



Disability Action Plan

Improving Access to 2017

Foreword



The Department of Transport and Main Roads is committed to providing a world class transport system for use by all Queenslanders. With approximately 20 per cent of people in Queensland having a disability, this commitment includes providing a transport system that enables people with disability to actively participate in community life.

To demonstrate this commitment, I am pleased to introduce the *Disability Action Plan – Improving Access to 2017* (Disability Action Plan). The Disability Action Plan seeks to assist people with disability to participate in our community by improving the accessibility of the passenger transport network. The twenty eight actions contained in the Disability Action Plan contribute to four key priorities. To achieve these priorities, Transport and Main Roads will work collaboratively with all transport partners and stakeholders.

As part of everyday business the department strives to contribute to the elimination of the social and physical barriers faced by people with disability. The Disability Action Plan identifies key initiatives that the department is committed to implementing which extend above and beyond the existing program of work.

The Disability Action Plan aligns with broader Queensland Government plans such as *The Queensland Plan: a 30-year vision for Queensland* and the *Queensland Disability Plan 2014–19 Enabling choices and opportunities*. The Disability Action Plan is also a key deliverable under the *Transport and Main Roads Disability Service Plan 2014–2016*.

I urge anyone with an interest in the accessibility of passenger transport in Queensland to read the Disability Action Plan in conjunction with these other plans.

To connect and enable genuine participation in the community, people with disability need accessible and inclusive transport. The development and release of the Disability Action Plan is a reflection on Transport and Main Roads' dedication and determination to achieving this aim and eliminating discrimination from all forms of passenger transport in Queensland.

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Department of Transport and Main Roads

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Our vision for transport in Queensland

Connecting Queensland – delivering transport for prosperity

Transport plays an essential role in our lives. It connects us to each other, to the places we need to be, and to the goods and services we need everyday.

It is the department's intention to offer a high quality passenger transport system across the state through the facilitation of services provided by operators and providers such as: private bus, coach, ferry and regional air service operators, local governments, Queensland Rail and the taxi industry.

One in five Queenslanders, approximately 830,000 people, identify as having a disability. The department is committed to reducing barriers for people with disability, which includes the provision of safe, accessible passenger transport services.

Key achievements in Queensland since 2007

- Investing over \$2.8 billion since 2007-08 to upgrade public transport fleet and infrastructure.
- Achieving the highest proportion of wheelchair accessible taxis in the taxi fleet, of any state jurisdiction in Australia. Of all taxis across the state 644 or 19.7% are wheelchair accessible.
- Allocated \$6.4 million to local governments across Queensland in 2012–13 to meet compliance milestones under the *Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002* (Transport Standards) and the *Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards 2010* (Premises Standards).
- Providing accessible and affordable transport options for approximately 49,900 members of the Taxi Subsidy Scheme.
- Providing 6,500 students with disability with transport assistance during 2013.
- Producing information booklets for the South East Queensland Bus Network Review in an audio version so that people with vision impairment can more easily access information about the changes.
- Ensuring the Queensland Road Rules include a sufficient deterrent for illegally parking in a disability parking bay.
- Working with our delivery partner Queensland Rail to assist them to improve accessibility of their rail network which has included: the purchase of new accessible trains for City network services; building of new stations at Varsity Lakes, Richlands, Springfield and Springfield Central; and the completion of major works and accessibility upgrades at a number of stations in the City network (including South Brisbane, Fortitude Valley, Indooroopilly, Ferny Grove, Petrie, Oxley, Grovely, Oxford Park, Darra, Sandgate and Narangba stations). Queensland Rail has also produced a Station Access Guide which provides their customers with information about the level of access and specific facilities at every City network station.

Overview



People with disability should be afforded the right of access to mainstream services, such as transport, health, education, public places and spaces. Removing social and physical barriers to access and mobility can help improve the lives of people with disability by enabling all to use passenger transport services and allow genuine participation in the community.

The *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (DDA) requires that people with disability be given equal opportunity to participate in and contribute to the full range of life activities, including access to the goods, services and facilities provided by government departments and agencies. The DDA encourages organisations to develop disability action plans to assist an organisation to plan the elimination of disability discrimination as far as possible. Developing and implementing an action plan is a voluntary, proactive approach to DDA compliance.

The Transport and Main Roads *Disability Action Plan – Improving Access to 2017* (Disability Action Plan) sets out how the department will contribute to making the Queensland passenger transport network more accessible for people with disability.

The *Disability Action Plan* contains new actions and highlights ongoing activities that are aimed at improving the experience of travelling on the passenger transport network for people with disability. Therefore it assists in the implementation of the Queensland Disability Plan, which includes a priority to promote genuine participation in the community by a number of strategies including making it easier to access a range of transport options and make public transport more accessible.

The development of the *Disability Action Plan* is an action contained in the *Transport and Main Roads Disability Service Plan 2014–2016* (DSP). While the *Disability Action Plan* takes a customer focussed approach on improving accessibility of the passenger transport network across the state, the DSP aims to more broadly improve access to services for people with disability and commits to delivering an integrated transport environment that meets the needs of all Queenslanders.

Actions included in the *Disability Action Plan* will assist in achieving the 2017 compliance milestones within the Transport Standards and the Premises Standards. The Transport Standards and the Premises Standards aim to enable public transport operators and providers to remove discrimination from public transport services.

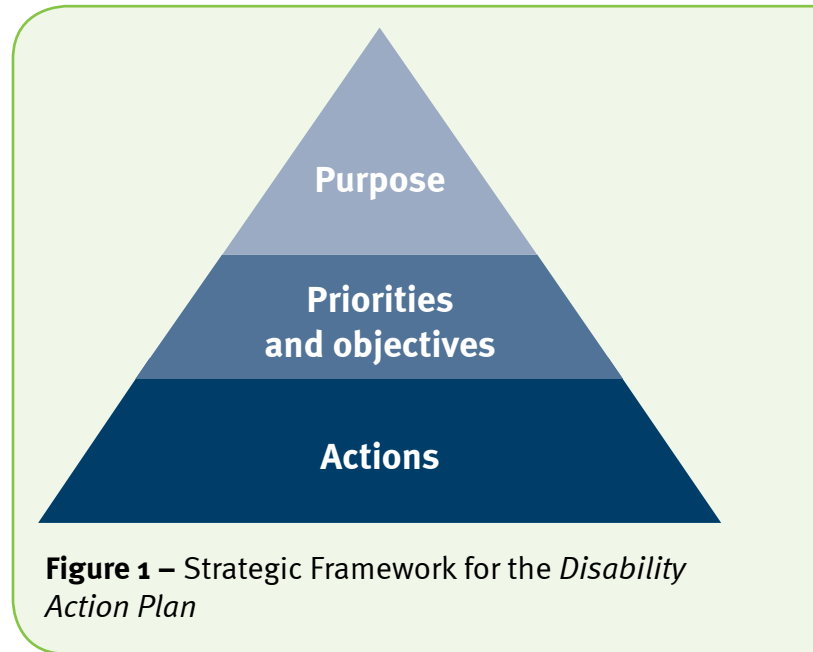
The *Disability Action Plan* also helps to deliver on *The Queensland Plan: a 30-year vision for Queensland* (Queensland Plan) by contributing to key foundation areas such as infrastructure, community and regions.

Strategic Framework

Accessibility of the transport system, in particular the passenger transport system, is critical to moving people and connecting communities. The department is committed to embedding universal accessibility thinking into strategic planning for the transport network to improve the end-to-end journey for all customers, including people with disability. Therefore, the strategic framework for the *Disability Action Plan* links identified actions to four priorities and objectives which, in turn, give effect to the purpose of the *Disability Action Plan* – see Figure 1.

Purpose

The purpose of the *Disability Action Plan* is to assist people with disability to participate in community life by improving the accessibility of the passenger transport network across Queensland.



Strategic Framework



Priorities

The *Disability Action Plan* identifies four priorities for action. Together, these will deliver a more accessible passenger transport network across Queensland. These priorities and their supporting objectives are listed in Table 1.

Table 1 – Priorities for the Disability Action Plan

Priority 1 – Building an accessible transport network

Objective

To deliver an accessible end-to-end journey for all our customers using the passenger transport network in Queensland.

Priority 2 – Enhancing the customer experience

Objective

To deliver an improved customer experience for people with disability when travelling on the passenger transport network.

Priority 3 – Improving the accessibility of information

Objective

To support people with disability by enhancing the availability and accessibility of information relating to the passenger transport network.

Priority 4 – Working in collaboration with partners and stakeholders

Objective

To work in collaboration with our partners and stakeholders to achieve improved outcomes for people with disability accessing the passenger transport network.

Actions

Actions have been developed to support the achievement of these objectives and align to the relevant priority.

The implementation of projects relating to the accessibility of the passenger transport network within the department is not confined to the actions contained within the *Disability Action Plan*. Subject to further funding and resources becoming available, the department will consider undertaking additional projects which aim to reduce social and physical barriers for people with disability while using the passenger transport network.

Priority 1

Building an accessible transport network

The department aims to lead by example in the delivery of accessible infrastructure and to also contribute to developing knowledge and understanding of accessibility requirements with infrastructure delivery partners and the design and construction industry. The delivery of accessible infrastructure also supports the implementation of the Queensland Plan's commitment to introduce infrastructure supporting community and economic participation.

The department undertakes a number of activities to meet this commitment including:

- Managing and administering the Taxi Subsidy Scheme for eligible members. This scheme provides for the transport needs of people with disability who experience profound difficulties using other modes of transport. The scheme currently consists of more than 50,000 members.
- Continuing to release wheelchair accessible taxi licences as required and work with taxi booking companies to improve response times for wheelchair accessible taxis.
- Providing students with disability with transport assistance (this assistance is managed on behalf of the Queensland Government Department of Education, Training and Employment).
- Working with passenger transport operators and providers to assist them to meet Transport Standards compliance milestones. Government contracted urban buses exceed the 2012 compliance milestones in the areas of internal configuration (seating allocation, aisle, wheelchair manoeuvring space) and boarding areas (doors, ramps).
- Supporting Queensland Rail to make improvements to the accessibility of their rail network through an agreed capital plan within the Transport Services Contract. The department will also work with Queensland Rail in relation to the planned upgrades for the Graceville, Newmarket, Alderley and Dinmore stations.
- Designing departmental owned infrastructure to meet the requirements of the Transport Standards and the Premises Standards. South East Queensland Infrastructure (bus stations and park 'n' rides) exceed 2012 compliance milestones of the Transport Standards in a number of areas such as pathways, ramps and boarding areas.
- Delivering public transport concessions for people with disability in accordance with the department's concessions framework, including free public transport travel for eligible Totally and Permanently Incapacitated Veterans and Extreme Disablement Adjustment Veterans, visually impaired persons and attendants of people with disability. Concessional vehicle and vessel registration are also provided to eligible customers.

Actions under this priority for implementation under the *Disability Action Plan* are listed in Table 2.

Priority 1



Table 2 – ‘Building an accessible transport network’ actions

Action	Description
1.1	Provide funding through the Passenger Transport Facilities Program to upgrade existing, and provide new, accessible passenger transport infrastructure across Queensland.
1.2	Continue to provide co-contribution funding grants to local government through the Passenger Transport Accessible Infrastructure Program to assist with upgrading passenger transport infrastructure to meet the <i>Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002</i> compliance milestones for 2017 and improve customer accessibility.
1.3	Update and promote the <i>Public Transport Infrastructure Manual</i> , which includes standard drawings and specifications focusing on the reasoning and requirements to build and upgrade accessible infrastructure across Queensland.
1.4	Develop planning and design guidelines and other reference documents to support the department and local governments to achieve an accessible integrated passenger transport network.
1.5	Implement a light rail system that is accessible for people with disability (Gold Coast Light Rail).
1.6	Ensure all service contracts (excluding excepted services) with transport operators contain consistent clauses that require compliance with the <i>Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002</i> and the reporting of compliance levels with these standards on request from the Department of Transport and Main Roads.
1.7	Investigate opportunities for innovative solutions to assist Vision Impairment Travel Pass holders to have independent access through fare gates.
1.8	Collaborate with operators and local governments to implement initiatives which support the delivery of an integrated accessible passenger transport network. These include collaborating with delivery partners to trial a customer help/assistance point.
1.9	Monitor advances in passenger transport service delivery in other Australian and international jurisdictions to identify any opportunities for improving the accessibility of the Queensland passenger transport network.

Priority 2

Enhancing the customer experience

It is important that all Queenslanders, including people with disability, can use the passenger transport network with ease and confidence, allowing them to fully participate in the community.

One way in which the department contributes to delivering this positive experience is through providing relevant, timely and accessible passenger transport information to assist people with disability to travel seamlessly on their journey through the network.

Our contact centres are available with TTY (TeleTYpewriter) phone capabilities via the National Relay Service and have Speak and Listen services (speech-to-speech relay). Public transport customers can use these services to contact the department for information or assistance to plan their journey if desired. If a public transport customer contacts the department through the TransLink contact centre and identifies themselves as having an impairment or disability, customer service officers are able to provide assistance to help to pre-plan a journey if necessary. Follow-up advice can also be provided about any planned outages impacting on the intended journey route.

As part of our everyday business, the department undertakes research and considers innovative and customer centred approaches to ensure a positive customer experience is delivered for all of our customers while using the passenger transport network. This includes the availability of flash passes, such as the TransLink Access Pass in South East Queensland; and more broadly, the Vision Impairment Travel Pass, and the Totally and Permanently Incapacitated/Extreme Disablement Adjustment Veteran Travel Pass.

Actions under this priority for implementation under the *Disability Action Plan* are listed in Table 3.

Table 3 – ‘Enhancing the customer experience’ actions

Action	Description
2.1	Provide orientation and mobility sessions for disability groups to explore and become familiar with Transport and Main Roads’ passenger transport infrastructure and increase awareness of the existence of these sessions amongst the community.
2.2	Raise awareness amongst operators about the tools used by people with disability that assist them to use the passenger transport network.
2.3	Collaborate with industry to investigate options for improving access into and out of wheelchair accessible taxis for people with mobility issues, such as aged, frail or those relocating from a mobility device to a fixed seat.
2.4	Work with industry and operators to highlight the benefits and importance of drivers undertaking disability awareness training.
2.5	Undertake research to understand the difficulties faced by customers with disability and older and frail customers hailing and boarding a bus at major bus stations, using a lead stop bus operation arrangement to inform possible solutions.

Priority 3

Improving the accessibility of information

The provision of accurate and timely information is crucial to all customers. The department aims to ensure that customer information is accessible and readable for people with disability and is produced in accordance with relevant standards. This includes information provided in printed form and is also available on the Transport and Main Roads website (www.tmr.qld.gov.au). Consideration will be given to the most efficient way of providing information to passengers, including the use of readily available and contemporary technology.

A key tool for communicating with our customers is through the Transport and Main Roads and TransLink websites. The TransLink website (www.translink.com.au) is the main portal for people seeking information on the public transport network in South East Queensland, such as travel options and timetables. Work is under way to expand the information available on the TransLink website such that in the future it will include whole of state public transport information.

Some of the key information on the Transport and Main Roads website includes documents that provide information about disability access to the public transport network, including travelling with mobility devices, concessions and other assistance for people with disability, and disability parking permits.

Information and feedback from our customers is also important. Complaints from users of the passenger transport network provide a means of identifying areas of the network that need improvement. Customers are able to lodge complaints through a number of platforms including web, phone and traditional written options. Customer feedback is also sought through quarterly customer satisfaction surveys, however, these are general public transport user surveys and do not specifically focus on the ease of access to public transport for people with disability.

Actions under this priority for implementation under the *Disability Action Plan* are listed in Table 4 (see over page).

Priority 3

Table 4 – ‘Improving the accessibility of information’ actions

Action	Description
3.1	Produce updated educational material for people travelling with mobility devices on the passenger transport network.
3.2	Improve TransLink website accessibility by achieving an ‘AA’ rating in accordance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines Version 2.0 (WCAG 2.0).
3.3	Include information about accessible passenger transport infrastructure in passenger information.
3.4	Investigate more effective methods for providing customer information about facility maintenance issues that impede accessibility for people with disability at bus, rail and light rail stations and ferry terminals.
3.5	Communicate and raise awareness of new infrastructure or conveyances that meet or exceed <i>Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002</i> .
3.6	Expand and enable the use of technology so that people with disability travelling on the passenger transport network are informed through a variety of information formats.
3.7	Investigate improvements to complaints systems regarding capturing and reporting of complaints about disability access to passenger transport services and infrastructure.
3.8	Support drivers with a medical condition, that may include a disability, to continue to drive safely and where appropriate, increase the availability of information to transition drivers to safe alternatives such as passenger transport.

Priority 4



Working in collaboration with partners and stakeholders

In order to improve and promote the accessibility of the passenger transport network, the department works collaboratively with passenger transport operators and providers, local governments, and state and national counterparts. Taking responsibility for our actions through collaborative partnerships for improved community outcomes is highlighted in the *Queensland Plan*.

The department supports the national direction for accessible transport policy and participates in the Accessible Public Transport Jurisdictional Committee and the Accessible Public Transport National Advisory Committee chaired by the Commonwealth Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development.

The department also participates as a member of the Queensland Rail Accessibility Reference Group and the Taxi Council of Queensland chaired Disability Discrimination Committee.

Actions under this priority for implementation under the *Disability Action Plan* are listed in Table 5.

Table 5 – ‘Working in collaboration with partners and stakeholders’ actions

Action	Description
4.1	Establish a multi-modal Accessibility Reference Group.
4.2	Participate and influence the development of policy that supports the national approach to removing barriers for people with disability using passenger transport.
4.3	Collaborate with other state government departments and local governments to explore options to improve community access to community transport.
4.4	Work with local governments to encourage them to promote community transport services that are available in their local area.
4.5	Work with other state government departments to support Queensland’s smooth transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme.
4.6	Expand government agencies engagement with client groups and the market, including through the delivery of the Maranoa Demonstration Project, to build market capacity to deliver transport services.

Implementation

A summary of actions and their associated implementation timeframe is illustrated in the Implementation Plan. The implementation time period for the *Disability Action Plan* is until the year 2017. This time period aligns with the next compliance milestone for the Transport Standards which is 2017.

Implementation timeframes are categorised as short-term (2013 and 2014), mid-term (2014 and 2015) and long-term (2016 and 2017).

Some actions will be implemented and operate over the whole period of the *Disability Action Plan*, therefore all categories (short-term, mid-term and long-term) have been highlighted.

A formal review of the *Disability Action Plan* will be undertaken at the half way implementation point and at the completion point – that is, in 2015 and 2017.



Implementation Plan

Disability Action Plan – Improving Access to 2017

Purpose – To assist people with disability to participate in community life by improving the accessibility of the passenger transport network.

Priority 1 – Building an accessible transport network

Objective – To deliver an accessible end-to-end journey for all our customers using the passenger transport network in Queensland.

		S	M	L
1.1	Provide funding through the Passenger Transport Facilities Program to upgrade existing, and provide new, accessible passenger transport infrastructure across Queensland.	✓	✓	✓
1.2	Continue to provide co-contribution funding grants to local government through the Passenger Transport Accessible Infrastructure Program to assist with upgrading passenger transport infrastructure to meet the <i>Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002</i> compliance milestones for 2017 and improve customer accessibility.	✓	✓	✓
1.3	Update and promote the Public Transport Infrastructure Manual, which includes standard drawings and specifications focusing on the reasoning and requirements to build and upgrade accessible infrastructure across Queensland.	✓		
1.4	Develop planning and design guidelines and other reference documents to support the department and local governments to achieve an accessible integrated passenger transport network.		✓	
1.5	Implement a light rail system that is accessible for people with disability (Gold Coast Light Rail).	✓		
1.6	Ensure all service contracts (excluding excepted services) with transport operators contain consistent clauses that require compliance with the <i>Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002</i> and the reporting of compliance levels with these standards on request from the department.			✓
1.7	Investigate opportunities for innovative solutions to assist Vision Impairment Travel Pass holders to have independent access through fare gates.		✓	
1.8	Collaborate with operators and local governments to implement initiatives which support the delivery of an integrated accessible passenger transport network. These include collaborating with delivery partners to trial a customer help/assistance point.			✓
1.9	Monitor advances in passenger transport service delivery in other Australian and international jurisdictions to identify any opportunities for improving the accessibility of the Queensland passenger transport network.	✓	✓	✓

Priority 2 – Enhancing the customer experience

Objective – To deliver an improved customer experience for people with disability when travelling on the passenger transport network.

		S	M	L
2.1	Provide orientation and mobility sessions for disability groups to explore and become familiar with Transport and Main Roads' passenger transport infrastructure and increase awareness of the existence of these sessions amongst the community.	✓	✓	✓
2.2	Raise awareness amongst operators about the tools used by people with disability that assist them to use the passenger transport network.	✓		
2.3	Collaborate with industry to investigate options for improving access into and out of wheelchair accessible taxis for people with mobility issues, such as frail aged or those relocating from a mobility device to a fixed seat.		✓	
2.4	Work with industry and operators to highlight the benefits and importance of drivers undertaking disability awareness training.		✓	
2.5	Undertake research to understand the difficulties faced by customers with disability and older and frail customers hailing and boarding a bus at major bus stations, using a lead stop bus operation arrangement to inform possible solutions.	✓		

Implementation Plan

Priority 3 – Improving the accessibility of information		S	M	L
Objective – To support people with disability by enhancing the availability and accessibility of information relating to the passenger transport network.		S	M	L
3.1	Produce updated educational material for people travelling with mobility devices on the passenger transport network.	✓		
3.2	Improve TransLink website accessibility by achieving an ‘AA’ rating in accordance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines Version 2.0 (WCAG 2.0).	✓		
3.3	Include information about accessible passenger transport infrastructure stops in passenger information.		✓	✓
3.4	Investigate more effective methods for providing customer information about facility maintenance issues that impede accessibility for people with disability at bus, rail and light rail stations and ferry terminals.		✓	
3.5	Communicate and raise awareness of new infrastructure or conveyances that meet or exceed <i>Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002</i> .	✓	✓	✓
3.6	Expand and enable the use of technology so that people with disability travelling on the passenger transport network are informed through a variety of information formats.		✓	✓
3.7	Investigate improvements to complaints systems regarding capturing and reporting of complaints about disability access to passenger transport services and infrastructure.		✓	
3.8	Support drivers with a medical condition, that may include a disability, to continue to drive safely and where appropriate, increase the availability of information to transition drivers to safe alternatives such as passenger transport.		✓	✓

Priority 4 – Working in collaboration with partners and stakeholders		S	M	L
Objective – To work in collaboration with our partners and stakeholders to achieve improved outcomes for people with disability accessing the passenger transport network.		S	M	L
4.1	Establish a multi-modal Accessibility Reference Group.	✓		
4.2	Participate and influence the development of policy that supports the national approach to removing barriers for people with disability using passenger transport.	✓	✓	✓
4.3	Collaborate with other state government departments and local governments to explore options to improve community access to community transport.	✓	✓	✓
4.4	Work with local governments to encourage them to promote community transport services that are available in their local area.		✓	✓
4.5	Work with other state government departments to support Queensland’s smooth transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme.	✓	✓	✓
4.6	Expand government agencies engagement with client groups and the market, including through the delivery of the Maranoa Demonstration Project, to build market capacity to deliver transport services.		✓	

S: Short-term (2013 and 2014) **M:** Mid-term (2014 and 2015) **L:** Long-term (2016 and 2017)