

[REDACTED]

Sent: Saturday, 29 April 2023 12:40 PM
To: Disability Transport
Subject: FW: [REDACTED] Complaint- URGENT - Robert Wood

[REDACTED]

To whom it may concern;

I have included a recent interaction email chain between myself and [REDACTED]

To make a long story short, I have experienced years of struggling to get taxi's to pick me up, despite charging way more due to my disability.

Recently, I have been reliant on cabs to perform basic everyday tasks, such as groceries, appointments with my specialists and even the mental stimulation of getting out into the community.

The taxi services often accept my requests for taxis but then the drivers will reject transporting me because I'm not travelling far enough for the effort of getting someone like me, or the very few drivers who will accept disabled people, are booked well in advance.

I was left for 14 hours recently, and then again only days later.

This is not the first time, this is a regular occurrence, and have even been asked by drivers " can we somehow put your wheelchair in the boot"...I'm a quadriplegic. I rely on my chair.

Please read the email chain below, this is my most recent complaint to [REDACTED] and their abysmal attempt to compensate. All I wanted was a driver, if I can't get a driver, how am I supposed to even use that \$50 they offered?

I really hope there's changes soon, as this is really taking a toll on my mental health. And there's no public transport where I live.

Regards,

Robert Wood

[REDACTED]

From: Robert Wood
Sent: Monday, 10 April 2023 2:08 PM

[REDACTED]

Subject: RE: [REDACTED] Complaint- URGENT - Robert Wood

Hi,

I put off replying to this, as I find this somewhat insulting, that \$50 is the price that everything I have gone through, is worth.

The day after I sent my complaint, I booked another cab, this time online to see if I would get any better result. Unfortunately, this is not the case either (booking request # [REDACTED]).

I booked a cab for 10am, and given a tracking of the cab, etc...again.

It wasn't until nearly 2pm that I was given a call that a cab would be on its way. 4 hours. But I couldn't even accept, even I wanted to, because I rely on carers to help me with almost everything, and my carer wasn't able to stay and wait.

I'm starting to believe to not call [REDACTED] now, as its like playing Russian roulette with whether I'm even going to be able to go anywhere. I am confined to a wheelchair. I rely on cab service to go anywhere. I feel like a caged animal.

Able-bodied people can call ubers, cabs, anything and be able to come, go, whatever they please.

The taxi service [REDACTED] provides is consistent in letting those of us who are disabled down.

And I think the consistent let downs are worth more than \$50. How about the fact I am having my freedoms...what little freedoms I have left...TAKEN from me. There is no price to the pain I was left in physically, the feelings of having all my social and community interaction TAKEN, and the disappointment and depression I feel as a result. NO price.

[REDACTED] need to fix the quality of your whole network, starting from management down. Management have no idea what is going on, and never will if something doesn't happen soon.

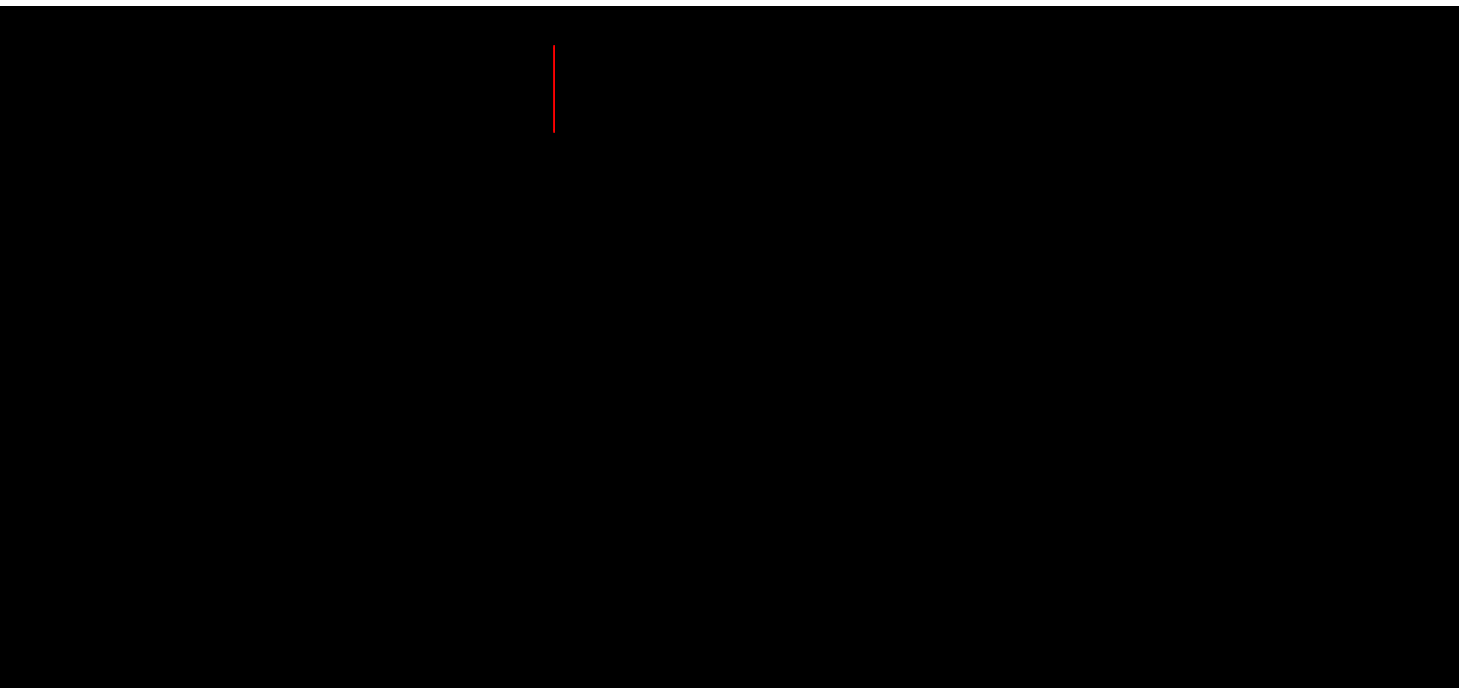
And then, how can you say you 'Love NDIS' and disabled people, when its on the driver to be able to decide on their passengers. There's no jurisdiction for drivers to NOT discriminate on the level of disabled, etc. Wrong, just WRONG.

I shouldn't have to say 'going to the airport' and LIE about my destination, just so a driver would consider taking me, when all I want to do is go to the shops like a normal, average person.

I would really appreciate a prompt reply, and at least some kind of explanation as to how things will improve, and how it will be ensured. I also would like this matter escalated to management/higher ups, to ensure they have knowledge of what is happening.

Regards,
Robert Wood

[REDACTED]





On Tue, 4 Apr at 1:46 PM , Robert Wood <[REDACTED]> wrote:
URGENT COMPLAINT:

To Whom it may concern;

My name is Robert Wood, and I am a quadriplegic who is trying to live the most independent life I'm capable of. Due to a long, drawn out and arduous fight with NDIS to get a new vehicle fitted for my needs, I have recently been left with no choice but to use taxi's/cabs.

On the 2nd April 2023, I called at 10:30am to book a maxi taxi through [REDACTED] I only ever book maxi taxi's with the ability to cater for my disability, as I have done for the last 16 years I've been in the wheelchair. I was told a booking was made and sent me a 'tracker', to track the progress and location of my booking. I made subsequent calls to ask about the progress as nothing was happening, at 11:08am, 11:51am, and 2:23pm. On the 2:23pm phone call, the staff member on the phone even made the statement of how ridiculous it is to be waiting 4 hours for a taxi.

However, if that wasn't bad enough, 4 hours turned into 13 hours before I received a call that a cab was on its way. I had many phone calls during this 13 hour waiting period, asking if I still wanted the taxi, etc. During the 10:43pm call, I was told 'Woolworths is shut, do you still want a taxi?'. I said yes, as I need to get out for my own mental health. Also during this phone call, they made the admission that they don't think they are able to get me a suitable taxi and seek other arrangements...only after 12 hours of waiting for this cab, was I informed.

Following this, at 11:40pm, I received another call. This was answered by one of my carers, as I was too exhausted from being up and waiting for this cab for most of the day. They said I can have a cab in 15-30 minutes...which would have made it midnight. My carer took the diligence to use this opportunity to book a 10am cab for the following day, so I would be able to finally leave my house and get the grocery shopping. But unfortunately, things don't go to plan, and with my health and conditions as they are, sitting in my wheelchair for that long, exhausting myself to wait for this taxi, I was unable to even get out of bed today, and the carer on duty has even contacted my doctor for a telehealth appointment, as I am exhausted, in significant pain, but also quite upset that this was all avoidable.

Due to the circumstances of the day before, I had to cancel that 10am booking for today (3rd April 2023), as the pain was far too great and the exhaustion from the day before have really taken its toll on me...that makes it another day I am stuck inside my house, unable to go anywhere, but now I am also left without groceries and the outing, to be frank, the outing is more important than anything, as it gives me the SOCIAL and COMMUNITY interaction that I struggle with, compared to able-bodied people. Normal people are able to interact whenever they want to, whereas people like myself require help and services to do the basic things that normal folk do daily.

I am aware that I'm not the only one who is experiencing the day to day struggles of being disabled, but it sure feels like some of us are being left behind...Far behind. At this point, it would be more effective for me to just drive my wheelchair on the road (which is illegal) and wait for the police to come and they call me a cab.

What shocks me more is, from further research, [REDACTED] 'proudly' displays NDIS and there's a section from the website that intrigues me, as it certainly sounds far from the truth in my experience.

[REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]

Furthermore, with the circumstances and events, with the fact I would be willing to gamble my life on it, there would have been many taxi's with the ability to drive me in operation yesterday, which leads me to believe that this was either negligent or wilful discrimination.

“The Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA) makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person, in many areas of public life, including employment, education, getting or using services, renting or buying a house or unit, and accessing public places, because of their disability.”

- Australian Human Rights Commission, DDA 1992 (Cth)

I was denied the ability to use a service for 14 hours, denied the ability to access the community/areas of public life, against my will. Under the legislature that is revised and current, whether a wilful or negligent act, it has caused UNJUSTIFIABLE HARDSHIP TO MYSELF, and not unto the taxi company, as they are a registered and willing provider of such services. (Cit 10 (b), Cit. 11 (1)a,b, of Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth), Federal Register of Legislation.

Considering all of this, I am going to be escalating this matter to all the appropriate channels, as these occurrences are increasingly more common, and someone needs to take action. I am expecting a prompt reply before close of business Thursday 7th April 2023. Its more than an apology I am looking for. I am looking for change, and more care and consideration for those of us you claim to cater for and care about, flaunting the NDIS logo's, while leaving a good portion of us behind.

Regards,
Robert Wood

Rob Wood
[Redacted signature block]