Response to the Stage 2 Reform of the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport Standards

SUBMISSION

August 9 2022

Bus Australia Network

Contents

1. About the Bus Industry Confederation

The Bus Industry Confederation (BIC) is an organisation uniting bus and coach operators, bus and coach chassis suppliers and manufacturers, bus and coach body manufacturers and associated suppliers and professional services. The BIC's vision is to enhance the sustainability and liveability of Australia's cities and regions by *moving people* using bus and coach transportation. We aim to do this by representing the collective interests of our Members and to assist them in promoting the safety, efficiency and effectiveness of bus and coach transport in Australia.

1.1 Our Moving People Objectives

1. Promoting policies and actions that are environmentally responsible.
2. Promote the development of a viable and improved bus and coach industry in Australia.
3. Foster and promote a viable Australian bus manufacturing industry.
4. Promote public understanding of the contribution made by the bus and coach industry to Australia's economy, society and environment.
5. Ensure the accessibility and mobility needs of Australians are met, regardless of where they live or their circumstances.
6. Promote the use of public transport as a viable alternative to the car.
7. Coordinate and make more effective existing Federal, State and Local Government policies and programs that relate to passenger transport.
8. Ensure that buses and coaches operate safely and effectively.

1.2 About the Bus and Coach Industry

The bus and coach industry in Australia carry an estimated 1.5 billion urban public transport passengers per year and makes up 4 per cent of the total urban passenger task. The coach sector of the bus industry, comprising long distance, tourist and charter operators moves more than 1.5 million domestic travellers.

Our Industry, which includes bus operators, bus manufacturers and parts and service suppliers, employs more than 85,000 people nationally. Comprehensive data on the bus industry, the fleet, the suppliers, operators and their passengers can be found on the movingpeople.com.au website.

The *Bus Industry Confederation* (BIC) is the federal and peak body of the *Bus Australia Network* (BAN) comprising the state associations of New South Wales, Queensland, Tasmania, South Australia and Western Australia.

2 Reform scope

The purpose of this Submission is to provide responses to the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport: Consultation Regulation Impact Statement for Stage 2 Reforms.

Queries or feedback relating to this submission can be directed to [redacted] National Policy Manager – Bus Industry Confederation via email to admin@bic.asn.au or by phoning [redacted].

2.1 BIC's approach to this reform

The bus and coach industry in Australia is fully supportive of the provision of accessible public transport for all passengers. The success of a bus/coach operator business relies on customers wanting to use bus and coach services.

The reform of the Transport Standards needs to provide clarity for both the users and providers of accessible public transport where it is currently lacking in the existing Transport Standards. The reform should also provide flexibility in the provision of accessible public transport.

In general terms, the BIC supports adopting regulation where:

a) it can be operationally applied

b) implementation and associated costs are manageable

c) unjustifiable hardship or applications for exemption, do not unintentionally weaken the intended outcome.

The BIC's approach to responding to this CRIS is based on the following principles:

a) examine the design of all reform options that support current or 'moving forward' commercial best practice

b) if this is achieved in the regulatory option, the BIC has supported the regulatory option in full or with amendment

c) where we have not been able to support a regulatory option, the BIC has examined non-regulatory options and support these options if 'workable' across the majority of bus and coach operations across Australia

d) support status quo where no option provided meets any of the first 3 criteria.

2.2 Key elements to be considered when reading this submission

1. Access to an accessible conveyance is critical for people with disability to participate fully in community life and the economy. The beneficiaries of an accessible transport service however not only accrue to people with disabilities but also applies to a broad section of the community, including: parents with prams; seniors with limited mobility; people travelling with shopping; business people in transit with luggage and people with temporary injuries. This greatly adds to making bus services attractive as a travel option across the community.
2. The Australian bus and coach sectors are one of the most highly regulated in the heavy vehicle industry. Generally, this regulation occurs via state-based transport legislation and operational contracts.
3. As all route, and the vast majority of school and replacement bus operations are, in one form or another, contracted by the respective state governments, there are specific contract requirements that operators must comply with. Therefore, some of the responses provided in this CRIS do not wholly consider these existing contractual arrangements.

   For example:

   a) the majority of new buses are purchased under government procurement contracts or contracts developed by large corporations and DDA compliance is part of that procurement process. Therefore, individual bus operators have limited control over bus specifications
   b) most state jurisdictions either operate or are creating, centralised passenger information systems; individual bus operators are users of these systems and therefore have limited control over the specifications of any such systems.

   Any proposed changes or additions to the current Transport Standards should, in recognising existing state-based operational contract requirements, avoid duplicating existing requirements or introducing new requirements for the same subject matter.

4. Many of the reform options provided in the CRIS attempt to group all conveyances (ie. bus, train, ferry, etc) except where obvious terrain or operational environments applies (ie. road, water, rail track).

   For the bus industry, a further variance is the differences in the vehicle design of a route-type bus, school bus and coach which incorporate design elements for specific operational environments, such as high-speed highway travel and rough-road (country) terrain.

   Many of the reforms are not practical to apply to all types of conveyances and would need to **recognise exemption.** Examples of this is:

   a) Location during journey – not applicable to coach type services or school bus services
   b) Appropriate seats on booked services – not applicable to timetabled services operating route-type services
5. This submission provides Status Quo, Non-Regulatory and Regulatory preferences for "**accessible low floor conveyances**" only or "**bus and coach conveyances**" per the following definitions:

   a) Accessible low floor conveyance – a low floor **bus** typically utilized in urban (metropolitan) settings
   b) Coach conveyance – a high floor **coach** utilized in metropolitan, outer metropolitan, regional and rural areas (with or without a hoist)
   c) School bus conveyance – either as a low floor bus or a high-floor school bus (with or without a hoist) specifically designed for the carriage of school students in metropolitan, outer metropolitan, regional and rural areas.

6. Many of the reform options do not recognise the size of the bus and coach industry and the proportion of businesses providing non-government contracted services. Many of these providers are small to medium and often provide a good source of local transport services in their communities and surrounding areas. Some businesses provide both government contracted and private services.

   These operations typically:

   a) vary in size of operation (small to medium from a 1-bus/coach operator through to 50-bus/coach operator)

   b) vary in location of operations (city, regional, remote)

   c) vary in operational service areas, for example – city to city, region to region, long haul or local area only.

   d) provide different types of services, for example - coaches conducting tour services or contracted services to private corporations such as the mining sector or operators providing pre-arranged charter services that are co-designed by the provider and the customer to meet their specific requirements.

   Various data collected from jurisdictions and BIC's industry surveys since 2018, indicate the following number of operations across Australia as being approximately:

   - School operators – 2,450
   - Private school institutions with school buses – 200-plus
   - Coach and/or charter operators – 1000-plus
   - Route/city – 670.

   According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021 Motor Vehicle Survey, the current 'commercial-use' number of buses and coaches on the road is 41,684. The BIC can reasonably account fleet utilization as being approximately:

   - School fleet – 12,200
   - Coach fleet – 4,170
   - Route-type (low floor) fleet – 25,300.

7. The bus and coach conveyance, by merit of requiring a driver to drive the vehicle and manager passenger loadings, is a direct point of contact in the journey for customers. In the coach sector, for example, the driver provides direct assistance outside of the coach at the boarding point and in the case of booked services, also uses a passenger manifest to assist customers with their travel needs.

8. The answers provided to this reform aims to highlight the coach sector and their provision of accessible coaches for people with disabilities. Data provided by 1 coach operator providing booked services only, shows that from the period 1 January to 15 July 2022, they provided services to 140,561 passengers – 98 of whom advised impairment status. It should be noted, that none of the fares paid by these customers (and this is industry wide practice), were charged any additional fare for their travel nor were fares charged for carers or assistance animals, regardless of the booking method used to book their travel.

   - Hearing-impaired - Travelling alone - 8 pax
   - Medical condition - Travelling alone - 32 pax
   - Medical condition - Travelling with a carer - 4 pax
   - Medical condition - Travelling with an assistance animal - 3 pax

- Vision-impaired - Travelling alone - 33 pax
- Vision-impaired - Travelling with a carer - 1 pax
- Vision-impaired - Travelling with an assistance animal - 1 pax
- Wheelchair - Can use the stairs - 14 pax
- Wheelchair - Requires coach with lift - 2 pax

9. It is important that any new or updated regulation recognises existing and future Australian Design Rule's for omnibuses and that these take precedence over the Transport Standards. This is to ensure no compromise to the vehicle design or capability and to maintain passenger-safety principles.

10. The BIC contends that by not reviewing, in full, the definitions in the current Transport Standards to align with the reform options in this CRIS, may create further confusion and inconsistent interpretations.

11. Mobility aid devices remain a significant issue for the bus and coach industry.

    It is important that the updated Transport Standards includes references to suitability of mobility devices for carriage on accessible bus and coach conveyances.

    The reform that came out the DRIS for Stage 1 dealing with mobility aid safety, attempts to provide guidance on the provision of passive and active restraining systems and their use, however it still does not adequately address suitability of the mobility device itself.

    The BIC would like to see a minimum technical specification that all mobility devices must meet in order to ensure safety to these devices in allocated spaces.

    Furthermore, customers who board a bus or a coach and remain seated in their mobility devices while the conveyance is moving, need to recognise that installed restraining systems must be used in the way the technology is designed – which is designed to:

    - align with the requirements of Australian Design Rules
    - ensure the safety of the seated passenger in the mobility device
    - ensure the safety of all other passengers travelling.

    For example, passive restraining systems require the passenger to face rearward; active restraining systems are designed specifically for surrogate wheelchairs complying to ASNZS10542.1 (2015).

12. There are several reforms from the Decision RIS for Stage 1 which relate directly to Stage 2 particularly in information, communication and wayfinding. The BIC contends that some of the decisions that came out of Reform 1 may require additional review taking into consideration the responses received for Stage 2.

    For example, the DRIS Stage 1 on website accessibility to meet WCAG 2.1 AA assumed most operators would be compliant-ready for this reform which grossly underestimated the many-hundreds of small to medium sized operators across Australia currently providing websites. The BIC has tried to rectify this conclusion from the DRIS in our responses to ICT procurement and Mobile Web Systems in Stage 2 reforms.

13. Access to the Australian Standards that were offered as part of the consultation did not allow for the useable download of any standards and also did not consider allowing access to referenced standards within the primary standard. Some of the responses in this submission relied upon BIC's purchase of Australian Standards only where the reform was deemed significant enough.

3 Reporting – Reform 1

3.1 Consultation questions

3.1.1 How could the impact on you change if compliance data is reported for sections of the Transport Standards (regulatory option 2) or for whole transport assets (regulatory option 3)?

The BIC is not able to make comment on this reform for bus operators providing government contracted services using either accessible low floor conveyances or coach conveyances, as these operators are users of public transport systems implemented by jurisdictions.

For the private coach sector providing city to city, region to region services or 'local' services, all regulatory options would require administrative systems and staff resources to audit and track assets (even when noting the scalability considerations in the proposed regulatory options). The whole of transport assets Regulatory Option 3 maybe achievable but would require substantial administrative systems and human resources thereby creating a financial and productivity burden to achieve the requirement.

3.1.2 What is your preferred option: status quo, non-regulatory option, or regulatory option 1, 2 or 3? Why?

The BIC is supportive of reporting in some form as a tool for **'quality control'** of any new or substantially refurbished asset to meet the requirements of the Transport Standards. Reporting also provides **'proof of compliance'** which, presumably, would assist in the fair resolution of any complaints or service provision issues between the passenger and the operator.

The options provided in their current form, however, lack the required detail for the BIC to form a solid position, particularly as it relies on some form of stakeholder engagement process which has the potential for an inequitable outcome.

As the BIC is supportive of any progress in the Transport Standards that would see some form of 'proof of compliance', the preferred option for bus and coach conveyances is non-regulatory.

3.1.3 Do the non-regulatory and regulatory options provide enough clarity to ensure people with disability would be able to access public transport without discrimination?

No, as stated in answers to previous questions.

3.1.4 Are there any challenges (i.e. physical, technical, operational, etc.) that could impact the implementation of any option?

The administrative systems required and subsequent financial and human resources burden (as stated above) is an inevitable outcome for small to medium sized bus operations with the regulatory options provided in their current form. The non-regulatory option is more likely achievable and reasonably administered by all types and sizes of bus operations.

3.1.5 Would you provide compliance data to the Australian Government if it was discretionary?

Yes.

3.1.6 What is your experience reporting on public transport accessibility (if applicable)?

3.1.7 Do you think compliance data on the Transport Standards should be made public? If yes, what would you use the data for?

If the purpose of publishing compliance data is to inform a user of public transport, then compliance could be demonstrated by the use of existing systems such as journey planners, whereby the accessibility features of conveyances, bus stops, a particular route or service type are part of the information systems.

If the purpose of publishing compliance data is to provide information to providers of public transport, then this could be a useful tool to identify accessible bus stops and subsequent planning and provision of new (or updated) public transport services.

However, any published compliance relies heavily on the timely provision of data. If the non-regulatory option was adopted, the BIC supports in principle, a central repository of public documents, however a major issue with a central repository is the supply of and subsequent revisions of any public document will not necessarily align with the date of access by the user.

4 Equivalent Access – Reform Area 2

4.1 Consultation questions

4.1.1 What is your preferred option: status quo, non-regulatory option, or the regulatory option? Why?

For bus and coach conveyances the preferred option is status quo.

Neither the non-regulatory or regulatory options give surety that the current definitions of equivalent access 1.16 and processes for equivalent access 33.3 (and including 33.4, 33.5 and 33.6).

If the current definitions and processes (ie. 1.16, 33.3/4/5/6) are to remain unamended in the new Transport Standards, then the BIC supports the non-regulatory option.

Equivalent access, more often than not, involves 'human factors' that require flexibility around the accessible transport standards and a performance-based approach to delivering the mobility outcome for an individual.

A definitive regulation in the Transport Standards may never provide all the answers, hence the purpose of equivalent access.

Current use of equivalent access offers operators and providers flexibility in the delivery of accessible public transport. It also supports innovation by providing an opportunity to harness new technology to improve accessibility and offers the potential for the delivery of public transport that may potentially exceed minimum accessibility requirements in the Transport Standards.

4.1.2 Do the non-regulatory and regulatory options provide enough clarity to ensure people with disability would be able to access public transport without discrimination?

No. As pointed out in the answer to question 4.1.1, there is no clarity that current existing regulation will remain in place. The already existing well-defined processes provided in the current Transport Standards 1.16, 33.3-33.4-33.5-33.6-33.7 provides the necessary clarity.

An example of such clarity is that 33.3.2 says direct assistance can be provided as an alternative.

A bus or coach conveyance example of this is Part 2.8 - access paths - the wheelchair path from the outside of the bus and into the wheelchair location - which states:

2.8 Extent of path

(1) An access path must extend from the entrance of a conveyance to the facilities or designated spaces provided for passengers with disabilities.

(2) Up to 50 mm of an adjacent allocated space may be used as part of the access path.

(3) If an access path cannot be provided, the operator must provide equivalent access by direct assistance.

In a low floor public transport/route, the bus complies as the access path does extend as per 2.8.1, but in a coach this is impossible, hence in a coach, the Industry uses a lift and the driver assists, as per 2.8.3.

Another example is Part 3.2:

3.2 Access for passengers in wheelchairs, etc.

(1) Passengers in wheelchairs or mobility aids must be able to enter and exit a conveyance and position their aids in the allocated space.

(2) If this is not practicable, operators must provide equivalent access by direct assistance.

Again Part 3.2.2 is the allowance for a coach.

Under the 2.5m wide bus allowances under Australian Design Rules (ADR's), two side by side wheelchair spaces contravene manoeuvring width allowances should two wheelchairs be on board. Therefore, Part 3.3 allows for direct assistance.

3.3 Limited on board manoeuvring

If the design restrictions of a conveyance limit on board manoeuvring areas for wheelchairs and similar mobility aids, the operator of the conveyance must ensure equivalent access by direct assistance to passengers.

The current Equivalent Access process, as the above illustrates, allows for both low floor route buses and coaches to comply.

4.1.3 Are there any challenges (i.e. physical, technical, operational, etc.) that could impact the implementation of the requirements of any option?

Any consultation and co-design process will need to ensure that it picks up on the already workable practice of the bus and coach industry where consultation already "organically" happens. This is

the nature of what a public transport provider does when passengers have specific travel needs. As each situation can be different, operators and providers will often address needs-based requirements case by case. Flexibility needs to be maintained to enable workable solutions in consultation with the passenger directly or passenger-nominated representative.

The proposed repository of operator examples in the non-regulatory option would be a useful reference. However, an additional tier (ie. federal based oversight body), as proposed in the regulatory option, could add unnecessary complexity to an already working solution and potentially remove the 'personable interactive' aspects of passenger and provider negotiation. The regulatory option is also counter-intuitive to the ideals of providing 'direct assistance'.

4.1.4 Have you been involved in developing equivalent access solutions? Have these been successful?

Yes and Yes. As the bus industry has to provide a wide range of services to a wide range of passengers, where a passengers' requirements sit outside of what can be achieved under the Transport Standards (and operational contracts), agreed alternative solutions (which we consider equivalent access) are resolved regularly.

4.1.5 Does Transport Standards section 33.3 Equivalent access, provide sufficient clarity and guidance in relation to consultation requirements?

The consultation requirement in Section 33.3 essentially means that if something arises, the bus operator communicates with their customer/s or appointed representatives (such as organisations representing people with disabilities) to arrive at an equitable solution.

The BIC believes that a formal process with experts (essentially what the regulatory option aims to do), is the last thing Industry or people with disabilities want or need. On most occasions, issues are worked out on a personal or professional organisational level or through the complaint process (of which the BIC believes are few).

4.1.6 The proposed performance solutions process (regulatory option) involves professional certifiers signing-off alternative access proposals. What qualifications and / or attributes should certifiers possess before they undertake this work?

The BIC does not support the implementation of the regulatory option for many reasons, however the first barrier to any such option is the complexity in the designing of a functioning certification process – which may provide the answer as to the qualities/attributes of how best to assemble the right 'talent'/body of people to ensure that the certification outcomes/assessment does not **unintentionally discriminate against an operator or passenger.**

4.1.7 What has been your experience applying equivalent access solutions?

Refer to answer to question 4.1.1.

4.1.8 Would you accept alternative accessible solutions if the development of proposed solutions included adequate consultation and participation with the disability community?

Yes. But the proposed options are too general. The BIC supports consultation with the disability community, however operator experience (as noted in our answer to question 4.1.4), is that the current practice of providing a solution by consultation with the individuals specifically involved in

the travel requirement or their nominated person, currently works.

4.1.9 Do you currently use the equivalent access provision provided at Transport Standards: section 33.3 Equivalent access?

Yes in conjunction with the whole of Section 33.

5 Rideshare – Reform 3

5.1 Consultation questions

5.1.1 What has been your experience accessing rideshare services?

a. How would your experience change if the Transport Standards were amended to explicitly include rideshare services, including the vehicle fleet and booking platforms and rideshare providers complied with those requirements?

Rideshare as an industry is difficult to regulate in comparison to On Demand Public Transport, taxis, and accessible taxi services.

On Demand public transport, or Demand Responsive public transport is defined as a form of public transport characterised by flexible routing of small to medium vans, or buses operating in shared ride mode between virtual pick up and drop off locations within a service area, according to the passenger needs. On Demand public transport can offer a “door-to-door” service for passengers with disabilities. This aids in a safer journey for passengers not having to traverse to a designated stop for travel.

Note: definition of On Demand is not reflected across all jurisdictions, i.e., WA, for example, refer to the point-to-point industry as On Demand, which is inclusive of rideshare, taxis and accessible taxis.

5.1.2 What is your preferred option: status quo, non-regulatory option, or the regulatory option? Why?

As this reform is yet to provide detail on proposed updates to the definition of a conveyance and a public transport service, the preferred option for bus and coach conveyances is status quo.

Compliance rate to the current Transport Standards by On Demand bus operators is already achieved as these providers are often already providing mainstream public transport services under government contracts. On Demand bus operators offer accessible vehicle options as well as options to access the services via an App or via a phone when booking the ride.

The rideshare industry whilst regulated is proving difficult to ensure compliance due to the lack of identification of vehicles and drivers i.e., signage etc. Whilst taxis and accessible taxis are generally inspected by compliance officers on taxi ranks, rideshare vehicles are not unless pulled over by police for inspection or the vehicle or driver have been reported to authorities.

5.1.3 Do the non-regulatory and regulatory options provide enough clarity to ensure people with disability would be able to access public transport without discrimination?

Detail on new wording of definitions is required.

The On Demand public transport segment is predominately an extension to the existing public transport network and as such complies with the Transport Standards and does not so far as reasonably practical, require additional regulatory arrangements for access or to address discrimination. On Demand public transport includes accessible vehicles that are made available on request for people with disability, this can be done via the App or over the phone when booking the ride.

5.1.4 Are there any challenges (i.e. physical, technical, operational, etc.) that could impact the implementation of the requirements of any option?

For any transport option, accessible bus stops/accessible boarding points is a hugely significant barrier.

On Demand transport utilizes virtual bus stops which are generally identified as safe areas in which to load/unload passengers at the kerb side. On Demand accessible vehicles will find a virtual bus stop that has a kerb side that will allow for the wheelchair or mobility device to move safely from the kerb to the vehicle or vehicle to the kerb.

5.1.5 Does a lack of clarity about whether rideshare services, such as Uber, are required to comply with the Transport Standards, contribute to people experiencing discrimination?

Yes. Rideshare services are proven to be difficult to regulate and ensure compliance. The issue with the Rideshare industry is explicit to that industry segment and is not reflective of other segments of the industry such as On Demand public transport which is generally delivered by public transport bus operators who are compliant with the Transport Standards.

6 Dedicated School Buses – Reform 4

6.1 Consultation questions

6.1.1 What is your preferred option: status quo, non-regulatory option, or the regulatory option? Why?

The BIC contends that accessible transport systems are already being provided to students with a disability without discrimination. The provision of accessible transport to school commences via a coordinated effort between primary parties - the student (or parent), educational institution, government jurisdiction and the bus operator. The BIC believes that this approach to the provision of accessible school transport ensures that the travelling student is able to receive both their mode choice and their preferred “format”.

The BIC’s work on the National Accessible Transport Taskforce and ongoing collaboration with the Federal Department of Infrastructure and Transport, suggests that status quo and non-regulatory options are unlikely to be supported in any recommendations provided to Ministers in a Decision RIS. This forms the primary reason for BIC’s support for regulatory option 2.

Other factors contributing to this decision are that Option 2 removes the general exemption for school buses while it also allows for:

- The use of low floor accessible buses where it is practical to do so
- High floor buses can continue to be used provided the bus is capable of a lift retrofit.

6.1.2 Do the non-regulatory and regulatory options provide enough clarity to ensure people with disability would be able to access public transport without discrimination?

Yes.

6.1.3 Are there any challenges (i.e. physical, technical, operational, etc.) that could impact the implementation of the requirements of any option?

Yes – there are several challenges in both non-regulatory and regulatory options. As both non-regulatory and regulatory options in principle share common outcomes, the BIC's response to this question intends to broadly capture the potential issues if Regulatory option 1 was included in the updated Transport Standards.

a) Seating Capacity Loss: A 12.5 m high floor seat belted school bus typically has 57 passenger seats, whereas (due to wheelarch intrusion and floor height changes) a 12.5 m low floor has only 41 seat belted seats (or 47 seats without seatbelts). The differences being due to the requirements of ADR 68 and the need to have two accessible locations available with compliant restraint systems.

b) Seat capacity loss on high floor dedicated school buses fitted with a hoist equates to the removal of 6 seats (due to both space and also tare mass effects).

c) If a seat belted high floor dedicated school bus was replaced with a seat belted low floor accessible bus, the seat capacity loss equates to 16 seats (but with two accessible places as per DDA requirements).

   This seating capacity loss would:

   - require expansion of the school bus fleet to meet current demand for all travelling students (for every 3 buses in the current school bus fleet, 1 additional bus would be needed – ie. 4 buses)
   - require additional drivers to drive the extra buses needed
   - increase congestion and whole of fleet vehicle emissions.

d) As state/territory jurisdictions progress to seat belted school buses, the suitability of fitment of ADR 68 seat-belted seats on a low floor route service bus can occur, but as stated above, the seat belted seating loss is around 30%.

   In simple terms for every 3 high floor seat belted dedicated school buses, you would need 4 seat belted low floor dedicated school buses, otherwise seating capacity would be lost.

e) The current reform options do not consider private schools who own and operate their own school bus fleet which, based on BIC's collation of industry data from 2009 to 2021, will effect 200-plus schools.

6.1.4 In your experience, does your school transport system adequately meet the needs of children with disability?

a. What impact does this have on your child and your family?

b. How could the school transport system be improved?

c. Do dedicated school bus exemptions in the Transport Standards result in discriminatory outcomes for students with disability?

6.1.5 Which exemptions (if any) should be removed to remove for dedicated school buses?

There seems to be a misunderstanding as to the effect on students under the current exemption for dedicated school bus services. The bus industry currently carries many hundreds of thousands of school students daily including many with disabilities.

The current exemption for dedicated school buses to comply with the Transport Standards does not create uncertainty that students with a disability will be able to travel to school on an accessible mainstream bus.

6.1.6 How do you ensure that students with disability are able to travel to and from school using accessible public transport:

a. in metropolitan areas?

b. in rural / regional areas?

The feedback that the BIC has received from bus operators across the country, the common and preferred position of parents, is that some form of specialised arrangement such as a wheelchair accessible taxi is deployed as it provides them with more certainty and security. Some operators provide special needs school buses (typically smaller Coaster type buses) to a range of students with special needs (for example the school and or parents agree that students that are either victims or perpetrators of bullying, need to be segregated on special services such as these).

In metropolitan areas, contracted school services are carried out utilising low floor accessible route buses. On regional and rural out-of-town services it is common, where required, for government to replace a non-accessible high-floor bus with an accessible low-floor bus where a disabled student requires a long term travel need.

In regional towns there is a mix of both dedicated high-floor school buses and low-floor route service buses operating. Where there is a need for an accessible transport school service, operators and government work together to provide the specific school service with an accessible route bus to provide equal access for all students.

The accessible low-floor route bus is largely designed for good quality metropolitan or urban regional roads. They are of integral design as opposed to a dedicated high-floor school bus which is of a stronger chassis with a body design that copes with rougher regional and rural roads where greater clearance from the road surface is often required. The more robust design of the dedicated high-floor school bus provides a longer useful life and better-quality ride for the customer on regional and rural roads.

High-floor dedicated school buses have increased ground clearance – meaning – an increased approach, departure, and ramp over angles, which allow them to pass over dips, humps and other road surface angle changes experienced when traversing country roads. This increased *"country road ability"* also allows the high-floor buses to access remote pick up and drop off points safely. Low floor buses, by their very design, are closer to the ground and hence have reduced approach, departure and range over angles and hence offer much reduced *"country road ability".*

7 Better communication of accessibility features – Reform 5

7.1 Consultation questions

7.1.1 What is your preferred option: status quo, non-regulatory or regulatory option? Why?

For bus and coach conveyances, the preferred option is non-regulatory.

The differences between non regulatory and regulatory and the required outcome being sought is minimal.

For accessible conveyances (as currently applied in clause 9.10 of the current Transport Standards), the non-regulatory option provides for far greater innovation for the operator to respond to local conditions (which will vary from operator to operator) and also provides clarity on what is the required outcome.

The BIC supports the use of consistent standards in terminology across all transport modes as this provides a better outcome for accessibility for both users and operators of buses and coaches.

The regulatory option comes with a number of issues outlined below.

1. State/territory governments have their own contracted operational requirements in place for the provision of public transport, therefore consultation is needed to avoid duplication or clash with existing contractual requirements.
2. Government contracted operations would already address accessibility and requirements currently in the DDA.

A purely regulatory based national Transport Standard may create unnecessary conflict and complication with these existing arrangements.

These systems could work within a national non-regulatory guidance framework and overtime may progress to some sort of national consistency.

7.1.2 Do the non-regulatory and regulatory option/s provide enough clarity to ensure people with disability would be able to access public transport without discrimination?

Yes

7.1.3 Are there any challenges (i.e. physical, technical, operational, etc.) that could impact the implementation of the requirements of any option?

Refer to answers to question 7.1.1.

7.1.4 In your experience, has the communication of accessibility features been effective?

A survey of bus operators indicates there is no systemic issue with communication of accessibility features on accessible low floor conveyances.

Typical practice of most bus operators is to provide a system that formally captures customer complaints. Such complaints can come via the driver or direct to the operator or government agency via a customer feedback line (online or by phone). Operators providing a government contracted service, are required, as part of contract compliance, to have a reportable customer

complaints system. Government contracted services may also require a set of specific performance indicators that need to be met. These KPI's are assessed for points of failure and therefore, if a KPI is not met, rectification is required.

In general terms, in order for a bus operation to run successfully, customer service standards need to be high.

7.1.5 How do you define the term 'accessible'?

Access to an accessible conveyance is critical for people with disability to participate fully in community life and the economy. The beneficiaries of an accessible transport service however not only accrue to people with disabilities but also applies to a broad section of the community, including: parents with prams; seniors with limited mobility; people travelling with shopping; business people in transit with luggage and people with temporary injuries. This greatly adds to making bus services attractive as a travel option across the community.

7.1.6 What accessibility terms work for all modes to best communicate accessibility, noting that scenarios/locations can change the level of accessibility?

For bus and coach conveyances across all operational types, the use of the international symbol for 'wheelchair access' is generally used to communicate overall accessibility:

- on the physical conveyance by way of the international symbol for 'wheelchair access' usually positioned at the door entry or front of bus or both. It should be noted that all other components such as colour contrast, wheelchair ramp boarding assistance, hearing augmentation (where a PA is fitted) are all features of an accessible bus and not independent of the bus
- on timetabled printed route services
- other web-based systems (such as journey planners) noting this is unlikely to be consistent across all bus and coach operations (government contracted or private coach sector)
- using Colour contrast / illuminated strips for stairs
- use of Wheelchair ramp boarding assistance.

Bus and coach conveyances also use the international symbol for deafness to denote that a hearing augmentation system is installed on the conveyance, however, the BIC is not able to provide detail on the number of conveyances that would use both the international symbol for wheelchair access and international symbol for deafness.

8 Timely provision of information – Reform 6

8.1 Consultation questions

8.1.1 What is your preferred option: status quo, non-regulatory or regulatory option? Why?

For bus and coach conveyances, the preferred option is non-regulatory.

The proposed associated guidance material in the regulatory option is too prescriptive for all bus and coach operations and operating situations to be covered in each instance.

The non-regulatory option provides adequate clarity on the required outcome and also allows for

far greater innovation for the operator to respond to local conditions (which will vary from operator to operator).

In relation to contracted operations, state/territory governments have their own operational requirements in place for the provision of public transport, therefore consultation is needed to avoid duplication or clash with existing contractual requirements.

Government contracted operations would already likely address provision of timely information. A purely regulatory based national standard would create unnecessary conflict and complication with the existing arrangements an operator would have with their government transport agency.

With regards the coach sector, the cost of compliance to a regulated option is unknown and we suggest, potentially prohibitive given the types of operations that exist across Australia.

Coach operators providing services in regional Australia, as an example, typically have a high understanding of their customers' needs to meet their requirements for timely information. Coach operations typically do not provide printed (or braille) versions of information about their services or specific journeys. A survey of coach operators indicates that no passengers have requested information to be provided in a print or braille format. Furthermore, these operators typically have information available via various online tools, call centres, text to mobile and TTY.

8.1.2 Do the non-regulatory and regulatory option/s provide enough clarity to ensure people with disability would be able to access public transport without discrimination?

Yes

8.1.3 Are there any challenges (i.e. physical, technical, operational, etc.) that could impact the implementation of the requirements of any option?

Government contracted services operate differently in each state/territory and articulate the requirements of timely provision of information. Each state/territory implement communication protocols and platforms through a range of accessible systems such as electronic, print, visual and audio.

In the context of government contracted services, timely information relies on the government agency to deploy service information to the travelling public. The usual process is that the operator, being responsible for the delivery of contracted services, informs the relevant transport agency of service schedules and routes. It then falls to the government agency to provide this information to the travelling public.

Feedback provided to the BIC by bus operators (metropolitan and regional), is that there are periodic weaknesses in deployment by the agency of service information to the travelling public. It is generally acknowledged however that the metropolitan contracted services tend to function comparatively well to those operating in regional/rural areas.

Both government contracted and private operations require a bus driver to operate the bus or coach and that this already provides an immediate point of timely information to all passengers regardless of disability status. A bus driver is in effect a direct point of contact and provider of direct assistance immediately prior to boarding, at time of departure and alighting at end of journey. It is also important to note that a driver can also seek back to base assistance to support a customer's needs if required.

8.1.4 In your experience, has accessible public transport information been provided in a timely manner?

A survey of bus and coach operators indicates there is no current systemic issue with the timely provision of information on bus and coach conveyances.

Typical practice of most bus operators is to provide a system that formally captures customer complaints. Such complaints can come via the driver or direct to the operator or government agency via a customer feedback line (online or by phone). Operators providing a government contracted service, are required, as part of contract compliance, to have a reportable customer complaints system. Government contracted services may also require a set of specific performance indicators that need to be met. These KPI's are assessed for points of failure and therefore, if a KPI is not met, rectification is required.

In general terms, in order for a bus or coach operation to run successfully, customer service standards need to be high.

8.1.5 Do you get requests for service-related information in formats that are not readily available? If so, how is this managed until the preferred format request for information has been fulfilled?

A survey of several bus and coach operator organisations (both government contracted and private coach services) have no record of this request in any of their customer service requests or customer service complaints systems.

9 Real time communication – Reform 7

9.1 Consultation questions

9.1.1 What is your preferred option: status quo, non-regulatory or regulatory option? Why?

For bus and coach conveyances, the preferred option is non-regulatory as it gives all bus and coach operations and their particular operating environment and features on the conveyance itself, the flexibility to cover the range of the journey requirements for *all* travelling passengers. The Non-regulatory option also is more easily applied where there is little or no infrastructure to communicate in real-time prior to boarding a bus or coach.

The Regulatory option can only be practically applied to all buses and coach conveyances where:

- **every bus stop and coach departure point have infrastructure that can readily deploy real-time communication and**
- **real-time communication infrastructure is a feature of the bus or coach itself.**

The Regulatory option is not possible to implement in its current proposed form as outlined below.

- Not all passenger boarding points correspond to bus stop infrastructure or major bus or coach terminals where, typically, real-time communications could be readily applied.
- In some states/territories (for example NSW), bus stops for route services are required at a maximum distance of 400 metres apart. Therefore, automated real-time communication

services (such as audio announcements and electronic information boards) cannot be practically applied along all routes (for example in residential areas).

- To provide complete coverage of real-time communication, it will require an alternative access via a web-based platform (as an example).
- This will **require the passenger to have responsibility** for preparing for their journey and carry on their person some sort of hardware/device to enable direct communication where real-time communication is not a feature of the bus or coach or where there is no bus stop or coach departure/arrival infrastructure.
- On a conveyance (where automated real-time communication infrastructure is *not* installed) in-transit communication exchange between driver and passengers presents a safety risk to the driver and all other passengers whilst the conveyance is in motion.

9.1.2 Do the non-regulatory and regulatory option/s provide enough clarity to ensure people with disability would be able to access public transport without discrimination?

Yes

9.1.3 Are there any challenges (i.e. physical, technical, operational, etc.) that could impact the implementation of the requirements of any option?

Refer to answers in Question 9.1.1 as automated real-time communication is not possible on all conveyances, routes or at all passenger boarding points.

9.1.4 In your experience, have you been able to effectively communicate with public transport staff and operators in real-time?

A survey of bus operators indicates there is no current systemic issue with effective communication to passengers prior to boarding, during the journey or on bus and coach conveyances.

Typical practice of most bus and coach operators is to provide a system that formally captures customer complaints. Such complaints can come via the driver or direct to the operator or government agency via a customer feedback line (online or by phone). Operators providing a government contracted service, are required, as part of contract compliance, to have a reportable customer complaints system. Government contracted services may also require a set of specific performance indicators that need to be met. These KPI's are assessed for points of failure and therefore, if a KPI is not met, it needs to be rectified.

In general terms, in order for a bus or coach operation to run successfully, customer service standards need to be relatively high to ensure the retention of not only the passengers travelling on conveyances, but also in the operator's retention of government contracted services.

9.1.5 Are there particular points of a public transport journey where real time communication is most important? If so, what are those points?

Yes. Major terminus, inter-modal transit changes (such as train, ferry where services might be linked to a bus or coach service). Essentially, any point of change from a high frequency service to a low frequency service.

10 Passenger location during journey – Reform 8

10.1 Consultation questions

10.1.1 What is your preferred option: status quo, non-regulatory or regulatory option? Why? If you prefer the regulatory option, which sub-option do you prefer? Why?

For accessible low floor conveyances the preferred option is non-regulatory.

For bus and coach conveyances, the BIC contends that the current Transport Standards Section 27.4 provides the flexibility for all bus and coach conveyances for all types of services to provide information on passenger location based on their operational environments and the infrastructure on the bus or coach itself.

The non-regulatory option may be implemented on bus and coach conveyances **only where *information in multiple formats* is practical to apply.**

The regulatory option may be applied **where real-time communication devices are fitted.** However, the regulatory option in its current proposed form, **implies that all conveyances including coaches and school buses must be fitted** with visual and audio communication systems. It is impractical and unnecessary to have next-stop information and 'location during journey' on services such as school runs and coach/charter.

Stage 1 Decision RIS – related requirements

Provision of information in multiple formats (could apply to accessible low floor conveyances only)

The outcome of the D1 DRIS on *provision of information in multiple formats* relates to the proposed reforms to *passenger location during journey*.

The current Transport Standards (Section 27.1) will include updated regulation in the *provision of information in multiple formats* as follows:

- *General information for transport services cannot solely be provided in an online format such as a website.*
- *General information includes but is not limited to timetables, routes, fare, payment methods, next stop information, next service information.*

The updated regulation in the *provision of information in multiple formats* is not practical to apply to all bus and coach conveyances and to all types of services.

In general terms, information communication technology and associated software systems are evolving rapidly. The BIC contends that any regulation that prescribes technology elements will eventually make the regulation either difficult to apply or be made redundant.

Digital Information Screens (cannot be applied to both bus and coach conveyances)

The regulatory outcome of the D1 DRIS on *digital information screens* relates to the proposed reforms to *passenger location during journey.*

The new regulatory requirements for *Digital information screens* relates to display screens used on transport infrastructure, premises and conveyances and deals with lumination, location (line of

direct access) and other display requirements (such as length of visibility, ie 10 sec).

The BIC contends that, in its entirety as currently prescribed, the new inclusions for *digital information screens* in the Transport Standards and guidelines should only apply to transport infrastructure and premises and **accessible low floor conveyances (not coach conveyances).**

The provision of digital signs which are user friendly for people with disability would be the aim of any **integrated live passenger information system**. Therefore, the costs associated with compliant digital information screens is not a cost issue, it is the supporting system that requires large upfront and ongoing costs.

10.1.2 Do the non-regulatory and regulatory option/s provide enough clarity to ensure people with disability would be able to access public transport without discrimination?

Yes. However, any implemented changes in either non-regulatory or regulatory options proposed, would also need to be careful not to discriminate against other travelling passengers who do not require visual or audio communication assistance and such provisions in the closed environment of a bus may present discomfort to others.

10.1.3 Are there any challenges (i.e. physical, technical, operational, etc.) that could impact the implementation of the requirements of any option?

In general terms, information communication technology and associated software systems are evolving rapidly. **The BIC contends that any regulation that prescribes technology elements will eventually make the regulation either difficult to apply or be made redundant.**

In an accessible low floor conveyance, the visual display hardware, if fitted, is only part of the integrated passenger information system needed to control and operate visual real-time signage. For example, for a bus or bus stop to have a digital display, the systems required to provide information to these signs include, at a minimum:

- GPS devices and associated vehicle tracking system
- on-time running systems
- live service scheduling
- data distribution, control, and live-update systems.

These systems, in the main, are being superseded by personal smart device technology and associated advanced web applications. These systems also require centralised monitoring and control systems.

In accessible low floor conveyances, some or all of these types of systems may be provided by the state-based transport agency and the operators are then contracted to host the system on their buses. However, this is not always a smooth process to implement as part of the contractual arrangement between the agency and the operator.

The bus industry has begun to experience instances where transport agencies may introduce or enforce a new technology requirement on the conveyance. In some cases, this technology is not a pre-defined asset (or other type of consumable) as part of the conditions of the original contract. This brings into question, who should bear the cost of new technology, ie. costs associated with setup and ongoing maintenance or training to use this new technology.

10.1.4 In your experience, have you been able to access arrival and next stop information when using public transport in ways the best meet your needs?

11 Hearing augmentation on conveyances – Reform 9

11.1 Consultation questions

11.1.1 What is your preferred option: status quo, non-regulatory or regulatory option? Why?

For bus and coach conveyances, the preferred option is regulatory option 2 with sub option 2 as it specifically sets out criteria for when a public address system is in operation (ie. in active use).

The BIC does not support Regulatory Option 1 as some conveyances with installed PA systems have transitioned to different types of work (for example, route bus transferred to work as a school bus) which makes the PA system redundant.

It should be noted that there is a mix of compliance across the coach sector due to different interpretations of this requirement in the current Transport Standards.

11.1.2 If you prefer the regulatory option, which sub-options do you prefer? Why?

Regulatory option 2 with sub option 2. Based on existing installed augmentation systems, 80% coverage is achievable however 100% coverage could create unintentional risks relating to interference with vehicle electronic componentry.

11.1.3 Do the non-regulatory and regulatory option/s provide enough clarity to ensure people with disability would be able to access public transport without discrimination?

Yes.

11.1.4 Are there any challenges (i.e. physical, technical, operational, etc.) that could impact the implementation of the requirements of any option?

The regulatory option 2 with sub option 2 is considered to adequately meet the desired outcomes without creating unforeseen technical issues.

11.1.5 In your experience, have hearing augmentation systems on public transport conveyances been adequately accessible?

A survey of bus and coach operators indicates there is no current systemic issue of hearing augmentation systems not currently meeting accessibility needs. **Anecdotal feedback from passengers has suggested a preference *not* to use radio signal functionality in their hearing aids.**

Typical practice of most bus operators is to provide a system that formally captures customer complaints. Such complaints can come via the driver or direct to the operator or government agency via a customer feedback line (online or by phone). Operators providing a government contracted service, are required, as part of contract compliance, to have a reportable customer complaints system. Government contracted services may also require a set of specific performance indicators that need to be met. These KPI's are assessed for points of failure and therefore, if a KPI

is not met, rectification is required.

In general terms, in order for a bus or coach operation to run successfully, customer service standards need to be high.

12 International Symbol for Access and Deafness – Reform 12

12.1 Consultation questions

12.1.1 What is your preferred option: status quo, non-regulatory or regulatory option? Why? If you prefer the regulatory option, which sub-option do you prefer? Why?

For bus and coach conveyances, the preferred option is regulatory with sub option 2 as the size of 60mm x 60mm is for viewing distances less than 7 metres which is applicable to buses and coach conveyances.

12.1.2 Do the non-regulatory and regulatory option/s provide this section enough clarity to ensure people with disability would be able to access public transport without discrimination?

Yes.

12.1.3 Are there any challenges (i.e. physical, technical, operational, etc.) that could impact the implementation of the requirements of any option?

No.

12.1.4 Have you experienced any issues with the current use and identification of the international symbols for accessibility and deafness on signs?

13 Letter heights and luminance contrast of signs – Reform 13

13.1 Consultation questions

13.1.1 What is your preferred option: status quo, non-regulatory or regulatory option? Why? If you prefer the regulatory proposal, which option do you prefer? Why?

For bus and coach conveyances, the preferred option is regulatory with option 1.

It should be noted that some accessible conveyances have state-based signage requirements that need to be met, such as school buses where signage requirements may contradict those of any proposed changes to existing Transport Standards.

13.1.2 Do the non-regulatory and regulatory option/s provide enough clarity to ensure people with disability would be able to access public transport without discrimination?

Not answerable by BIC.

13.1.3 Are there any challenges (i.e. physical, technical, operational, etc.) that could impact the implementation of the requirements of any option?

Not answerable by BIC.

13.1.4 Do standards outlining type and luminance contrast for static, non-braille and non-tactile signs lack clarity? What has been your experience navigating these standards?

Not answerable by BIC.

13.1.5 Have you experienced difficulty reading static, non-braille and non-tactile signs in a public transport context? How did this impact your public transport journey?

14 Location of signs – Reform 14

14.1 Consultation questions

14.1.1 What is your preferred option: status quo, non-regulatory or regulatory option? Why? If you prefer the regulatory proposal, which sub-option do you prefer? Why?

For bus and coach conveyances, the preferred option is regulatory sub option 1 as it is the easier pathway for industry to ***access*** a clear technical specification.

14.1.2 Do the non-regulatory and regulatory option/s provide enough clarity to ensure people with disability would be able to access public transport without discrimination?

Yes.

14.1.3 Are there any challenges (i.e. physical, technical, operational, etc.) that could impact the implementation of the requirements of any option?

Signage locations on and inside a bus can meet the intent of these criteria however there a range of ADR's and public transport regulations that may dictate that signs are fixed in other locations (such as emergency exist signage). **ADR's must take precedence over the Transport Standards.**

14.1.4 In your experience have the standards for sign location lacked clarity?

No.

14.1.5 What is you experience using signs in the public transport context? Has the location of signs impacted your ability to access public transport services?

15 Information and communication technologies (ICT) procurement – Reform 21

15.1 Consultation questions

15.1.1 What is your preferred option: status quo, non-regulatory or regulatory option? Why? If you prefer the non-regulatory proposal, which option and sub-option do you prefer? Why? If you prefer the regulatory proposal, which option and sub-option do you prefer? Why?

The BIC is not able to make comment on this reform for bus operators providing government contracted services using either accessible low floor conveyances or coach conveyances, as these operators are users of public transport systems implemented by jurisdictions.

The BIC supports progress in the Transport Standards for ICT procurement principles to ensure hardware and software supports a more accessible digital world. However, due to the inherent costs associated with ICT products and services, any introduced reform would need to take care not to create a solution that would see many small to medium sized businesses decide not to implement this procurement reform.

The preferred option for bus and coach conveyances is non-regulatory option 2 with sub option 1 which, although still costly to implement for a smaller business, may result in a higher success rate in capturing more businesses (of all sizes and types) to implement.

The BIC does not support any other non-regulatory or regulatory option as these will create significant upfront costs and ongoing administrative and operational burden for small to medium sized bus and coach operators. ICT procurement principles outlined in these options require specialised knowledge and for many small businesses, this would require outsourcing procurement services.

Any non-regulatory or regulatory option that supports AS/EN301549 (2020) and WCAG 2.1 AA or AAA will essentially close web-based systems for these smaller operators.

<u>Stage 1 Decision RIS – related requirements</u>

Website accessibility (compliance for small to medium sized businesses will be challenging to achieve)

ICT procurement directly relates to the Decision RIS on website accessibility that now mandates WCAG 2.1 AA. The BIC reiterates our previous communique to the Disability Secretariat that the view expressed in the DRIS that many businesses are “compliant-ready” and would thereby incur low financial and administrative outlay is inaccurate. We believe these assumptions were made on a knowledge-base that only considered government deployed public transport websites and did not account for the many hundreds of other operators who are not users of government centralized web systems.

It is important to note, many small to medium sized businesses – often regionally based, use their website as their primary form of advertising and providing information to their customers.

The ICT procurement reform and the current DRIS on website accessibility will in effect force these smaller businesses to decommission their websites that are typically used to communicate service offerings to *all travellers* (not only people with disabilities).

15.1.2 Do the non-regulatory and regulatory option/s provide enough clarity to ensure people with disability would be able to access public transport without discrimination?

Yes.

15.1.3 Are there any challenges (i.e. physical, technical, operational, etc.) that could impact the implementation of the requirements of any option?

Yes. Small to medium sized businesses do not typically have a dedicated information technology unit within the organisation. Significant costs would be accrued to outsource specialised services which would then require ongoing specialised maintenance arrangements of digital information systems.

15.1.4 What is your experience of using the ICT related hardware, services and software (for example website, smartphone app, digital information displays, touch screen technology, ticket machines, fare gates) provided by public transport operators and providers?

16 Mobile Web Systems – Reform 22

16.1 Consultation questions

16.1.1 What is your preferred option: status quo, non-regulatory or regulatory option? Why? If you prefer the regulatory proposal, which option do you prefer? Why?

The BIC is not able to make comment on this reform for bus operators providing government contracted services using either accessible conveyances or coach conveyances, as these operators are users of public transport systems implemented by jurisdictions.

The preferred option for bus and coach conveyances is non-regulatory as this option has the flexibility for operations of *all* sizes and types to achieve a form of WCAG compliance with web applications. In general terms, the private sector (as with any business), would typically assess the use of web applications based on service need, affordability and on-going maintenance. Typical practice of organisations is to integrate with external 3rd party web app systems.

16.1.2 Do the non-regulatory and regulatory option/s provide enough clarity to ensure people with disability would be able to access public transport without discrimination?

Yes.

16.1.3 Are there any challenges (i.e. physical, technical, operational, etc.) that could impact the implementation of the requirements of any option?

Any option would have cost barriers for small to medium businesses and may discourage the implementation of bespoke web applications unique to their service offerings.

16.1.4 Have you experienced difficulties or barriers accessing or navigating a public transport mobile website or application?

17 Accessible fare system elements – Reform 23

17.1 Consultation questions

17.1.1 What is your preferred option: status quo, non-regulatory or regulatory option? Why? If you prefer the regulatory proposal, which option and sub-options do you prefer? Why?

The preferred option for bus and coach conveyances is status quo.

The Issues section implies that discrimination is already occurring and that people with disability are charged a higher rate for their fare or fare payment products when using an accessible fare payment option.

The BIC believes that this is not correct and is inconsistent with the wording used in the final issues paper that was endorsed by the NATT on 11 October 2021. The core principle of the NATT paper is best described as the current ticketing fare payment options can be complicated and complex in certain transport modes (in particular airline services) which could result in a higher fare being paid.

This section of the CRIS states discrimination is occurring and supports this by inferring that if people with disability use an accessible fare payment option, they are charged a higher rate for this. The BIC believes that this claim that higher fares are being paid is not substantiated in this CRIS and therefore the claim of discrimination is incorrect.

The issues outlined in this CRIS also heavily relies upon unsubstantiated failings of current equivalent access in the Transport Standards.

The CRIS also infers that people with a disability may be at risk of not being able to travel independently (and therefore, we believe it is implied, having to pay for a 2nd bus or coach fare, for example, for an assistance animal or carer) and that there is a heavy reliance on the equivalent access process.

For booked services on coach services, any person with a disability that travels with an assistance animal or a carer, the animal or the carer travel free of charge. There are no additional surcharges applied to any fare for people with a disability.

For government supplied transport services, the operator providing the service may be required at times to offer equivalent access (via an accessible taxi for example) if, for circumstantial reasons, a mainstream service cannot be used. Feedback provided to the BIC by bus and coach operators across Australia indicate that there are no separate or 'penalty' fares applied in any equivalent access scenario.

Based on the current non-regulatory and regulatory options presented in their current state, the preferred option for bus and coach conveyances is status quo. As this reform area also requires digital conformance to WCAG, the BIC is unable to provide feedback on the capability of current ticket machines in use and if the software requirements of proposed WCAG are deployable on current hardware in use.

17.1.2 Do the non-regulatory and regulatory option/s provide enough clarity to ensure people with disability would be able to access public transport without discrimination?

No. The current non-regulatory option does provide guidance to support the current DDA clauses, which in themselves are quite detailed, but all of the numerous regulatory options contain errors making it impossible to implement any of the regulatory options for bus and coach conveyances.

Each of the regulatory options provide regulatory statements that are superfluous and potentially misleading as these regulations are contained within other areas of both the current Transport Standards and also the proposals contained within the CRIS. We have outlined a brief on those below.

Electronic Notices

All Regulatory options for accessible fare systems state:

> *Transport Standards section 17.5 Electronic Notices, would be amended to include the following:*
>
> - *Presentations of words or numbers on electronic notices must be visible for at least ten seconds.*
>
> *These requirements would apply to all conveyances, premises and infrastructure.*

In the current Transport Standards, Section 17.5 does not apply to conveyances.

The reasons for the current 17.5 section not applicable to conveyances is that electronic destination signs on buses are required to scroll where additional destination or trip information is required to be **provided to all passengers**. For example, a destination sign could advise the destination of the trip, but also additional information such as “All Stops” or “Express” or details of any diversions or via during the trip.

The frequency of scroll cannot be limited to at least 10 seconds as this would severely limit the level of information that would be able to be provided to all passengers.

Access gates contravene Section 2.4 of the Transport Standards

The regulatory sub-options in accessible fare systems, include proposed regulation that contravenes other areas within the current Transport Standards. The regulatory options proposed in the CRIS state:

> *Access gates forming a barrier between paid and unpaid areas of a station or interchange must have a minimum width of 850mm.*

This statement contravenes the minimum unobstructed width requirements of Section 2.4 of the Transport Standards which requires a minimum width of 1200mm. And the only place where this can be reduced to 850 mm is on a moving footway.

17.1.3 Are there any challenges (i.e. physical, technical, operational, etc.) that could impact the implementation of the requirements of any option?

Refer to answers provided in Questions 18.1.1 and 18.1.2.

The proposed reforms also do not consider third-party providers providing “point of sale” such as

convenience stores providing tokens, tourism outlets or centres.

17.1.4 Do you, or your passengers, experience difficulty or higher costs in using public transport ticketing, fare payment or fare validation systems? If so, can you provide examples?

A survey of bus and coach operators indicates there is no current systemic issue with access to fare system elements on bus and coach conveyances.

Typical practice of most bus operators is to provide a system that formally captures customer complaints. Such complaints can come via the driver or direct to the operator or government agency via a customer feedback line (online or by phone). Operators providing a government contracted service, are required, as part of contract compliance, to have a reportable customer complaints system. Government contracted services may also require a set of specific performance indicators that need to be met. These KPI's are assessed for points of failure and therefore, if a KPI is not met, rectification is required.

In general terms, in order for a bus or coach operation to run successfully, customer service standards need to be high.

18 Doors on Access Paths – Reform 24

18.1 Consultation Questions

18.1.1 What is your preferred option: status quo, non-regulatory or regulatory option? Why? If you prefer the regulatory proposal, which option do you prefer? Why?

For accessible low floor conveyances, the preferred option is regulatory option 1 based on our interpretation of the proposed options outlined below.

- An *access path* in the current Transport Standards is defined as being "a path that permits independent travel for all passengers" meaning it is wheelchair accessible.
- On a wheelchair accessible bus or coach, the access path is from the point of entry to the allocated space.
- The passenger aisle in a bus or coach is limited to a typical width of 350mm which deems it not accessible for wheelchairs (as per Section 2.9 of the Transport Standards, direct assistance will be provided).
- As a toilet on a coach is only accessible by the passenger aisle (and these passenger aisles are not required to be an access path, as per 2.9 of the current DDA), therefore, by definition, the toilet on a coach is not accessible via an access path.

Therefore, coaches should be defined as being excluded in the same manner as the proposed exclusion being given to wide bodied aircraft. In practice, the doors and access requirements for coach toilets are required to meet the ADR's and operators may use direct assistance, if possible.

As detailed in the current DDA, coaches are only required to provide an access path once inside the coach.

Clause 2.9 When is an access path not required

(1) An access path need not extend inside the entrance of a conveyance.

(2) If there is no access path inside the entrance of a conveyance, the operator must provide on board wheelchairs or direct assistance to passengers to use on board facilities or services.

Conveyances
Accessible taxis
Coaches
Aircraft

Regulatory Option 2 cannot be applied to bus and coach conveyances as outlined above.

18.1.2 Do the non-regulatory and regulatory option/s provide enough clarity to ensure people with disability would be able to access public transport without discrimination?

The proposed updated inclusions and new wording from the status quo, for both non-regulatory and regulatory options, is in conflict with the stated definition of an *access path*.

Cavity sliding doors cannot be used anywhere on a bus or coach because every door must be an emergency exit and must open outwards.

18.1.3 Are there any challenges (i.e. physical, technical, operational, etc.) that could impact the implementation of the requirements of any option?

Not answerable based on the stated position outlined in answers to Questions 19.1.1 and 19.1.2.

18.1.4 Have you, or your passengers, ever been in a situation while moving through a public transport conveyance, infrastructure or premises whereby you were not able to open an unlocked manual door or had great difficulty opening the door?

A survey of bus operators indicates there is no current systemic issue with doors on access paths.

Typical practice of most bus operators is to provide a system that formally captures customer complaints. Such complaints can come via the driver or direct to the operator or government agency via a customer feedback line (online or by phone). Operators providing a government contracted service, are required, as part of contract compliance, to have a reportable customer complaints system. Government contracted services may also require a set of specific performance indicators that need to be met. These KPI's are assessed for points of failure and therefore, if a KPI is not met, rectification is required.

In general terms, in order for a bus operation to run successfully, customer service standards need to be high.

19 Location of Fare System Elements – Reform 29

19.1 Consultation questions

19.1.1 What is your preferred option: status quo, non-regulatory or regulatory option? Why?

For accessible low floor conveyances, the preferred option is regulatory.

However, the following wording must also state that ADR's take precedence over the Transport

Standards and ASEN301549 (2020).

[CRIS Excerpt Page 199]

> *Where any conflict of requirements between the Transport Standards and ASEN301549 (2020) or other Australian or International Standards exist, Transport Standards requirements take precedence.*

ADR's for example include specifications so that:

- driver vision is not inhibited by front door ticket validation devices and
- validators do not inhibit emergency egress.

19.1.2 Do the non-regulatory and regulatory option/s provide enough clarity to ensure people with disability would be able to access public transport without discrimination?

Yes. **Noting that the ADR precedence noted above needs to be clearly stated.**

19.1.3 Are there any challenges (i.e. physical, technical, operational, etc.) that could impact the implementation of the requirements of any option?

Yes. **If the ADR's *do not* take precedence.**

19.1.4 Is your ability to travel independently impacted by the existing location of some fare system elements including ticket vending machines, fare validators and platform access gates? If so, can you provide details?

20 Poles, objects and luminance contrast – Reform 36

20.1 Consultation questions

20.1.1 What is your preferred option; status quo, non-regulatory, regulatory option 1 or regulatory option 2 (including the sub-options for each)? Why?

For bus and coach conveyances, the preferred option is regulatory option 1 with sub option 1; sub option 1 is less prescriptive and allows for greater innovation for luminance options.

Stage 1 Decision RIS – related requirements

Wayfinding (exclusion of buses and coaches required)

The poles, objects and luminance contrast reform relates to Wayfinding from the D1 Decision RIS which the BIC assumes that **bus and coach conveyances would be excluded.**

We note the below clause however that refers to street furniture/fixtures in Wayfinding. The BIC contends that this reform 36 – poles, objects and luminance contrast, adequately covers bus and coach conveyances.

> *[Extract Wayfinding DRIS] A provision specifying a minimum 30 per cent luminance contrast between external ground surfaces and street furniture/fixtures and between external columns and ground surfaces*

along external areas along a continuous accessible path of travel.

20.1.2 Do the non-regulatory and regulatory options provide enough clarity to ensure people with disability would be able to access public transport without discrimination?

Yes.

20.1.3 Are there any challenges (i.e. physical, technical, operational, etc.) that could impact the implementation of the requirements of any option?

Poles, columns, stanchions, bollards and fixtures must not project into an *access path* and must not also interfere with the safety of the driver and all passengers.

For example, placement of bollards will need to be placed in such a way so that these objects do not:

- obstruct driver vision due to excessive luminance
- obstruct driver vision from having complete line of sight to waiting passengers
- present a crush zone (between the bus and the bollard) for waiting passengers
- obstruct emergency egress.

With regards bus stop infrastructure where poles, columns, bollards or other fixtures are in use, it is common practice that state/territory governments and respective local council often share the cost of installed assets. A coordinated effort between the state/territory government and local council on management of the asset would be an ongoing requirement of maintenance.

It should also be noted that maintenance of fixed assets may also fall to the government contracted private operator as part of their contractual arrangements.

20.1.4 Are objects located beside access paths, such as bus stop poles, furniture or light poles, difficult to detect? What would make them easier to visually detect and what makes them harder to detect.

21 Lighting – Reform 37

21.1 Consultation questions

21.1.1 What is your preferred option; status quo, non-regulatory or regulatory option 1, 2, 3 or 4? Why?

For bus and coach conveyances, the preferred option is regulatory option 1. Bus and coach conveyances currently meet the requirements outlined in option 1 and the BIC is not aware of current lighting levels in all bus types creating any discrimination.

Regulatory options 2, 3 and 4 **do not apply to a bus and coach conveyance because they are not defined as enclosed zones.** Even if bus and coach interiors were required to comply, the required lux level going from 150 to 160 lux would only have a net benefit increase of less than 10 percent (which is probably within the acceptable range of error or measurement).

The exception to type of conveyance and its relationship to enclosed zones (if applicable), as described in these options, may be a toilet on a coach. If a toilet on a coach is considered an enclosed zone, the requirement of 200 lux may represent a minimal adjustment to typical interior lighting on a coach toilet. Current unisex toilets on a coach typically increase the lighting when the door is closed.

21.1.2 Do the non-regulatory and regulatory options provide enough clarity to ensure people with disability would be able to access public transport without discrimination?

Yes.

21.1.3 Do you think the referenced Australian Standards are adequate to achieve the desired outcome? If not, why?

No.

This options paper in its current format, is confusing and is in conflict with Australian Standards and their respective reference standards.

The prescriptive components of regulatory options 2, 3 and 4 describe elements that need to comply (ie. enclosed zones, unenclosed zones, boarding points, fare system elements) which are not consistent with current Australian Standards.

The proposal is confusing and although it attempts to provide detail on new complying elements, it doesn't provide enough supporting detail. It is difficult to decipher what parts of options 2, 3 or 4 are already referencing current Australian Standards or what are the new Australian Standards requirements, updated prescriptive requirements or new prescriptive requirements.

21.1.4 Are there any challenges (i.e. physical, technical, operational, etc.) that could impact the implementation of the requirements of any option?

Options 2, 3 and 4 as described in answer to Questions 21.1.1 and 21.1.3, would not only be difficult to implement but it would be extremely difficult to monitor compliance.

21.1.5 Are there specific areas within public transport environments where you experience discomfort, feel unsafe, or find it difficult to complete a task due to the amount of lighting available? For example, read a sign or timetable, buying a ticket or communicate with staff at a service counter. If so, what do you wish was different?

22 Signals and process for requesting boarding devices – Reform 38

22.1 Consultation questions

22.1.1 What is your preferred option: status quo, non-regulatory option, or the regulatory option (including relevant sub-options)? Why?

For accessible low floor conveyances, none of the options as currently proposed are suitable. However, the BIC would support the regulatory option with a third sub option as follows:

> *the surrounding area in the conveyance be suitably illuminated to allow the buttons to be clearly seen.*

Having multiple separately lit buttons as required in sub options 1 and 2, would provide no advantage in the passenger area inside a bus or coach that is at 150 Lux and would create reflection issues for drivers.

22.1.2 Do the non-regulatory and regulatory options provide enough clarity to ensure people with disability would be able to access public transport without discrimination?

Yes.

22.1.3 Are there any challenges (i.e. physical, technical, operational, etc.) that could impact the implementation of the requirements of any option?

Typical call buttons use wireless technology. Sub options 1 and 2 would require dedicated hard-wired power to keep the call buttons permanently lit.

22.1.4 Have you, or your passenger, ever had difficulties boarding a conveyance or disembarking at your stop due to an inability to request a boarding ramp?

1. What was the nature of the fault? For example: the ramp did not arrive or was late, staff failure to communicate effectively, poorly located or broken controls?
2. What was the consequence?

The current default vehicle standard of an accessible (route bus) conveyance is to have disability access via the front door which allows the driver to have direct line of sight and communication with passengers.

23 Notification by passenger of need for boarding device – Reform 39

23.1 Consultation questions

23.1.1 What is your preferred option: status quo, non-regulatory option, or the regulatory option (including the sub-options for unbooked services and calls and control buttons)? Why?

For bus and coach conveyances the preferred option is status quo. Signal devices are not utilized in bus and coach conveyances as the driver has a direct line of sight with all passengers who are waiting to board the conveyance (in accordance with clause 8.8.1 in the Transport Standards).

23.1.2 Do the non-regulatory and regulatory options provide enough clarity to ensure people with disability would be able to access public transport without discrimination?

Yes.

23.1.3 Are there any challenges (i.e. physical, technical, operational, etc.) that could impact the implementation of the requirements of any option?

23.1.4 Can you describe your experience using controls to request a boarding device?

24 Portable boarding ramp edge barriers – Reform 40

24.1 Consultation questions

24.1.1 What is your preferred option; status quo, non-regulatory or regulatory option 1, 2 or 3? Why?

For accessible low floor conveyances the preferred option is regulatory option 1 as it is less prescriptive thereby allowing for greater innovation and flexibility to address assessed risk.

Portable boarding ramps are not in use on coach conveyances.

24.1.2 Do the non-regulatory and regulatory options provide enough clarity to ensure people with disability would be able to access public transport without discrimination?

Yes.

24.1.3 Are there any challenges (i.e. physical, technical, operational, etc.) that could impact the implementation of the requirements of any option?

The non-regulatory option, although guidance only material, tries to incorporate all three edge options as described in the regulatory options.

24.1.4 What is your experience of using portable boarding ramps when boarding or alighting, or providing boarding assistance, from public transport? Please tell us about your experience and whether portable boarding ramps are fit for purpose.

25 Nominated assistance boarding points – Reform 43

25.1 Consultation questions

25.1.1 To what extent does the issue impact you?

Due to some of the ambiguous statements contained in this options paper, it would be reasonable to conclude that much of this issue relates to rail and/or ferry travel. Bus and coach operations may include large bus terminals and interchanges, however even in these environments there is still a point of direct communication with either the bus driver or inspector to enable notification of a boarding device.

Independent travel is somewhat assured for bus or coach travel as passengers:

- do not need to access a boarding point through barriers such as turnstiles and
- ticketing validation/machines are deployed on an accessible conveyance.

As a bus requires a driver to operate it, this already provides an immediate point of communication to provide direct assistance for boarding. A bus driver is in effect a direct point of contact and provider of assistance immediately prior to boarding, at time of departure and alighting at end of journey. It is also important to note that a driver can also seek back to base assistance to support a customer's needs if required.

25.1.2 What is your preferred option: status quo, non-regulatory option, or the regulatory option? Why?

For bus and coach conveyances the preferred option is regulatory option 2 **without the suggested guidelines** as written in the current format.

The guidelines provided in option 2 are a reflection of guidelines proposed in the non-regulatory option which we argue do not make sense. For the purpose of providing some 'meaning' to this comment, this response will address a number of elements in the non-regulatory guidelines.

As 'independent boarding' is not a clearly defined term, this would need to be clarified in order to succinctly address all other suggested guidelines.

The Staff Training and Communications module to come out of the D1 Decision RIS already addresses a number of elements in the guideline materials such as:

- additional consultation with people with a disability on direct assistance procedures. The proposed Reform 43, will incur an additional tier of consultation that is not required (unless there is more specific detail on what needs to be consulted on).
- future modification and innovations offering consistent customer outcomes (regardless of operational and staff changes) will form part of the requirement to revisit staff training and communications modules
- the acknowledgement of the importance of staff training (including knowing the correct

boarding procedures and options available) will form part of staff training and communications.

- ensuring that a nominated assistance point is clearly identified by a symbol and tactile element are existing requirements within other sections of the current Transport Standards and proposed reforms.

The BIC seeks clarification on "easily identified" in the below statement as this is covered in other sections of the current Transport Standards and proposed reforms.

> *Ensure the nominated assistance point is clearly identified by a symbol and tactile element.*

The BIC seeks clarification in the meaning of the below statement:

> *Are operator and provider agnostic and mode agnostic (choosing whichever mode gets you to your destination via the fastest, most efficient or most direct route, depending on preference).*

The BIC assumes that the intention of this statement is that it is beholden upon the operator/s to coordinate and provide mode options to give passengers choice of travel. This cannot be practically applied in all public transport circumstances or provisions. The BIC contends that passengers would be able to make the appropriate choice based on their own unique travelling circumstances.

25.1.3 Of the sub options in regulatory option 1, which of the proposed list of facilities should be identified or marked as accessible?

Regulatory option 1 states:

> ***Where a door on a conveyance is marked as being accessible**, it must have:*
>
> *Sub-option 1 Access to a seat.*
>
> *Sub-option 2 Access to a priority seat.*
>
> *Sub-option 3 Access to an allocated space.*
>
> *Sub-option 4 Access to other accessible facilities, such as an accessible toilet, where available.*
>
> *Sub-option 5 All of the above.*

The regulation refers to the marking of the door that then provides access to an area, whereas, this question asks which of the Sub-options should be marked as accessible.

Marking of accessible seats is already a requirement of the current and proposed Transport Standards.

25.1.4 Do the non-regulatory and regulatory options provide enough clarity to ensure people with disability would be able to access public transport without discrimination?

No.

25.1.5 Are there any challenges (i.e. physical, technical, operational, etc.) that could impact the implementation of the requirements of any option?

To answer this question, the BIC would need further clarification on the answers provided in Questions 25.1.1 and 25.1.3.

25.1.6 What does the International Symbol of Accessibility mean to you when you see it marked on a conveyance door?

26 Bus, tram and light rail boarding points on infrastructure – Reform 46

26.1 Consultation questions

26.1.1 What is your preferred option: status quo, non-regulatory option, or the regulatory option? Why? For the regulatory option, do you prefer sub-option 1 or 2?

Preferred option for accessible low floor conveyances is regulatory option 2 as it recognises effects of road gradient.

26.1.2 Do the non-regulatory and regulatory options provide enough clarity to ensure people with disability would be able to access public transport without discrimination?

Yes

26.1.3 Are there any challenges (i.e. physical, technical, operational, etc.) that could impact the implementation of the requirements of any option?

With regards bus stop or boarding point infrastructure, it is common practice that state/territory governments and respective local council often share the cost of installed assets. A coordinated effort between the state/territory government and local council on management of the asset would be an ongoing requirement of maintenance.

It should also be noted that maintenance of fixed assets may also fall to the government contracted private operator as part of their contractual arrangements.

26.1.4 Have you ever encountered a boarding point at a bus, tram or light rail stop that had too great a slope or crossfall for easy boarding? If so, how did you, or the passenger, manage to board?

27 Hail-and-ride boarding points on infrastructure – Reform 47

27.1 Consultation questions

27.1.1 What is your preferred option: status quo, non-regulatory option, or the regulatory option? Why?

For bus and coach conveyances the preferred option is regulatory.

Due to the nature of hail and ride, nominated boarding points relies on both the driver and the passenger to identify (and agree) that a boarding point is accessible and that this can potentially occur wherever a bus or coach can safely access.

The regulatory option 're-defines' Part 8.4 by updating 'boarding point' to 'accessible boarding point' and the BIC is supportive of this change as it ensures boarding devices are able to be deployed at an accessible boarding point. However, making all boarding points accessible for hail and ride would have hugely significant infrastructure costs (as noted in the reform proposal).

27.1.2 Do the non-regulatory and regulatory options provide enough clarity to ensure people with disability would be able to access public transport without discrimination?

Yes.

27.1.3 Are there any challenges (i.e. physical, technical, operational, etc.) that could impact the implementation of the requirements of any option?

As noted in answer to question 27.1.1, making all boarding points accessible for hail and ride will have hugely significant infrastructure costs.

27.1.4 Do you use hail-and-ride services that are available in your area? If not, can you describe why?

27.1.5 What elements make a boarding point accessible?

28 Grabrails on access paths – Reform 51

28.1 Consultation questions

28.1.1 What is your preferred option: status quo, non-regulatory option, or the regulatory option? Why?

For accessible low floor conveyances, the preferred option is regulatory because it provides clarity and certainty to the builders and operators of buses and clearly states the relationship with the ADR's.

The BIC however, would like to see a clearer definition of an access path. Currently an access path in the current Transport Standards is defined as being "a path that permits independent travel for

all passengers" meaning it is wheelchair accessible. However, the BIC contends that:

- the aisle of a bus downstream of the allocated space, is not an access path in the literal interpretation of the current definition of access paths in the Transport Standards
- the entire aisle of a coach is therefore deemed to be not an access path as per Part 2.9.

The BIC believes that on a wheelchair accessible bus or coach, the access path is from the point of entry to the allocated space.

Although this regulation deals specifically with grab rails, the BIC would like to supply additional information.

Where buses are configured to avoid head strike or minimize impact from head strike in certain applications are impractical or difficult to maintain.

For example:

- high contrast grab handles (that incorporate high density impact foam for head strike) in rear of seats, stay-fast colouring has proven impractical
- hanging straps (utilized in low floor buses where grab rail is positioned in order to avoid head strike) are difficult to maintain.

28.1.2 Do the non-regulatory and regulatory options provide enough clarity to ensure people with disability would be able to access public transport without discrimination?

Yes. However, as pointed out in the answer to Question 1, the operator and the builder of the bus is the beneficiary of having clarity with a clear relationship with ADR's.

28.1.3 Are there any challenges (i.e. physical, technical, operational, etc.) that could impact the implementation of the requirements of any option?

Refer to the answers provided in Question 28.1.1

28.1.4 Can you describe your experience with grabrails on access paths?

a. How do grabrails on access paths on conveyances affect your ability to travel due to your personal circumstances? Can you describe how important grabrails are to you?

b. Have you ever felt unsafe where seeking support while traveling to or from your seat and the conveyance entrance? Can you provide details?

c. Have you ever been unable to distinguish grabrails from the background along an access path on conveyances? Why was this a challenge and how could this be improved?

29 Grabrails in allocated spaces – Reform 52

29.1 Consultation questions

29.1.1 What is your preferred option: status quo, non-regulatory option, or the regulatory option? Why?

For bus and coach conveyances the preferred option is regulatory as it updates specific elements in clause 11.7 of the Transport Standards that gives clarity to the builder and operator of buses and coaches.

However, the regulatory option would need to incorporate a specific clause from the proposed Guidelines or Whole of Journey Guide. The BIC contends that the below clause is a critical element in the application of grabrails in allocated spaces as it applies to coaches and seat belted buses.

> *[CRIS Extract – regulatory guidelines]*
>
> *…in coaches or seat belted buses any grabrails fitted in the accessible area or the access path must not encroach the head impact zone as determined by Australian Design Rules. Grabrails that may be struck by the head of a seated occupant if the bus is involved in a collision must be padded as per the relevant state technical requirements.*

This regulation would need to be prospectively implemented for new buses and not retrospectively.

29.1.2 Do the non-regulatory and regulatory options provide enough clarity to ensure people with disability would be able to access public transport without discrimination?

Yes.

29.1.3 Are there any challenges (i.e. physical, technical, operational, etc.) that could impact the implementation of the requirements of any option?

There is potentially large stock of existing buses that would not be able to easily comply to the proposed regulation. This regulation would need to be prospectively implemented for new buses and coaches, not retrospectively.

29.1.4 What are your experiences using grabrails in allocated spaces on conveyances? For example:

a. Are they visually easy to identify?

b. How does the different layout (horizontal, vertical or angled) of grabrails impact your ability to use them?

c. What factors are important for accessible use of grabrails (for example location, height, diameter, length, and colour)?

30 Mobility aid movement in allocated spaces: Passive restraints - Reform 53

30.1 Consultation questions

30.1.1 What is your preferred option: status quo, non-regulatory option, or the regulatory option? Why?

There is no regulatory outcome that ensures the safe containment of those passengers who choose not to use 'approved' mobility devices for travel on buses.

The regulatory option would also need to include specific guidelines for the mobility device itself having to meet the specification of a 'surrogate wheelchair' as defined in Annexe E of ASNZS10542.1 (2015). There is little point in providing a specification of an active restraint (as this regulation aims to do), if the wheelchair (or 'similar mobility aids') is not technically configured to align with the restraint system.

The preferred option for accessible low floor conveyances is the regulatory option **IF approved mobility devices are used.** The regulatory option provides clarity to both the buyers and builders of buses, however such an option would need to be implemented prospectively not retrospectively.

The BIC does not support status quo or non-regulatory as the current DDA lacks detail in this area. The non-regulatory option seeks to only provide *guidance* to accompany the current status quo which does not adequately address the issue in the long term.

There are however issues with the current proposed regulatory option that would need to be addressed per below.

1. Evidence and experience of bus operators is that many scooters, as an example of **current** mobility devices in use, do not comply to Standards Australia Technical Specification 3659.3 (2018)
2. Many scooters are unable to manoeuvre along the access path and meet the criteria for swept path. In addition, scooters cannot be passively restrained unless the scooter can be backed up against barricades (such as ironing boards)
3. A passive system can only be designed to retain a certain type of mobility device
4. A passive restraint system works best where the **device faces rearwards** and this is for the safety of the passenger. Therefore, the below statement in the **regulatory option supports the user of the mobility device to travel at any orientation of their choice – but this would need to be at their own risk. The mobility device must be oriented in the direction required by the restraint.**

   Appropriate signage could be provided to assist the passenger.

   [CRIS Regulatory Extracts]

   Each allocated space must contain movement of a mobility aid towards the front, rear and sides of a bus.

   Passengers may choose to orient themselves facing forward, to the rear or side of the vehicle. Containment systems will typically only work with the passengers facing rearward.

5. The regulatory option would also need to consider how an operator might prove a passenger opted not to use available passive restraints.

   [CRIS Regulatory Extract]

   Passengers who choose to travel without containment must be permitted to do so.

6. The D1 Decision RIS for Mobility Aid Safety (non-regulatory) states that:

   [D1 DRIS Non-regulatory Extract]

   AS/NZS ISO 10865.1:2015 requires users to face rearward, which is not preferred by some users. However, the requirement to face rearward offers better safety in being able to contain forward movement. In circumstances where compliance with AS/NZS ISO 10865.1:2015 is not achievable or preferred by users, the development of an equivalent access solution determined through a co-design process is encouraged.

7. The BIC supports the technical descriptions provided in the final working paper from the National Accessible Transport Taskforce: *Mobility aid movement: In allocated spaces [Paper 8]*.

30.1.2 Do the non-regulatory and regulatory options provide enough clarity to ensure people with disability would be able to access public transport without discrimination?

No. Refer above. Given this is a critical safety issue, the BIC believes that the information provided in the final NATT Paper 8 was useable by both the builder, operator and user of the bus.

However, what is not adequately addressed in either the work undertaken by the NATT or in this reform proposal is the **lack of requirements imposed on the mobility device itself for safe travel on buses.**

Technical Specification 3659.3 (2018) or an agreed alternative needs to be called up as part of any new Transport Standard. The BIC contends that TS 3659.3 does not align the ability of the mobility device to travel safely and also to not endanger the safe travel of other passengers.

30.1.3 Are there any challenges (i.e. physical, technical, operational, etc.) that could impact the implementation of the requirements of any option?

Yes. The challenges include:

- mobility device users understanding that the orientation of the device must be rear-ward facing in order to achieve optimum safety when travelling on a bus.
- the technology of mobility devices is continuing to evolve and are not necessarily manufactured for compliance to buses (ie. to meet weight limit, swept path or passive restraint configurations).
- scooters, as advised by some manufacturers, are not designed to travel in a moving vehicle whilst the occupant is seated in the device.
- due to varying interior layouts on older buses, if the retrospective implementation was adopted, side effects could include loss of seating capacity and interiors requiring significant reconfiguration.

30.1.4 What experiences have you had with wheelchair or scooter safety in allocated spaces on buses, trams, light rail and ferries?

a. Have you, or your passenger, ever slid or toppled? If so, could you describe the experience?

b. Have you, or your passenger, ever had difficulty manoeuvring into an allocated space due to the location or design of restraints systems? Could you describe the experience and outcome?

c. Have you ever been deterred from using public transport due to safety concerns related to mobility aid safety?

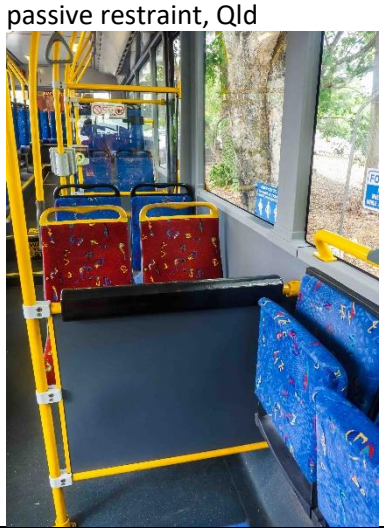
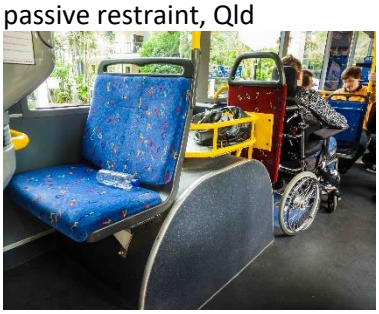
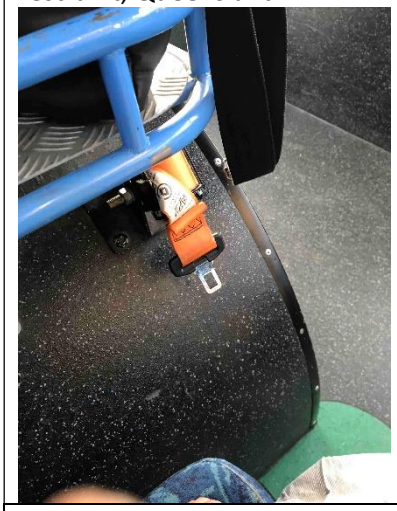
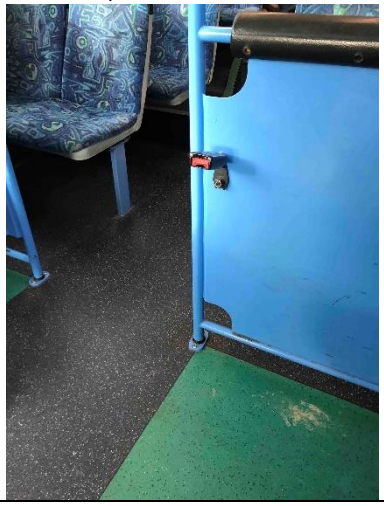
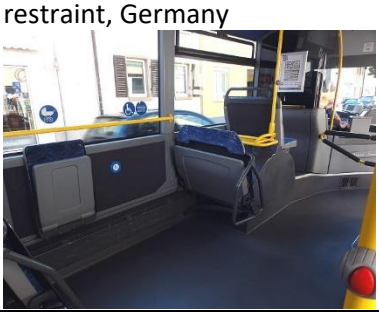
A survey of bus and coach operators indicates there is no systemic issue with passive restraints systems.

Typical practice of most bus operators is to provide a system that formally captures customer complaints. Such complaints can come via the driver or direct to the operator or government agency via a customer feedback line (online or by phone). Operators providing a government contracted service, are required, as part of contract compliance, to have a reportable customer complaints system. Government contracted services may also require a set of specific performance indicators that need to be met. These KPI's are assessed for points of failure and therefore, if a KPI is not met, rectification is required.

In general terms, in order for a bus operation to run successfully, customer service standards need to be high.

Extract NATT Paper 8

Among the varied means of passively containing mobility aid movement that are or might be employed are side walls, wheel-arches, 'ironing boards', padded rear rails, fold-down aisle grabrails and static aisle-side rails or stanchions. Of critical importance for all of these is that they do not compromise other DSAPT requirements such as access path width or manoeuvring space to allow turns into allocated spaces. Also, all Australia Design Rule requirements for passenger egress and emergency exit access must not be compromised by the inappropriate design or placement of fold-down aisle grabrails or static aisle-side rails or stanchions.

Bus wall as side passive restraint, Qld 	Padded rail and screen as rear passive restraint, Qld 	Ironing board as forward passive restraint, Qld 
Retractable belt aisle active restraint, Queensland 	Retractable belt aisle active restraint, Queensland 	Retractable belt aisle active restraint, Queensland 
Static arm as aisle passive restraint, Germany 	Static arm as aisle passive restraint, Germany 	Ironing board as passive forward restraint, Qld 

Currently, most passive containment systems in Australian buses cover only three sides of a bus allocated space as per the first row of photographs above. Such systems conform in part to *AS/NZS ISO 10865.1:2015* but lack a Lateral Excursion Barrier (LEB) on the aisle side that meets *AS/NZS ISO 10865.1:2015* requirements.

It should be noted that ISO 10865.1:2015 is based on the European and UK requirements where only one allocated space is required per bus. As such the issue of access path width or manoeuvring space for a second wheelchair or scooter is not considered within this ISO.

Consequently, uncontained wheelchairs and scooters can topple or slide into the aisle, particularly if the bus executes a turn at an inappropriate speed or is displaced laterally due to kerb strike. This puts not only the occupant of the mobility aid at risk, but also any passengers who may be struck by the sliding or toppling wheelchair or scooter. A sequence of a photographs below illustrates a wheelchair and occupant falling into the aisle due to the absence of an aisle-side LEB restraining system. The fall occurred while the bus was turning.

31 Mobility aid movement in allocated spaces: Active restraints – Reform 54

31.1 Consultation questions

31.1.1 What is your preferred option: status quo, non-regulatory option, or the regulatory option? Why?

There is no regulatory outcome that ensures the safe containment of those passengers who choose not to use 'approved' mobility devices for travel on buses.

The regulatory option would also need to include specific guidelines for the mobility device itself having to meet the specification of a 'surrogate wheelchair' as defined in Annexe E of ASNZS10542.1 (2015). There is little point in providing a specification of an active restraint (as this regulation aims to do), if the wheelchair (or 'similar mobility aids') is not technically configured to align with the active restraint system.

The preferred option for bus and coach conveyances is the regulatory option as it provides clarity to both the buyers and builders of buses, however such an option would need to **make compulsory (not as a recommendation)**, compliance to ASNZS10542.1 (2015) as this allows a reference point for the vehicle compliance.

The BIC does not support status quo or non-regulatory as the current DDA lacks detail in this area. The non-regulatory option seeks to only provide *guidance* which does not adequately address the issue in the long term.

31.1.2 Do the non-regulatory and regulatory options provide enough clarity to ensure people with disability would be able to access public transport without discrimination?

No. Refer to answer to question 31.1.1.

31.1.3 Are there any challenges (i.e. physical, technical, operational, etc.) that could impact the implementation of the requirements of any option?

The main challenge relates to the trained staff person being able to fit non-complying wheelchairs or 'similar mobility device'. The BIC contends that compliance of the mobility device **must** meet ASNZS10542.1 (2015); otherwise the resulting combination will see a non-compliance to the proposed regulation.

From an operator perspective, how does an operator/driver/or customer relations staff know when a passenger has special dispensation not to use an active restraint.

ASNZS10542.1 (2015) only certifies systems for forward-facing.

31.1.4 What has your experience been using restraints on public transport?

a. Did you feel safe?

b. Did you feel comfortable?

c. As an operator and / or provider do you know how use the restraint properly?

A survey of bus and coach operators indicates there is no systemic issue with active restraint systems.

However, the driver or appointed staff, may feel discomfort in intruding on the personal space of the passenger.

Typical practice of most bus operators is to provide a system that formally captures customer complaints. Such complaints can come via the driver or direct to the operator or government agency via a customer feedback line (online or by phone). Operators providing a government contracted service, are required, as part of contract compliance, to have a reportable customer complaints system. Government contracted services may also require a set of specific performance indicators that need to be met. These KPI's are assessed for points of failure and therefore, if a KPI is not met, rectification is required.

In general terms, in order for a bus or coach operation to run successfully, customer service standards need to be high.

31.1.5 If you, or your passenger, have ever been involved in an incident whilst actively restrained, could you provide details?

32 Appropriate seats on booked services – Reform 55

32.1 Consultation questions

32.1.1 What is your preferred option: status quo, non-regulatory option, or the regulatory option? Why?

For coach conveyances offering booked services on coach type services, the preference is non-regulatory as it enables a coach operator to apply the guidelines where there is operational and passenger alignment. It allows both the operator and passenger to negotiate an outcome so as not

to discriminate against *any* passenger.

The BIC does not support the regulatory option as it would be impossible to apply to passengers in all circumstances of travelling needs across all coach types.

For example: All booked passengers have their position on the coach conveyance pre-allocated. If a roadside pickup were to occur, the passenger would be booked and allocated a seat (if one is available), before the passenger boards the coach. This cannot happen for roadside bookings, for example, where the passenger uses a mobility aid, as the removal of fixed seats to gain access is a 2-man lift / job and cannot be completed roadside.

For buses and coach conveyances offering On Demand services, the preference is non-regulatory. Compliance rate to the current Transport Standards by On Demand bus operators is already achieved as these providers are often already providing mainstream public transport services under government contracts. On Demand bus operators offer accessible vehicle options as well as options to access the services via an App or via a phone when booking the ride.

32.1.2 Do the non-regulatory and regulatory options provide enough clarity to ensure people with disability would be able to access public transport without discrimination?

Yes.

32.1.3 Are there any challenges (i.e. physical, technical, operational, etc.) that could impact the implementation of the requirements of any option?

Yes. Coach operators, depending on area/s of operation and type (eg. remote areas and distance of travel) typically require 24 hours (up to 48 hours for remote locations) advance notice from passengers with special needs in order to:

- pre-allocate appropriate seating
- ensure point to point infrastructure is accessible for pickup and drop off.

32.1.4 What is your, or your passengers, experiences in booking appropriate seats on public transport?

a. Were appropriate seats available?

b. Was there a need to negotiate an appropriate seat?

c. Was the eligibility process fair and accommodating? Please provide detail.

33 Conveyance dwell times at stops – Reform 56

33.1 Consultation questions

33.1.1 What is your preferred option: status quo, non-regulatory option, or the regulatory option? Why?

For buses and coaches, the preferred option is non-regulatory as it supports the already passenger driven practice of the bus industry which requires the driver to monitor the safe transit of passengers to their seat or standing position prior to departure.

The lack of detail in the regulatory option would see different operational interpretation of dwell time and lead to operators providing different dwell time policies. Measuring compliance under this regulatory option would not be possible.

For all buses and coaches, passenger loading and unloading and dwell time is managed, for example, in the timetable or the schedule of a coach conducting a tour service. These timetables are adjusted due to heavy and light loading as a matter of course.

33.1.2 Do the non-regulatory and regulatory options provide enough clarity to ensure people with disability would be able to access public transport without discrimination?

Yes.

33.1.3 Are there any challenges (i.e. physical, technical, operational, etc.) that could impact the implementation of the requirements of any option?

Driver training is the best tool to achieve the desired outcome.

The lack of detail in the regulatory option would see different operational interpretation of dwell time and lead to operators providing different dwell time policies. Measuring compliance under this regulatory option would not be possible.

33.1.4 Have you, or your passengers, ever been in a situation where a conveyance has departed or moved off before being seated or were safely in an allocated space? If so, can you describe what happened?

A survey of bus operators indicates there is no systemic issue in conveyance dwell times. However, it should be noted that anecdotal evidence provided by bus operators (providing urban type services) is that passengers with ambulant disability will often choose not to sit in an allocated space.

In general terms, in order for a bus operation to run successfully, customer service standards need to be relatively high to ensure the retention of not only the passengers travelling on buses and coaches, but also in the operator retention of government contracted services.

Most if not all bus and coach operators, provide a system that formally captures customer complaints. Such complaints often come via the driver, direct to the operators via a customer feedback line.

Government contracted services set specific performance indicators and are assessed for points of

failure and therefore, even should a KPI for timely provision fail, it needs to be rectified.

On the rare occasion there is a complaint, this is resolved by driver discipline and additional driver training.

34 Stairs on buses – Reform 59

34.1 Consultation questions

34.1.1 What is your preferred option: status quo, non-regulatory option, or the regulatory option? Why?

For bus and coach conveyance the preferred option is regulatory with a minor change outlined below as it reflects current industry practice and provides certainty for bus suppliers and operators.

Both the regulatory and non-regulatory options include the following requirement:

> *Step edges and stair tread nosing's must comply with AS1428.1 (2009) Clauses 11.1 (c), (d), (e), (f), and (g).*

The BIC worked with the NATT to include this requirement, however, as was agreed in that process, buses cannot meet point (d) due to the following explanation:

> *A review of AS1428.1 (2009) Clause 11.1(d) requires that "Stair nosings shall not project beyond the face of the riser and the riser may be vertical or have a splay backwards up to a maximum 25mm…" this raises concerns as currently used 25 to 50 mm wide step edges are designed to include smooth and tapered wrap arounds on the front face of the step so to avoid the possibility of a top only mounted step tread producing a sharp edge that can form a trip hazard (also with a top only edge, any movement over time can add to this concern).*

Therefore, the BIC can support the regulatory option, but point (d) needs to be removed from the reference to AS1428.1 Clause 11.1.

34.1.2 Do the non-regulatory and regulatory options provide enough clarity to ensure people with disability would be able to access public transport without discrimination?

Yes, as they represent the current industry best practices.

34.1.3 Are there any challenges (i.e. physical, technical, operational, etc.) that could impact the implementation of the requirements of any option?

Yes, refer to response to Question 34.1.1

34.1.4 Have you, or your passengers, ever had difficulty identifying bus stair or step treads while climbing them? If so could you describe the situation and suggest improvements?

A survey of bus and coach operators indicates there is no systemic issue with stairs on buses.

Typical practice of most bus operators is to provide a system that formally captures customer complaints. Such complaints can come via the driver or direct to the operator or government agency via a customer feedback line (online or by phone). Operators providing a government contracted service, are required, as part of contract compliance, to have a reportable customer complaints system. Government contracted services may also require a set of specific performance indicators that need to be met. These KPI's are assessed for points of failure and therefore, if a KPI is not met, rectification is required.

In general terms, in order for a bus or coach operation to run successfully, customer service standards need to be high.

35 Doorway contrast and height – Reform 60

35.1 Consultation questions

35.1.1 To what extent does the issue impact you?

35.1.2 What is your preferred option: status quo, non-regulatory option, or the regulatory option? Why?

For accessible low floor conveyances the preferred option is regulatory.

The contrasting luminous requirement is used on some city buses and the inclusion of this requirement would be of a benefit given:

- city (accessible) buses have multiple passenger doors, who's locations down the length of the bus varies depending on bus design and layout, therefore highlighting the door exterior location to passengers is a benefit
- the high number of passenger movements in and around city buses, again the luminous requirement could be of a benefit.

This reform should not be applied to coach conveyances which are typically only fitted with front doors located at the very front of the coach. Coaches also do not experience high and regular passenger movement around doorways and as such the luminous requirement does not provide the same passenger benefit.

There is also a safety risk for coaches. Coaches that operate frequently on high-speed roads and highways, use additional headlighting and experience reflection from other road vehicles. Additional luminous doorway contrasts would create a vision distraction for the driver and therefore is a safety hazard for the driver and all passengers.

35.1.3 Do the non-regulatory and regulatory options provide enough clarity to ensure people with disability would be able to access public transport without discrimination?

Yes.

35.1.4 Are there any challenges (i.e. physical, technical, operational, etc.) that could impact the implementation of the requirements of any option?

Yes, on any bus and coach conveyance, the effect of door surround luminous contrast needs to be

assessed to ensure that driver vision, and the state-based bus door vision requirements, are maintained in all operating conditions.

35.1.5 What is your experience of locating doors on conveyance access paths and at entrances?

a. Have you, or your passengers, ever mistaken a part of a conveyance for a door, or a door as part of the conveyance?

b. Have you, or your passengers, ever mistaken a gap between conveyances for a door? If so, can you describe the experience?

c. Have you, or your passengers, ever found an external or internal door on a conveyance to be too low? Have you, or anyone ever struck their head because of this?

A survey of bus and coach operators indicates there is no systemic issue with door height or luminosity.

Typical practice of most bus operators is to provide a system that formally captures customer complaints. Such complaints can come via the driver or direct to the operator or government agency via a customer feedback line (online or by phone). Operators providing a government contracted service, are required, as part of contract compliance, to have a reportable customer complaints system. Government contracted services may also require a set of specific performance indicators that need to be met. These KPI's are assessed for points of failure and therefore, if a KPI is not met, rectification is required.

In general terms, in order for a bus or coach operation to run successfully, customer service standards need to be high.

36 Compliance – Reform 61

36.1 Consultation questions

36.1.1 Have target dates for compliance in Transport Standards, Schedule 1 Target dates for compliance been successful in bringing compliance to public transport assets?

In general terms, the BIC believes that the target dates set in Schedule 1 were reasonably achievable for accessible low floor conveyances.

36.1.2 What are the challenges and benefits to achieving compliance for existing assets under Transport Standards Schedule 1 Target dates for compliance?

The BIC is not able to make specific comment on the success of compliance to Schedule 1 for bus operators providing government contracted services using either accessible low floor conveyances or coach conveyances, as these operators are users of public transport systems implemented by jurisdictions. The BIC believes that any government contract with a bus operator would stipulate compliance with the Transport Standards and that some form of proof would be required as part of that contract arrangement.

A significant barrier for providers of bus or coach services, is accessible bus stops that are not

located near major infrastructure or terminus points. Accessibility via foot paths and kerb boarding points are typically not accessible concurrently (eg. whilst the kerb might be accessible, the foot path may not be or neither provide accessibility). Whilst modern buses and coaches are equipped to 'kneel' at kerb boarding points, passengers with ambulant disability or requiring wheelchair access to board or alight often need to do-so at non-accessible bus stops in outer metro, regional and remote locations.

With regards to all bus and coach conveyances, another significant barrier to achieving full compliance with the Transport Standards is the suitability of mobility devices for carriage on the conveyance.

The Transport Standards also heavily relies on 'self-regulation' which makes it difficult to provide a detailed response to the successful compliance to Schedule 1. We note however that Reporting (Reform 1) attempts to resolve this and would implement some form of 'quality control' and 'proof of compliance'.

The BIC is not able to provide a detailed response on the level of coach conveyance compliance in the private sector. The exchange between the buyer of coaches and the manufacturer as the builder of the coach will differ due to operational needs. Coach operators and their operations vary hugely across this sector such as:

- size of operation and how the coach fleet is utilized for optimal productivity
- location of operations (city, regional, remote)
- type of service provision, for example - coaches conducting tour services or contracted services to private corporations such as the mining sector (noting services such as these may be deemed as private hire operations)
- pre-arranged charter services that are co-designed by the provider and user to meet the specific requirements of the customer.
- operational service areas, for example – long haul or local area only.

The buyer and builder of coaches are both responsible for the vehicle design elements and vehicle compliance relies on both parties being equipped to adequately understand and interpret the Transport Standards.

In the private coach sector, anecdotal evidence suggests that there is a broad mix of compliance.

36.1.3 What is your preferred option: implementation option 1, 2 or 3? Why?

The BIC has been unable to arrive at a solid position on a preferred option for compliance as the decisions yet to come out on Reforms 1 through to 60 (Stage 2) are unknown and many of the regulatory reform options relating to bus and coach conveyances and in-service operations lack the required detail or are flawed.

There are some elements from the Decision RIS on Stage 1 that may be reasonable to apply in a relatively short time frame (ie. within the next 10 years). Staff training and communications from Stage 1 for example, is a reform that could deliver a good outcome within a relatively short time frame. However, many reform areas in Stage 1 and 2 are not mutually exclusive which again makes it difficult to form a solid position on compliance timeframes. In addition, all reforms rely on how equivalent access is to be applied; equivalent access is vitally important in bus and coach services as it supports equitable outcomes for both the passenger and the operator where circumstance are unique to an individual's travel needs.

The BIC does not support retrospective compliance to bus and coach conveyances and to that end,

option 3 – as it applies to new assets only - may be a reasonable outcome provided that the stakeholder engagement process accounts for *all* bus and coach operational types and does not end in an inequitable outcome. Options 1 and 2 would require an audit of the 40,000-plus registered bus and coach conveyances and 4,000-plus bus and coach operations for in-service assets such as information communication technologies.

The BIC contends that any compliance system needs to consider the vast operations of the bus and coach industry and capacity for all operational types to comply to target dates all at the same time. Some regulatory reform areas in both Stage 1 and Stage 2 - particularly in relation to information, communication and wayfinding are likely to incur significant administrative and financial burdens on small to medium size businesses. Consideration also needs to be given to those businesses providing services to both government contracted and private enterprise (eg. community transport solutions or tour services).

The BIC believes a tiered compliance system might work; a system that would see accessible conveyances (supplying urban route services) complying to an earlier date with all other conveyances (such as coach services) complying to a later date.

36.1.4 Where you have been unable to reach full compliance under the Transport Standards what mechanisms have you used to provide accessibility for public transport users?

There are some situations where a compliant conveyance is not readily available or is not usable due to location issues or opposes the preferences of the passenger. In situations such as these, equivalent access solutions are provided.

Current use of equivalent access offers bus and coach operators the flexibility in the delivery of accessible public transport. It also supports innovation by providing an opportunity to harness new technology to improve accessibility and offers the potential for the delivery of public transport that may potentially exceed minimum accessibility requirements in the Transport Standards.

Some equivalent access solutions require a parallel service to be provided as this is the preferred travel mechanism for the passenger/s as this is often the passenger/s preference not to travel on mainstream public transport.

36.1.5 Is there sufficient clarity around when the triggers outlined in the Transport Standards section 32.1 Effect and application of these Standards are activated and when an existing asset should comply with the new requirements?

The BIC believes the triggers are not well defined and open to a wide range of interpretation.

For example:

> *(b) new or revised ancillary services that are provided as an adjunct to the public transport operation; and*
>
> *(c) new or updated information provided to the public.*

What is the definition of b) an ancillary service as an adjunct and c) information

> *Manufacture to be completed before target dates*
>
> *In all cases, manufacture or other work that is required to ensure compliance with these Standards is to be completed before the target dates*

set out in Schedule 1

What assets are captured in the definition of manufacture.

36.1.6 What impact does enforcement of target dates (or lack of enforcement) have on the success of using a schedule mechanism to reach compliance?

a. How does this impact accessibility of public transport?