



## Stage 2 Reforms of the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002



# Safety on board conveyances: Grabrails in allocated spaces

Currently, there is insufficient guidance and clarity in the Transport Standards on the layout of grabrails in allocated spaces, and no requirement for grab-rails to have sufficient luminance contrast. This poses a safety risk to people with vision impairment using public transport. There is an opportunity to provide clarity on the layout of allocated spaces across different modes of transport to allow for differences in position, and include requirements on the minimum luminance contrast for grab-rails.

## Reform options

### Maintain current requirements in the Transport Standards

Transport Standards Section 11.7 *Grabrails in allocated spaces*, would remain unchanged and no changes to guidance would be made.

### Non-regulatory option

Guidance would be updated to encourage operators and provides to include a variety of grabrails with various orientations are permitted in allocated spaces and that they should be luminance contrasted, including:

- Grabrail location and installation, including alignment.
- Grabrail distance from adjacent surface or obstruction, such as a wall or pole
- Grabrail luminance and contrast

These requirements would pertain to buses, coaches, ferries, trains, trams and light rail.

### Regulatory option

Transport Standards Section 11.7 would be amended to include the following (including any requirements retained or amended from the status quo):

- Grabrails in allocated spaces must comply with AS1428.1 (2009), *Design for access and mobility, Part 1: General requirements for access - New building work, clause 17(a), (b) and (c)*.
- Grabrails may have a combination of horizontal, vertical or angled alignment as the use of the space dictates but apart from attachment points may not be closer than 50 millimetres to an adjacent surface or obstruction.

- Grabrails must have a luminance contrast of at least 30 per cent with the adjacent surface or attachment point or against other fixed surfaces that are within 2 metres of the grabrail. Luminance contrast testing of grabrails must be determined as per *AS1428.1 (2021), Design for access and mobility, Part 1: General requirements for access - New building work Appendix B*.

These requirements would pertain to buses, coaches, ferries, trains, trams and light rail.

The Transport Standards Guidelines and / or The Whole Journey Guide would be updated to reflect new requirements and provide additional guidance.

## Case study

Seo-Jun catches the bus a few times a week to work. She uses a powered wheelchair and prefers to face backwards when travelling in the allocated space on her bus. Seo-Jun has limited strength and dexterity in her hands and fingers.

### Seo-Jun's experience today

Seo-Jun catches her usual bus service and positions herself in the driver-side allocated space facing backwards. It takes Seo-Jun a few moments to notice a dark grabrail. The bus departs before Seo-Jun hold on and she is worried she might slide or topple over. At the next bus stop, Seo-Jun repositions herself at the other end of the allocated space, facing into the aisle. The large padded rail at the other end of the allocated space is the only place she can hold onto confidently. Because she's facing into the aisle, her footplates protrude into the access path. For the rest of the journey, Seo-Jun is embarrassed and stressed as she's worried she might trip another passenger as they walk past.

### Seo-Jun's experience under the proposed reforms

Seo-Jun catches her usual bus service and positions herself in the driver-side allocated space facing backwards. She notices a bright yellow horizontal grabrail against the wall. Seo-Jun takes hold of the grabrail. The bus departs and Seo-Jun is confident that she can prevent herself from sliding or toppling over if they go around a sharp corner. For the rest of the journey, Seo-Jun is relaxed and confident.

## Have your say

Public consultation on the Stage 2 reform of the Transport Standards will open from 15 March to 9 August 2022.

For further information:

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- **Survey:** <https://edm.infrastructure.gov.au/survey.php?sid=28680&name=grabrails-in-allocated-spaces>