

Disabilities Transport Access Secretariat
Road Safety and Transport Access Branch
Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development
GPO Box 594
Canberra ACT 2601

Review of the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2012 - Draft Report

CPL welcomes and acknowledges the importance of the 2012 review into Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002.

CPL is the largest provider of support to people with a physical disability in Queensland, supporting more than 8,000 individuals and families, the majority of whom have significant mobility and/or communication difficulties.

Accessible transport remains one of the highest hurdles in their participating and contributing to community life. This has been recognised and firmly embedded in the principles of the National Disability Insurance Scheme. Unfortunately, Queenslanders with a disability are not able to exercise what should be a basic right, as a matter of choice.

This is clearly demonstrated in data from *Table 17 from 2009 Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: State tables for Queensland* (attached). A concerning 7% of Queenslanders with a severe or profound core activity restriction who need transport support, receive no support at all and therefore are unlikely to have any access to transport. Furthermore, only 1 in 5 (19%) receive any support from formal sources (private or Government). For all Queenslanders with a disability this drops even further to 17%. For more than 80% of Queenslanders with a disability, this means that families and informal supporters are carrying the load that the community would expect should be met through a seamless and universal transport system.

CPL welcomes and commends Recommendations 1 through 7 of the 2012 Review. Given the fundamental impact that accessible transport has on the opportunity to participate in community life for CPL's constituency, we look forward to a cross-jurisdictional, whole-of-government response.

CPL attaches particular emphasis to the importance of Recommendation 4 – *Whole-of-journey accessibility*. All too often, even best practice transport modes are rendered at best inefficient and at worst unusable by the lack of seamless transition points in a journey. CPL's clients regularly report that they have started off on a journey they thought would be accessible from beginning to end, only to encounter a barrier part-way through that renders the entire journey unviable. The barrier may be as simple as a broken lift - where no alternative solution put in place for people with a mobility impairment. Members of the public without a disability can on these occasions simply use the stairs - however this option is not available to those with a mobility impairment.

CPL commends to you the response to the Draft Report prepared by the Queenslanders with a Disability Network.

In particular, CPL endorses the cautionary note in QDN's response to Recommendation 5 – *National motorised aid labelling scheme*. CPL also welcomes the introduction of a national motorised mobility aid labelling scheme understanding that informative labelling can assist purchasers to make more informed decisions. A labelling scheme will undoubtedly make decisions easier in determining what mobility aid will be suitable for use on different types of public transport. However, if the label on a motorised mobility aid

becomes a proxy for a "licence to use public transport" then the possibility exists that people with disability might be being refused access to public transport as a result of a public transport provider's "timely" glance at a mobility aid in search of a label.

CPL notes with disappointment that responses previous 2007 Review's recommendations have not progressed as planned. Only actions for three of sixteen recommendations have been completed, action is underway for another eight and no action has been taken in relation to the remaining five, which were only noted by the previous Government, primarily due to the need for cross-jurisdictional commitment.

The 2012 Review identifies that the lack of progress in implementing the 2007 Review recommendations is due largely to barriers encountered when inter-jurisdictional boundary issues arose, whether between Federal and State governments or conflict between pieces of legislation or standards. A number of recommendations have also been slowed as a result of legal proceedings.

CPL looks forward to the 2012 Review's recommendations being accepted by Government and implementation progressing at a more rapid pace, applying the learnings from the 2007 Review.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A.T.L.', written in a cursive style.

Angela Tillmanns
CEO