



Infrastructure access paths: Grabrails on access paths

Currently, there are no requirements or guidance to provide grab-rails along access paths on board conveyances, which poses a risk to the safety of people with ambulant disabilities using public transport. There is an opportunity to improve accessibility along conveyance access paths by providing grab-rails that have sufficient luminance contrast.

Reform options

Maintain current requirements in the Transport Standards

The Transport Standards would remain unchanged and no additional guidance would be issued.

Non-regulatory option

The Transport Standards Guidelines and /or The Whole Journey Guide would be updated to include advice on luminance contrasting grabrails on conveyances.

Specific guidance may include the following:

- Why grabrails are necessary
- Grabrail location and design
- Compliance with state requirements, such as not encroaching on the head impact zone.

Regulatory option

The Transport Standards would be amended to include new technical specifications for grabrails beside access paths on conveyances with accessibility requirement to ensure they meet the needs of people with disability, including:

- Grabrails that conform to the requirements of AS1428.1 (2009), *Clause 17 (a), (b) and (c)* must be provided at all locations where passengers require support or stability during boarding, alighting or transit.
- 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 with the adjacent surface, attachment point or against other fixed surfaces that are within 2 metres of the grabrail by at least 30 per cent.

- Luminance contrast testing of surfaces, objects and fixtures other than tactile ground surface indicators must be determined as per Appendix B of AS1428.1 (2009) *Design for access and mobility – General requirement for access – New building work*.

These requirements would apply 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 include specific guidance for buses, trams and light rail and ferries.

Case study

Henry catches the tram once or twice a week to do his groceries. He has arthritis and uses a walking stick for assistance. Though independent, Henry often experiences pain and fatigue in his joints when walking. Henry also has a moderate vision impairment.

Henry's experience today

Henry is catching his usual tram and the joints in his legs are particularly painful today. As he boards the tram, he feels a shooting pain in his leg. Henry looks for support and struggles to see the grabrail as it is a similar colour to the bus door. As he makes his way down the aisle he reaches for another grabrail, however it is too thin and close to the luggage rack. Henry then slowly makes his way to his seat, worried he may fall over.

Henry's experience under the proposed reforms

Henry is catching his usual tram and the joints in his legs are particularly painful today. As he boards the tram, he feels a shooting pain in his leg. He pauses to look for support and sees bright yellow grabrail. Henry grasps the sturdy grabrail as he swipes his pass at the card reader. He then makes his way down the aisle and sees a bright yellow grabrail. He holds onto the grabrail as he confidently lowers himself into his seat.

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:

- **Website:** www.infrastructure.gov.au
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- **Email:** DisabilityTransport@infrastructure.gov.au
- **Survey:** <https://edm.infrastructure.gov.au/survey.php?sid=28681&name=grabrails-on-access-paths>