

Dear Sir / Madam,

Please see below which comprises Parramatta City Council's submission on the Review of Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport. The Departments of Council which have contributed to this submission are Land Use and Transport Planning and Community, Library and Social Services.

Parramatta City Council has a strong commitment to an accessible Local Government Area which includes the public transport in it and that which connects to surrounding areas. However, any ability of Council to meet increased access requirements will be limited by its current and future budgets.

Council will need to audit and analyse all transport access points under its jurisdiction to ascertain if they meet required standards. This would require funding which Council does not currently have.

Provision needs to be made by the Federal Government to assist Local Government with the cost of complying with these standards. It is estimated that a full audit of bus and taxi facilities in the Parramatta City Council Local Government Area would cost \$50,000. The works to be carried out to comply with the Standards over the 15 year time frame are estimated to total \$60,000 per annum.

There is a need for coordination between Councils and bus service providers to ensure that bus-stops used by accessible buses are given priority by Local Government when providing accessible bus stops.

There is also a need to make the provision of accessible buses on some bus routes mandatory, for example, routes to hospitals (Westmead Hospital in our case).

The Report identifies the need for bus-stops to be linked with facilities already provided, for example, footpaths and pram ramps. This is a key point which needs to be highlighted in the review.

Having stated all of the above, Parramatta City Council believes that the current accessibility targets are set too low and should be set at a higher standard. An example of best practice in this area is that of the *Access Transit* Project of *Translink* British Columbia, Canada, where the public transport system has been reviewed and is to be 100% accessible by 2008.

Yours sincerely,

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