General Questions

Where do you operate or provide your public transport service?

Metropolitan area

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

Bus

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

Accessible

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

No

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

Information not available

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

Information not available

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?

Information not available

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

Information not available

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

Information not available

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

Information not available

1. Staff Training and communication

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

All front line staff are required to complete mandatory online Customer Service Training as part of their induction training which includes a module on Disability Awareness. This is also covered in their Certificate III Transport and Distribution (Road Transport) classroom-based training. All front line staff are required to complete a refresher course annually. Transit Systems is currently updating all of its Certificate III training material to ensure it is all current, effective and to make it more engaging for staff. This includes the use of video content. We have just finalised a training module on assisting customers who are blind or have low vision, which we developed in consultation with Guide Dogs Australia, featuring representatives from Guide Dogs Australia and customers who are blind or have

low vision. This video will be used in Certificate III training and will also be used for micro learning opportunities and monthly focus campaigns throughout the year. We have also commenced work on a second module regarding customers who are non-verbal, or who have a disability that is not as obvious such as autism. We are working with a Speech Pathologist and interviewing a family who has a son with non-verbal autism as part of this video. This video will also form part of our new Certificate III training material.

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

Yes

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

The current Customer Service and Disability Awareness module takes 30 minutes per driver. With current staff numbers we estimate this equates to ~$30,000 per annum. All Monthly Focus campaigns and micro learning opportunities are designed and created inhouse with minimal expense to the business.

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

 Yes

What costs would you incurr?

We are already conducting mandatory Disability awareness training for staff so there would be no additional costs for staff wages however, if we were required to engage external providers to carry out training (in person) from organisations representing customers with disability, we envisage significant additional ongoing costs would be involved in this.

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?

While we have existing training programs in place, we are only in the early stages of revising this content to ensure it continues to be effective and engaging for staff. We believe our training and communications to frontline staff is comprehensive and effective which can be seen through low (and decreasing) numbers of customer complaints. We do not have any data or metrics to measure this field however is something we will consider for future measurement.

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

We occasionally do receive complaints regarding driver behaviour from customers with disability. The most common is that the driver refuses to lower the bus or extend the wheelchair ramp because the customer has limited mobility or a disability that is not immediately visible. When we receive these complaints, the driver is identified and counselled. If necessary, the driver will also undertake remedial training with a Bus Operator Trainer to ensure they are aware of their requirements and the customer service expectations of them.

2. Digital Information Screens

What types of digital displays do you use?

Visual and Audible

What are the benefits for you associated with installing digital displays which are user friendly for people with disability?

Digital screens installed on buses helps to make bus travel a realistic and less stressful option for those who are blind or with low vision, potentially increasing patronage. • Having visual and audio messaging indicating next stop information alleviates the pressure on drivers needing to remember destinations of customers while trying to focus on traffic and safe operation of the vehicle.

What are the barriers associated with installing digital displays to meet the needs of people with disability?

Upfront costs of purchasing and installing the digital display units for the fleet. We currently install the screens only on new buses purchased to avoid large investment to retrofit the fleet. • Increased resourcing required to ensure information displayed is accurate and updated any time there is a service change. • GPS issues in the CBD can momentarily impact the reliability of the system which can potentially create greater confusion for customers who are blind or have low vision. There is currently no system in the market that doesn't rely on GPS technology. • A review of the existing network is required prior to rolling out this system as currently, there are some parts of the network with stops that are too close together for the system to work effectively.

What are the upfront and ongoing costs associated with installing digital displays which are user friendly for people with disability?

Initially, the cost for us to install a system with a single-panel digital screen and audio functionality was approximately $4800 per bus. This cost has since increased to $7700 per bus following TfNSW's change to the requirement for a double-panel digital screen to be installed in lieu of the single-panel version. • Additionally, there are ongoing costs for wi-fi/4G data connectivity, as well as hardware maintenance costs. • It should also be noted that the manufacturers of some systems require ongoing software licencing costs, which can be significant.

When you design digital displays, which features do you use to meet the needs of people with disability?

The screen display is currently designed based on Transport for NSW style guide specifications – Screen Guidelines - Bus Fleet Digital Displays (version 1.0, 14 June 2019).

With rapid changes in digital screen technology, what challenges or barriers do you foresee with digital displays in the future?

There is a risk is that a digital screen type that is selected now may be considered obsolete in the future, or not meeting any updated standards that are subsequently introduced post-installation. • This may result in a varied range of screen hardware variants installed across a bus fleet, increasing supply and maintenance costs. Additionally, there may be the requirement to maintain multiple versions of software/data so that the different screen types can operate.

7. Website accessibility

What are the barriers and challenges with meeting website accessibility requirements?

The number one barrier is cost. To have the audit completed and to ensure the website meets best practice it would require a bespoke website to be built which would be quite costly. There would

also be ongoing audit costs to ensure the website maintains accessibility requirements. The second barrier is staff training and understanding of WCAG requirements to ensure the ongoing compliance after it was professionally built. We do not have a trained disability communications expert to manage this process.

How do the current website accessibility requirements meet the needs of people with disability?

Not in a position to answer. Bets answered by a person with disability.

How could website accessibility be improved?

Best answered by a person with disability who understands their needs and what changes would be effective.

What are the barriers to improving accessibility requirements for people with disability?

The biggest barrier to changing requirements/standards is cost and resources. A lot of the changes that are most beneficial require changes to existing infrastructure so altering this can be quite costly and disruptive. It's much easier to build in accessibility requirements when the infrastructure is being designed and built rather than retrofitting.

What is the nature of feedback you receive from people with disability regarding website content?

We do not receive any feedback from customers with disability regarding our website content. Customers are encouraged to visit transportnsw.info (managed by TfNSW) for all service and public transport network information which is WCAG 2.0 AA compliant.

Do your websites with information on public transport services meet website accessibility requirements as prescribed under Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) version 2.0 AA?

Unable to answer without conducting a website audit and obtaining quotes from a developer. We believe the costs would be substantial.

If the current website does not meet the AA requirements, what upfront and ongoing costs would you incur to meet the requirements?

We believe the costs would be substantial.

If your websites were required to meet WCAG 2.1 AA requirements, what upfront and ongoing costs would you incur to meet the requirements?

We believe the costs would be substantial.

What barriers or operational impracticalities will you face in meeting the requirements of WCAG 2.1 AA?

Much of our customer facing content on our website includes detailed network maps which would be very difficult (perhaps impossible to make 100% accessible). o We do not have a trained professional who is an expert in website accessibility for people with disability so we would need to outsource, recruit for a new position, or upskill an existing employee.

If your websites were required to meet WCAG 2.0 AAA requirements, what upfront and ongoing costs would you incur to meet the requirements?

Unable to answer without conducting a website audit and obtaining quotes from a developer. We believe the costs would be substantial.

What barriers or operational impracticalities will you face in meeting the requirements of WCAG 2.0 AAA?

Much of our customer facing content on our website includes detailed network maps which would be very difficult (perhaps impossible to make 100% accessible). o We do not have a trained professional who is an expert in website accessibility for people with disability so we would need to outsource, recruit for a new position, or upskill an existing employee.

13. Wayfinding

How successful is the Transport Standards in providing enough information to designers and planners to assist in providing good wayfinding?

Unable to answer as TfNSW specifies the design and positioning of Wayfinding products so am not aware of the requirements

How can wayfinding requirements in the Transport Standards be improved?

Unable to comment

What do you see are the features of good wayfinding approaches to public transport sites?

• Level, smooth walkways without hazards or obstacles.

• Wheelchair accessibility, including lifts and ramps where applicable.

• TGSI installed.

• Braille identification where required i.e., bus stop TSNs, toilets, stop buttons.

• Next stop systems on board all public transport vehicles providing audio and visual announcements.

• Hearing loop available where required.

What feedback have you had from people with disability regarding your current wayfinding provisions?

o Requests for a greater rollout of onboard customer information displays including audible and visual announcements to assist customers who are blind or have low vision.

o Better alignment of TGSIs with the head of the stand (where drivers can pull up) to pick up customers.

o Replacement of older destination signage which is not as clear and doesn't provide as much contrast. White LED on black background with large text has been identified as the most legible for customers with low vision.

What are the impacts of working with people with disability to develop wayfinding approaches?

Working with people with disability to develop Wayfinding approaches ensures the solutions are effective for those they are being developed for.

What are the issues public you face when trying to implement good wayfinding strategies

o Lack of cooperation from some local councils and/or other stakeholders.

o Increased cost and resources to maintain products.

What do you see are the upfront and ongoing costs associated with improving wayfinding requirements compared with meeting existing requirements

o Braille and tactile requirements as prescribed in the National Construction Code and Premises Standards?

• These activities are currently the responsibility of Transport for NSW and various local Councils. o Specified provisions of Australian Standard AS 1428.4.2 concerning building and room identification?

• We would need to investigate the scope of these requirements. At present, the only customer-facing locations with a depot building are for the collection of lost property. All other customer-facing buildings and rooms would be interchange facilities maintained by others.

o Wider use of minimum 30% luminance contrast requirements as currently required under Transport Standards Section 2.5 Poles and obstacles?

• Customer information visual specifications regarding bus stop information are currently determined by Transport for NSW. Our bus destination signage would already meet this contrast.

16. Multiple formats of information

What alternative formats of information, other than online formats, do you utilise?

Printed timetables and maps are available on request and can be mailed out to customers. Onboard Customer Information Systems are installed on all new buses delivered to provide an audible and visual announcement of the customers location and the upcoming stops. Service change information is communicated via multiple channels including via website, real-time planning apps, at stop notices and information provided to the transport info call centre operators.

What information do you currently produce in alternative formats that is readily available for a customer on request for content that is available only through digital means?

Printed timetables are printed in house on request. Otherwise, they are only available electronically.

What type of requests do you receive from people with disability for alternative formats of information that is provided online that are not readily available?

We do not receive any requests for information via alternative means other than website by people with disability. We regularly receive requests for printed timetables and maps by people who do not have access to the internet.

How do you meet these requests??

Timetables are printed inhouse and sent to the customer via mail.

What are the barriers you face in being able to meet these requests?

Costs and resourcing

What are the costs associated with providing information in alternative formats when only provided in online content?

Unable to provide exact costs however it could include design costs and printing.

How do you receive complaints from customers with a disability relating to the provision of information?

Complaints, in general, are received via phone, website, app, letter or email. There are multiple channels available for customers to make complaints to our company.

How can communication methods with people with disability be improved

• Greater consultation with people with a disability or organisations that work with people with a disability to ensure communication methods are effective.

• Greater awareness of the issues faced by people with a disability when accessing information through increased training and information on best practice.

• Provision of information in multiple channels.?