to real public transport inaccessibility.

Daily exclusion from public transport results in people with disability being shut out from accessing their community. Subsequently, this restricts their ability to work, study, shop, socialise with family and friends, be engaged in recreational activities, and access vital government services. As a result, people with disability are cloistered in communities, stripped of their independence, and denied the right to socially and economically participate on an equal basis with others. People with disability are also unable to undertake spontaneous and unscheduled journeys due to public transport inaccessibility and unreliability. Therefore, public transport accessibility continues to remain a critical human rights issue for people with disability.

It is hoped the recommendations put forward by people with disability in this report will result in real and lasting changes to the Transport Standards.

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