



Reform of the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport

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Bus Industry Confederation
MOVING PEOPLE

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DSAPT – What has happened since the reform started

- August 2019 - Transport Ministers endorsed the reform of DSAPT
- 70 reform areas identified over 2 stages
- July 2020 - Work commenced
- BIC involved in 9 out of 11 focus groups
- BIC formed a DSAPT review committee in April 2021
- Stage 1 - Decision RIS on 16 reforms was released 2022
- Stage 2 - Consultation RIS on 54 Reforms. BIC responded to 40 reforms effecting bus operators, manufacturers and suppliers.
- Decision by Transport Ministers on Stage 2 plus implementation for Stage 1 and 2 expected in May 2023



DSAPT – what are the options for the reforms

Status Quo | Change nothing

Regulatory

- Updates existing regulation or there is a new regulatory requirement

Non-Regulatory

- Improvements warranted - guidance material only

Transport Standards Guidelines

- Provides **additional guidance** on how to comply

Whole of Journey Guide

- Focus on people's accessibility needs across their whole journey.



DSAPT – what were the outcomes of Stage 1 – 16 Reforms

STAGE 1 REFORMS



DSAPT – what were the outcomes of Stage 1 – 16 Reforms

- Several reform areas assume that the bus and coach industry (all types, sizes, sectors) already have high levels of compliance
- Decision RIS released in March 2022 - several NEW regulations:
 - Training of staff and communication
 - Display/digital screens - location (line of access), length of visibility (10 secs scroll)
 - Accessibility of websites - minimum requirement WCAG 2.1 AA
 - How to communicate a disruption in service - planned and unplanned - direct assistance can be used
 - Information to be provided in multiple formats



DSAPT – what will be adopted from first round of 16 reforms

Training of staff and communications

- Conduct tailored training to meet the specific roles and responsibilities of staff
- Conduct refresher training
- Consult with people with disability (co-design process)
- Ensure training is delivered by a qualified trainer



DSAPT – what will be adopted from first round of 16 reforms

Accessibility of websites - minimum requirement WCAG 2.1 AA

- Websites must be perceivable, operable, understandable and robust
- Websites need to consider how people access information
- Perceivable - text alternatives, transcripts, video captions, use of colours, zoom-in effect
- Operable - everything must work for keyboard only users, no blinking/flashing
- Understandable - language in use, consistency, visible form fields
- Robust - must work across old, current and anticipated browsers



DSAPT – what are the options in Stage 2 Reforms

STAGE 2 REFORMS



DSAPT – what are the options in Stage 2 Reforms

Dedicated School Buses

- The regulatory proposal included 2 options - federal government position was for all dedicated school buses to be low floor accessible and BIC's regulatory option - low floor accessible buses (only where practical to do so) and that new high floor dedicated school buses be capable of wheelchair retrofit
- State and Territory jurisdictional responses to accessible school buses is mainly either status quo or non-regulatory (guidelines). BIC's response - Regulatory Option 2



DSAPT – what are the options in Stage 2 Reforms

Equivalent Access

- Regulatory option proposes certification mechanisms and a certification body
- The proposed regulatory options would impose significant expense and add a formal tier in a negotiation process that is already in place
- State and Territory jurisdictional responses to Equivalent Access - Non-regulatory (guidance). BIC's response - Status Quo



DSAPT – what are the options in Stage 2 Reforms

Real-time Communication

- Real-time communication and timely provision of information in multiple formats and in preferred formats if requested
- Not easily applied for all conveyances in all operational circumstances or by all operation types and/or location (eg. regional or rural)
- Increased financial and operational burden on state/territory jurisdictions to comply across their entire operational footprint
- State and Territory jurisdictional response - mixed bag Status Quo, Regulatory, Non-regulatory (guidance). BIC's response - Non-regulatory.



DSAPT – what are the options in Stage 2 Reforms

Mobility Aid movement in allocated spaces

- Deals with both passive (non-seat belted) and active restraints (seat-belted buses)
- Status Quo - not an option - this issue needs to be resolved
- Current industry best practice should be the adopted standard
- Both Regulatory and Non-regulatory options are flawed
- BIC's preference is to try and get regulation on this - but not possible with what is currently on the table
- State and Territory jurisdictional response - mixed bag of Status Quo, Regulatory and Non-regulatory (guidance)



DSAPT – what are the options in Stage 2 Reforms

IMPLEMENTATION?



DSAPT – update on public consultation process – the Social Desk

Government held 17 online events to consult industry bodies, disability persons and organisations and transport providers and operators

- 31% people with disability or a family member or carer
- 23% transport operators or providers
- 18% from disability organisation or advocacy group
- 16% from government
- 12% - others such as academic, architects, etc.



DSAPT – update on public consultation process – the Social Desk

Government held 17 online events to consult industry bodies, disability persons and organisations and transport providers and operators

- 2 Introductory webinars
- 4 Workshops with disability groups
- 3 Stakeholder roundtables (specifically ICT, infrastructure, safety and accessibility onboard)
- 6 Focus groups (evidence collection - these were a very small number of participants with specific disability - physical (visible and non-visible), cognitive/learning/intellectual disability, autism, etc.)



DSAPT – update on public consultation process – the Social Desk

What did the government find out?

- PT needs to be easy to navigate, simple and convenient, safe, equitable
- PT needs to be consistent for the whole of journey regardless of mode
- Barriers to accessing PT and barriers to PT infrastructure and sites
- Taxi and airline sectors were significant target groups
- Rideshare - also an issue - would rideshare services/providers decrease if forced to meet current accessibility requirements of taxis?



DSAPT – update on public consultation process – the Social Desk

What did the government find out?

- Implementation, reporting and proof of compliance (and public accountability)
- Struggled to get input on equivalent access
- School buses - a no show issue?
- Concern on timeframes for new requirements, implementation for current requirements being carried-over (past Dec 2022) and whether or not reforms could actually be achieved (noting current non-compliance).



DSAPT – major flaws of reform process

- Does not adequately distinguish the task of the BUS and the task of a COACH
- The social desk undertaking was not transparent
- The reform process should have engaged with public consultation up front
- The reform process did not firstly thoroughly look at the existing standards to see what needed to be updated or changed
- Splitting the reforms into 2 stages - problematic



DSAPT – what is BIC currently doing?

- Providing a response to the fourth 5-year review.
- Ongoing representation on the proposed federal government national advisory body (implementation and monitoring phase) - yet to be finalized
- BIC will release various advisories and guidelines
- Continue robust engagement and ‘talks’ with federal government and state/territory governments (a number of reform areas will be subject to further review prior to any decisions being made by Ministers)



This is a BIG reform
There is a lot of work to do
We have a long way to go
There are no guarantees on the outcomes

BUT BIC HAS GOT YOUR BACK!



THANK YOU!

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