



Stage 2 Reforms of the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002



Infrastructure access paths: Stairs on buses

Currently, there are no specific requirements for stairs on buses in the Transport Standards, and the existing requirements are lacking accessibility features for people with disability to be able to use stairs on buses. There is an opportunity to update references to Australian Standards and provide specific requirements for stairs on buses which are aligned with industry standards and are accessible to people with disability.

Reform options

Maintain current requirements in the Transport Standards

Transport Standards Section 14.4, *Compliance with Australian Design Rule 58 – conveyances* and Section 14.3 *Compliance with Australian Standards – conveyances*, would remain unchanged and no additional guidance would be issued.

Non-regulatory option

Guidance would be updated to include advice on the accessibility of stairs on buses, including:

- Step and stair design, specifically location, risers, nosings and luminance contrast
- Handrail location and design
- Operators and providers can choose to follow:
 - AS1428.1 (2009) *Design for access and mobility – General requirements for access – new building work, Clause 11.1 (c), (d), (e), (f) and (g)*
 - AS1428.1 (2009) *Design for access and mobility – General requirements for access – new building work, Clause 12 (b)*

Regulatory option

Transport Standards section 14.4 would be amended to include updated requirements for stairs on buses, including accessibility features (including any requirements retained or amended from the status quo):

- Steps and stairs must comply with Australian Design Rule 58 to the extent that that rule sets requirements that conflict with these Standards.
- Step edges and stair tread nosings must comply with AS1428.1 (2009) *Clauses 11.1 (c), (d), (e), (f), and (g)*.

- Passenger doors must be fitted with handrails accessible when the doors are open and the minimum distance between the handrails of the door that provides the access path must be a minimum of 850 millimetres. For outward opening doors, handrails must be permanently fixed to the body.
- Steps and stairs must not intrude into access paths.
- TGSIs are not required at bus steps or stairs.

This Section would apply to buses (except dedicated school buses).

Transport Standards Section 11.3, *handrails on stairs – conveyances*, would be amended to include the following:

- A handrail on stairs or steps need not extend beyond the top or bottom of the steps and stairs.
- If the handrail is interrupted or terminates abruptly at the top or bottom step a domed warning indicator with a height of between 4 to 5 millimetres and a diameter of between 10 to 12 millimetres must be provided on the top of the handrail 150 millimetres from the end of the handrail.
- Handrails must have at least 30 per cent luminance contrast with any background wall or surface adjacent to the handrail, within a distance of 2000 millimetres from the handrail.
- Handrails must comply with AS1428.1 (2009) *Clause 12 Handrails*.

This Section would apply to conveyances, (except dedicated school buses) and small aircraft.

The Transport Standards Guidelines and / or The Whole Journey would be updated to reflect new requirements and include specific guidance for buses.

Case study

Yuvi catches the bus to school everyday with his older brother and mother. He has a vision impairment and enjoys sitting on the upper deck with his brother.

Yuvi's experience today

Yuvi and his family board a double-decker bus one morning. Yuvi approaches the stairs leading to the upper deck. Yuvi takes a moment to find the first step, as it does not have a contrast strip. His mother suggests he hold the handrail, however Yuvi struggles to identify the handrail as it's a similar colour as the adjacent wall. Yuvi struggles to hold onto the handrail and navigate the steps, which blur together. The bus departs before Yuvi is able to reach the upper deck and he bumps his knee. His mother suggests he stays on the lower deck.

Yuvi's experience under the proposed reforms

Yuvi and his family board a double-decker bus one morning. Yuvi approaches the stairs leading to the upper deck. Each step is clearly visible thanks to the bright and wide contrast strips on the stair nosing. Yuvi grips onto the handrail as the bus lurches forward. Yuvi feels confident that he can follow his brother upstairs. Yuvi is thrilled that he can sit with his brother and mother at the upper deck.

Have your say

Public consultation on the Stage 2 reform of the Transport Standards will open from 15 March to 9 August 2022.

For further information:

- **Website:** <https://www.infrastructure.gov.au>
- **Call:** 1800 621 372
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- **Survey:** <https://edm.infrastructure.gov.au/survey.php?sid=28720&name=stairs-on-buses>