



9 June 2017

Via email: Peter.Stafford@infrastructure.gov.au

Dear Peter,

**RE: Transdev Australasia response to The Whole of Journey**

We would like to congratulate the Australian Government on *The Whole Journey, A guide to thinking beyond compliance to create accessible public transport journeys*.

At Transdev we consider ourselves as journey makers. As the largest provider of public transport service across Australia, we are pleased to add our voice to this very important discussion and assist in shaping the future of accessible public transport.

Transdev operates services in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Darwin and Perth. Across our bus, ferry, light rail and coach services we are at the forefront of providing our customers with a journey experience that ensure they feel safe and confident when they travel.

Almost four million people in Australia have some form of disability and 64% of these four million people are estimated to use public transport. For many of our customers with a disability, the services we provide is the only form of mobility and a source of independence.

Transdev is committed to providing accessible transport and we look forward to working with the Australian Government and our partners in state and local governments across the country to improve information, infrastructure and services to ensure all Australians have access to safe, reliable and affordable journeys.

Yours sincerely,

**Kathy Lazanas**

General Manager Group Corporate Affairs & Communications

**Transdev Australasia**

Level 8

469 LaTrobe Street

Melbourne VIC 3000

The following section provides Transdev Australasia's response to the questions asked in the consultation draft, taking into consideration the specific sections;

**1. Thinking about influencing factors? Have the key factors been identified and appropriately discussed? Are there any additional influencing factors that should be included?**

In addition to those drivers of change already identified, we believe that the following will also influence public transport journeys into the future:

*Transport on demand*

At Transdev, we see the future of transport being personalised, autonomous, connected and electric (*P.A.C.E.*).

Transport on demand services promise to positively impact journeys into the future. First-mile, last-mile connectivity is currently operating successfully around the world with trials imminent in Australia. Transport on demand services will not only seamlessly connect individuals from their home to existing forms of transport but also provide intermodal connections.

While this promises to make journeys more accessible, consideration needs to be given to the implications of the potential change in the balance between transport modes used and a possible shift away from set services and infrastructure to more flexible Transport on Demand options. For instance how might a shift away from the use of set infrastructure like bus stops to pick-up-points anywhere impact accessibility?

*Electric buses*

Similar to autonomous vehicles, the technology to deliver electric buses is prevalent around the world. By the end of 2017, Transdev Group will have more than 350 buses in operation around the world. This technology is important to consider as part of the Whole of Journey proposal due to the infrastructure to operate electric buses, such as charging stations, this will require numerous stakeholders from both public and private sectors to work together to collectively deliver the next generation of clean transport solutions.

*National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)*

We welcome the Australian Government's progress on the National Disability Scheme and more specifically participant transport funding as part of the program. We see the opportunity to increase coordination between the NDIS and *The Whole of Journey* to be a more inclusive program ensuring that those with a disability are able to freely choose their mode of transport.

### *Awareness of mental health issues*

We see the positive trend in our workplace and communities in increased awareness of mental health issues. As a member of the Australian Network on Disability, we understand that not all disabilities are physical. There is an opportunity for The Whole of Journey to ensure that those with mental health issues are able to plan their trips on public transport and complete their journeys comfortably and safely. As the largest operator of services we want to ensure that our employees are able to provide a journey for all customers without prejudice and increased awareness and training is important when addressing mental health issues.

## **2. Thinking about parts of the journey. Does this section fully describe the whole journey and key considerations across the journey?**

This section comprehensively covers the whole of journey experience, starting from pre-journey planning seeking to provide an end-to-end solution.

In addition to providing improved real-time information that captures the public transport services, we see that the future lies in technology that can integrate not only public transport disruptions but road and other environmental disruptions seamlessly. This means that a person as part of their pre-planning journey will be able to identify where they would like to go and a route will be mapped out identifying the most efficient way of getting to their end destination taking into account traffic considerations, environmental and infrastructure facilities as well as unplanned disruptions that may negatively impact the journey.

## **3. Thinking about what does this mean for you. Does this section provide an effective set of key principles to focus stakeholders in creating accessible public transport journeys?**

Yes, The Whole of Journey captures the key areas and principles to improve our collective approach to providing public transport services. It is important for operators such as Transdev to be considered as partners in providing public transport journeys. The nature of our contracts ensure that over a considerable period of time (often 5+ years) we provide much of the the human element of public transport journeys.

## **4. Thinking about stakeholder collaboration to achieve a whole of journey. How can this be best achieved?**

The challenge as identified in the draft report is the governance surrounding who is responsible, and therefore who funds, improvements to infrastructure. While we work successfully with Departments across the country and regularly propose new ideas to improve our customer's journeys taking into end to end requirements, the nature of our contractual environments and funding arrangements may prohibit investment where we know it is required. This may be at home when planning a journey, at a stop or station or on board a vehicle.

We believe that there is an opportunity for committees to be established that include all levels of Government, Road Authorities and Operators such as ourselves to review opportunities to improve end to end journeys to make them accessible for all Australians. With our international experience in operating services in 19 countries around the world we have extensive knowledge of how initiatives, no matter how large or small, can positively empower people to confidently travel on public transport. Committees could establish a prioritisation of projects, taking into account the whole of journey, ensuring initiatives are planned and appropriately funded through existing contract mechanisms.

**5. Thinking about best practice examples. Are there any additional best practice examples or case studies you would like to see referenced in an appendix which could further encourage, be used to draw upon, and potentially facilitate Whole Journey understanding and networking?**

In addition to examples provided in the document, Transdev have developed the following programs to assist people with disability. The following section provides initiatives and programs that we have developed and delivered in partnership with our contracting Departments across the country.

**Accessibility Customer cards**

Mobility aids usually include wheelchairs, scooters and motorised vehicles and our drivers are trained to engage and deal with disabled customers using those. But we found out that some of our disabled customers may use different types of walking aids which are less common so less known by our drivers. This created frustration from certain customers and drivers in the past.

Following an increase in feedback from one of our customers who uses their shopping trolley as a walking aid, we created a first card in 2014. They can show the card before boarding so drivers lower the ramp without asking questions or arguing that it's not an official walking aid.

The feedback from this customer and the Victorian Public Transport Ombudsman was so positive about the card that we created a couple more for customers with similar issues but specific to their own needs and routes.

A decrease in complaints from these specific customers, in some cases we have not received any since we provided them with the card. The Victorian Public Transport Ombudsman now mentions the card as an example of best practice in terms of customer service in their induction program.

### **Transdev Training**

Across our operations our front-line employees, be they drivers, authorised officers, customer service officers or customer information ambassadors, undertake disability awareness training to become more disability confident.

The key element of this training module is “empathy” – the ability to stand in another’s shoes, to see their experience of a situation, and to care about making a difference.

It includes education about Australia’s Disability Discrimination Act and people’s legal and moral obligations. We also educate our employees on the types of disabilities, and key factors to consider when communicating with customers, keeping in mind that not all disabilities are physical and therefore easily identifiable.

We also encourage employees to focus on the ability and not the disability and arm them with some simple steps to help communicate in these instances, as well as learning where to physically hold people if needed – where appropriate.

And lastly as part of these training exercises we engage a local Disability Organisation such as Guide Dogs NSW to come and participate. Role plays are undertaken, where staff are blindfolded so they get a feel first hand of the challenges of navigating, let alone navigating a transport network.

Our staff training is continuous in this space and refreshed each year.

### **Initiative –“Mobility Card”**

- A new Sydney light rail network is under development in Sydney.
  - Comprising the existing Inner West Light Rail and the CBD and South East Light Rail, currently being constructed, the new SLR will revolutionise access and mobility around Australia’s premier city.
  - 8.4 million passenger journeys per annum
  - One of the most accessible modes of public transport in Sydney.
  - Vehicles have low floor height, with no steps required.
  - All vehicles have access ramps available, two dedicated wheelchair spaces, next stop audio announcements and visual display boards, and hearing loops throughout the carriages.
- What is it?*
- Simple yet effective customized flash card produced to assist customers with special needs travel safely.
  - It reminds our staff that not all disabilities are visible and makes it easier for staff to identify customers who require special assistance.

-

- 
- It also allows the customer to discreetly share their disability instead of having to publically announce it.  
*How is it managed/ how does it work?*
- Cards are issued by TDS and include Transdev branding to demonstrate management endorsement
- Includes three options to allow the customer to share instructions to staff or customers on board, on how they can assist their travel i.e. please be patient, can you please assist me with, please let me know when we get to
- Publicised via Transdev Website and was launched at our Meet Our Manager session.  
*Benefits/ Results*
- Positive feedback and engagement from our stakeholders
- Card only launched in May 2016 and presented at the Quarterly Accessible Transport Advisory Committee.



### Practice makes perfect

Practice Makes Perfect is a program run by Transdev by our team in Melbourne. The program provides bus education and safe traveling tips for individuals and groups who have special needs.

Bus is one of most accessible mode of transport in Melbourne with our fleet being 96% accessible. This program is offered to anyone who would like to become a more confident traveler by familiarising themselves with our buses. With sufficient notice, our teams can arrange individual or group sessions at our major depots or at specific locations on our network where customers are able to come and practice getting on and off our buses in a safe and controlled environment. The program is publicised via our website and via a flyer distributed during relevant expos and events.

### Stay Independent & Travel Safe

Stay Independent & Travel Safe is a joint initiative between Transdev in Melbourne, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the Transport Accident Commission. In 2015 we launched a campaign to encourage seniors to feel comfortable when travelling on public transport and to be proactive about doing so safely.

Each year more than 350 customer slips, trips and falls are reported on Transdev buses. Of this figure, approximately 18 per cent are seniors (people older than 65 years). At the center of the campaign were three short videos that were launched on the big screen at Federation Square during the opening of the Seniors Festival.

Each video focuses on a different aspect of travelling — holding on and taking a seat, speaking out and engaging proactively with the bus driver, and understanding myki; (ticketing system). Videos were available on our s, DHHS's and city councils' websites. At the same time we ran an internal campaign to reinforce to our drivers the importance of their role and created an internal training video which is now part of their induction training.

Following the campaign we ran an online survey for three weeks with the aim of better understanding seniors' attitudes to public transport and to our services. It was promoted on our own, PTV's, DHHS's, TAC's and local government websites, as well as through the Seniors Card newsletter. We had approximately 450 responses from people aged 55 years or older, and DHHS invited us to present our results to an age friendly roundtable, with a view to now work with one of the councils on an age friendly route pilot in 2017.

### **Try Before You Ride**

Try before you Ride is a Joint event initiative between Public Transport Victoria and Melbourne's major public transport providers including –Yarra Trams, Metro Trains and Transdev Melbourne. The program is aimed at encouraging people with accessibility issues to use public transport, by providing an opportunity for people to practice boarding all modes of public transport and ask representatives questions to help build their confidence using public transport.

The event takes place once per year and brings together all metropolitan modes of transport. The event is publicised through the involved stakeholder websites and other channels such as social media. In 2016, 50 people attended the event which was covered by Channel 10, free to air TV channel.