

General Questions

Where do you operate or provide your public transport service?

Metropolitan area

What type(s) of conveyance do you operate or provide?

Taxi

How would you rate the overall accessibility of the public transport service you operate?

Very accessible

Do you know approximately how many of the people who use your service have some form of disability?

All of them. 10 or more per day per vehicle

What aspects of your service could be improved to ensure people with disability have better access to the public transport service you provide?

Subsidies for new access vehicles from either Federal or State funding. Better application and assessment processes for drivers. Higher standards of training to ensure participant awareness. Improved subsidies for the passengers, especially those in wheelchairs. Consultation with stakeholders by local and federal authorities to ensure quality of service and cost effectiveness.

Are you aware of any factors out of your control that make your service less accessible?

State government interference in the day to day running of the service. Failure by the state to be diligent in its assessments of the communities needs in this arena. Failure by the state to have open and frank dialogue with stakeholders with a view to actually improving the service to all.

What are the core challenges or barriers you face in ensuring the service you provide is accessible to people with disability and meets the Transport Standards?

State interference and ignorance in the requirements of all stakeholders. This area of public transport requires the authorities, the providers and the participants to at least acknowledge the need for a social chapter that is unique in this arena that actually benefits all participants rather than just tick off some regulatory or statutory requirement.

Do you have a process to handle complaints from people with disability?

Yes

Can you describe that process?

Yes

Have you ever received a complain about an accessibility problem?

Yes

Were you able to resolve it for the user?

Not always due to many factors, mostly regulatory and logistical.

Which areas of reform do you view as most important to improve accessibility on your service?

1 & 15 You don't have cost or regulatory reform on here unfortunately

Which areas of reform do you view as most challenging to improve accessibility on your service?

Cost. Regulatory reform.

Which area of reform would impose the greatest cost on you?

Upgrading and updating vehicles and driver training

1. Staff Training and communication

What disability awareness training do you provide to frontline and back of house staff?

Very little. WA had the most comprehensive and effective application, acceptance and training process in the nation for those wishing to participate in access taxis which was fully funded by the DoT and endorsed and supported by the major taxi companies. This was killed off by the current state government.

Are staff involved in design, policy and procurement trained in disability awareness or transport accessibility awareness?

No longer

Can you provide any details concerning costs incurred and time taken by staff to undergo current disability awareness training you have in place?

Minimal, reflective of the tiny amount of training now undertaken.

If staff disability awareness training was mandatory would you be required to implement new training programs?

Yes

What costs would you incur?

Cost of staff, admin, facilities etc. It would not be low but the returns would possibly make it up over time.

Do you have any examples of improved accessibility or improved customer service interactions as a result of recently implemented training programs or well-trained staff?

Yes

When staff are the subject of a complaint, what processes do you have in place to address the complaint?

This is regulated by the state under the On Demand Regulations and Legislation.

2. Mobility Aid Safety

What has been your experience in facilitating travel of mobility devices and carers for people using a device on the network?

Experience in WA has always been one of paramount safety. However, new regulations have added substantial cost to the procurement and fitting out of vehicles. New regulations are not retrospective, but many operators would like to upgrade but this is cost prohibitive at this time

Are mobility device restraining systems used on your public transport conveyances?

Yes

What mobility device restraining systems are used on your public transport conveyances?

Unwin restraining

How have these mobility device restraining systems affected the safe travel of people with disability?

They are the safest in the world. However, training plays a large part in understanding why how and what they do!

What was the cost of these systems?

multiple thousands of dollars.

What data do you have on utilisation of restraining systems by people with disability when on-board?

There is an assumption that they are used by default. Passenger complaints would be forthcoming if they were not.

Are your current systems adequate to ensure people using mobility aids are safe in transit?

Yes, though improvements are always an option depending on the need vs cost vs efficiency.

What technical barriers or difficulties do you experience in implementing solutions which prevent tipping of mobility devices in both existing and new fleet?

None. WA's access taxi fleet has world standard restraint systems by default.

What are the barriers, operational costs and other considerations that may arise if staff are required to assist customers in utilising an active restraint system?

Bad training or lack of training is the only barrier.

What alternative mitigations have you implemented to address the risks associated with mobility aids tipping or sliding out of allocated spaces while in transit?

There are no concerns in this area.

Have mobility device users on your public transport conveyances had accidents where the device has slipped or toppled over?

Yes

What was the result of this incident?

Passenger failed to take safety directions from driver and attempted to exit vehicle without assistance. Pax and his equipment were both damaged as a result. Camera footage revealed driver had taken all steps to ensure pax safety.

What methodologies have been implemented to minimise or reduce the likelihood of further incidents occurring?

Drivers reinforcing instructions to passengers to ensure they understand.

15. Passenger loading areas

What considerations do you currently make when designing passenger loading facilities?

Taxi industry used to be consulted about these areas by both the state and local government. This is not happening at present

What feedback have you received regarding the use of passenger loading facilities?

Complaints about safety and efficacy.

Bearing in mind the various national, state and local government guidelines on the layout of taxi ranks and passenger loading zones, what is the optimum layout of a taxi rank or passenger loading zone?

For a multi vehicle taxi rank in a high traffic area (meaning many people using taxis from the rank) there is rarely space for a wheelchair access taxi to load and unload safely. It has been suggested the rear portion of the rank be a 5-10 pick-up/drop-off bay with clearance for the rear hoist to deploy, and ramp access to the road surface from the footpath. Disabled bays in car parks often fail to allow safe space for vehicles that require space for hoists to operate with incursion of traffic or pedestrian flows whilst allowing for safe ingress and egress of passenger(s)

Can we improve design requirements in the Transport Standards?

Yes

What costs would you see associated with ensuring that the Transport Standards requires all taxi ranks and passenger loading zones at public transport premises and infrastructure to be accessible?

Shitloads