Phone submission – 14/06/2022 ███████ **for publication** <u>anonymously</u> **–** summary of conversation

- Supports the reform process and all proposed regulatory options.
  - o Regulating will help build trust.
- Not familiar with the content of the reform options, but would like share thoughts on a few things.
- For people on DSP or who receive NDIS funding, public transport is too expensive. Cost is a significant barrier for many people with disability who use public transport.
  - o Acknowledged that this issue falls outside the scope of the reform process.
- For those who use a mobility aid, connecting services (such as buses) between major public transport hubs are frequently inaccessibility.
  - o Taxis are an accessible option, but often have long waiting times and are expensive.
  - o It is easier and cheaper to drive.
- Sensory disabilities are often ignored.
  - o Chemical sensitivities are exacerbated on public transport due to frequent cleaning (and the harsh chemicals used). This has become worse since COVID-19.
  - o Lighting is a challenging issue to solve, given the diverse needs of different people. Inappropriate lighting design can make travelling on public transport impossible.
- Generally, public transport is not designed to be accessible. Accessibility solutions often involved direct human assistance, which can be demeaning.
  - o Calling ahead to ensure the availability of boarding ramps and staff to provide assistance, for example, is disruptive and prevents easy use of public transport.
    - ▪ This is not equal access.
  - o Some efforts which may improve accessibility, such as low-light, low-noise carriages are good steps. But sometimes other accessibility considerations, such as boarding ramp access to these carriages, is not considered, resulting in an inequitable provision of services.
- Rideshare should be considered public transport and be required to comply with the exact same requirements as taxis.
  - o Rideshare services are a common source of discrimination.
  - o Small changes would make rideshare services more accessible. For example, a light to signal a rideshare vehicle (like a light on a taxi roof).
- Public transport accessibility is worse in regional areas. The impact of inaccessible public transport is also greater in regional areas, and can be quite isolating.
  - o Travelling interstate, or between regional areas and cities can also be confusing, as accessibility features vary, and the way they are communicated is inconsistent.
- There are a significant number of issues with aviation services, which anecdotally result in people choosing to not fly.
  - o Issues include:
    - ▪ Direct assistance is sometimes difficult to organize
    - ▪ Carers / companions are not always considered as an essential component of travel.
    - ▪ Issues relating to security screening.
    - ▪ Staff training appears to be limited, and is an issue when transiting people from check-in to the boarding gate.

- People are unable to fly with their wheelchair, which can be stressful. Restraints should be installed in a plane to allow people to fly in their own chair.
- Staff training is equally as important as the design of public transport.
- Co-design is critical to all reforms. If policies are not co-designed, some people will be left behind.
- Restraints should be offered in all bus services and be offered (but not mandatory) to every customer.
- Safety should be the number one priority. The financial cost should be second.
- It is great that phone submissions are being accepted.