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| 25 March 2015 |



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| Disability Discrimination Action Plan |
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# Forward

Trans North Bus & Coach Services (“Trans North”) recognises that there is a fundamental need for public transport to better meet the requirements of all its users. In order to achieve this, it is essential that in the development of the public transport network, future strategies include coordination of the design of vehicles, infrastructure and other premises. Trans North is taking active steps to ensure that people with disabilities have the freedom and independence to enjoy equivalent access to our services.

Persons with some form of disability, including people with temporary injuries, the elderly, school children, people with prams/pushers and those carrying parcels or luggage, make up a significant proportion of our customers. Therefore as part of a balanced business strategy, it is imperative that we consider the needs of such persons.

Trans North is committed to providing public transport services that are clean, safe, reliable, efficient and accessible. Trans North is planning for accessible transport services every step of the way with new equipment and facilities that meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) where economically feasible.

While the spirit of making public transport services and facilities accessible has gained increasing recognition over the past years, issues that still require attention include those public assets that do not meet the requirements of people with special needs to enable access to bus transportation. Trans North’s rural and remote bus operations have little infrastructure and require the direct support of local councils and the Department of Main Roads to remedy this.

# Legislative Framework of the Action Plan

This Trans North Action Plan is designed to be compliant with:

* The Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992.
* The Queensland Anti-Discrimination Act 1991.
* Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002.

# Identified Access Barriers[[1]](#footnote-1)

Trans North recognises that there are many real barriers in providing fully accessible public transport services to our customers. The most evident access barriers include the following:

## Information about Services

* Non- availability of large print timetables for people with impaired vision.
* Limited availability of information regarding disabled access for public services operated.

## Physical Access to Services

* Older vehicles are not compatible with some disability transportation requirements.
* A number of mobility devices are not suitable for use on a bus, which results in:
  + Damage or breakage of accessibility ramps on entrance to the vehicle.
  + A passenger not being able to board the bus due to physical limitations.
  + The device not being able to be manoeuvred into the allocated space due to size, weight and/or turning circle.
  + The passenger and/or device not able to be restrained properly and safely for travel.
* Difficulty for disabled persons moving inside vehicles due to the need for someone to assist, with associated risk of injury to the person assisting.

## Staff Training and Employment Practices

* Operational staff are unaware of the impact of various disabilities.
* Operational staff are not fully trained in how to assist persons with all types of disabilities.

## Passenger Safety

* Mobility device safety in the event of an accident or unexpected change in vehicle direction with regard to:
  + Securing of the device.
  + Securing of the passenger.
  + Safety and security of other passengers.

## Contractual Framework

* Deficiency of prescribed provisions that do not offer incentives or financial support to meet compliance of the Act within the required time frames
* Lack of consideration for on-time running performance within contracts when people with disabilities are boarding and disembarking from buses.

# Progress Towards Improving Access

Trans North is taking a range of active steps in meeting its obligations under the Act. Our strategies and actions are detailed in the table below.

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| **Barrier** | **Strategies/ Actions** | **Resources Required** | **Responsibility** | **Timeframe** |
| 4.1 Information about Services | 1. Update websites to detail how services can be accessed by persons with special needs. | IT staff. | General Manager. | October 2014 |
| 1. Operations staff to provide information to persons with special needs. | Operations staff training via Government funded program. | General Manager. |
| 4.2 Physical Access to Services | 1. Update and retro fit vehicles where economically viable | Government funding | Managing Director | January 2022 |
| 1. Educate the public in use of mobility devices on public transport. Employ the use of modern communication strategies to do this. | Government funded Operator and Customer education program.  Operations staff Training. | Department of Transport and Main Roads.  Managing Director. General Manager. | January 2018 |
| 1. Training of staff in safe manual handling techniques for specific use with disabled persons. | Operations staff training via Government funded program. | General Manager. | January 2018 |
| 1. All new vehicles are Australian Design Rules and Disability Discrimination Regulation complaint. | Contractual Environment to allow funding of vehicles. | Managing Director. | Current and ongoing |
| 4.3 Staff Training and Employment Practices | 1. Training staff in the types of disabilities they may encounter and provide useful strategies for dealing with persons to maintain dignity. | Training expertise and knowledge in disability services. Government funded program. | Department of Transport and Main Roads.  General Manager. | January 2016 |
| 4.4 Passenger Safety | 1. Educating consumers on what constitutes a safe mobility device and how to secure them safely when using public transport. | Customer education – Government funding.  Operations staff Training. | Department of Transport and Main Roads.  Managing Director. | January 2017 |
| 1. Training of Operations staff on ensuring security and safety of disabled passengers using services. | Customer education – Government funding.  Operator Training. | Managing Director. | January 2017 |
| 4.5 Contractual Framework | 1. Negotiating with contracting parties to ensure that all parties area aware of service impacts and financial requirements of Disability Discrimination Act Compliance. | Customer education – Government funding  Operator Training | Government, Industry Associations, Operators. | Ongoing |
| 1. Enhancing current service contracts to define required Disability Discrimination Act initiatives and supporting funding. | Contractual Environment to define actions plans.  Government funding. | Department of Transport and Main Roads.  Managing Director. | Ongoing |

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