

Accessible Public Transport in Victoria

ACTION PLAN 2020–2024



Authorised by the Victorian Government, Melbourne

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Foreword

The Andrews Labor Government is building an inclusive community where everyone can reach their full potential.

We want to ensure people with disability – 20 per cent of our population – are included as our State grows and changes over time.

We are making the most of the \$70 billion Big Build infrastructure program to improve access to transport for all Victorians. The new stations being built as part of our Level Crossing Removals Project, the Metro Tunnel and its five new city stations, rail infrastructure including the Melbourne Airport Rail Link, our new bigger metro trains and next generation trams will make our public transport system more accessible and promote equality.

It's not all about infrastructure. Passengers travelling on Victoria's public transport network will have confidence to travel thanks to updated tools and better information.

The Victorian Government has recently unveiled the new-look PTV app, which has been updated and redesigned to be fully accessible, especially for those passengers who are blind or low-vision and who rely so heavily on our public transport network. We are making sure our call centre and transport information hub staff are well trained, establishing a Try Before You Ride annual community confidence building event and rolling out passenger information displays that respond to diverse needs.

The Accessible Public Transport in Victoria Action Plan 2020 - 24 (the Action Plan) shows our commitment to reducing and eliminating barriers across all modes of transport. By setting out the steps needed to improve access to transport, this Action Plan complements Victoria's third State disability plan, *Absolutely Everyone – State disability plan 2017 – 2020*, and supports *Getting to work: Victorian public sector disability employment action plan 2018–2025* as well as *Every Opportunity: Victorian economic participation plan for people with disability 2018-2020*.

This Action Plan will be regularly refreshed to ensure it remains in step with ongoing actions, investments and change, and reflects future consultation with Victorians. Implementing this Action Plan will require collaboration by all transport agencies if we are to deliver meaningful access to bus, train, tram and commercial passenger vehicle services throughout Victoria for all Victorians.

Hon Ben Carroll MP
Minister for Public Transport
October 2020

Secretary's message

The Department of Transport brings together all modes of transport to deliver an integrated transport system for all Victorians.

We plan and operate the transport system in a way that responds to the needs of the people that travel on it - focused on where people need to go, rather than what mode they use.

Our *Accessible Public Transport in Victoria Action Plan 2020 - 2024* (the Action Plan) identifies opportunities to improve the whole-of-journey experience for people with disability by collectively identifying gaps in accessibility and exploring other transport options, including new and emerging transport solutions.

Delivering this Action Plan requires collaboration across Victoria's public transport sector. Our aim is to build a culture across the portfolio that focuses on integrated accessible transport that responds proactively to the needs of people and communities.

We will work with our transport operators and consult with passengers to plan and coordinate accessibility across Victoria's transport system.

Working together, the Action Plan will lead to more efficient and effective access for people with disability to work, education, services, recreation, family and friends.

Consistent with the *Getting to work: Victorian public sector disability employment action plan 2018-2025*, we have a strong commitment to our people, and our employees play a critical role in implementing this Action Plan. Increasing the employment of people with disability is good for business, and it reflects our diverse community.

Paul Younis
Secretary
Department of Transport, Victoria
October 2020

1. Introduction

The Victorian Government's *Accessible Public Transport in Victoria Action Plan 2020 - 2024* (the Action Plan) takes a whole-of-journey approach to accessibility. The public transport network spans the State. Challenges faced in regional Victoria differ from those in metropolitan Melbourne. We understand the differences and impacts on regional areas and aim to further increase accessibility to benefit the whole community, no matter where you live. This includes access to buses, trains, trams, rideshare and emerging, flexible transport options.

The Action Plan identifies opportunities to improve the whole of journey experience. This includes providing people with disability the ability to plan their journey and access information when travelling, in addition to getting physical access to transport services that are better connected.

Flexible transport solutions - including commercial passenger vehicles - can help provide first and last mile transport, reducing barriers to access. More broadly, accessible commercial passenger vehicles support people with disability when faced with barriers to the transport system.

Our Action Plan is based on a set of priorities set out below.

Priority One: Customer, community and engagement

People with disability have equitable, dignified and responsive access to customer service and are provided the opportunity to interact and engage to identify continuous improvement.

Priority Two: Access to public transport services

People with disability will have increased access to train, tram, bus, coach, ferry and commercial passenger vehicle services, including responsive and timely information on disruptions, cancellations and major events.

Priority Three: Accessible processes and systems

People with disability will benefit from inclusive and accessible processes and systems.

Priority Four: Access to facilities

Universal design principles and dignified access to buildings and public transport infrastructure will be included in network expansions and upgrades.

Priority Five: Workplace accessibility

Inclusive practices for employment of people with disability will create accessible work environments.

The Action Plan aims to position accessibility and inclusion as fundamental values where our employees at every level embrace the inclusion of people with disability.

A NEW APPROACH FOR REGIONAL VICTORIANS

The Flexible Local Transport Solutions Program provides financial support to seed small-scale initiatives across regional Victoria. The program is designed to address transport disadvantage and improve transport access in regional areas. It aims to support flexible, tailored transport services or trials in regional Victoria. The program provides support to marginalised and disadvantaged members of the community, particularly those that are mobility disadvantaged or those that are living in remote areas.

ConnectU Community Transport Service is a community-centred transport initiative that enables people in the Warrnambool area to access transport for medical, educational, social and economic reasons.

The service provides safe and easy transport option for people who find it difficult to travel.

ConnectU volunteers drive residents who can't catch buses, are financially disadvantaged or don't have family or local support to participate in community life and self-care.

The recent Flexible Local Transport Solutions Program funding, received by ConnectU, enabled the purchase of a new Honda Odyssey. This is a seven-seater vehicle which will cater for more passengers with specific mobility requirements. The two seats directly behind the driver are electrically controlled so that they can move right to the edge of the door and back again with ease. The third row of seats allow more ambulant passengers to share this vehicle, or alternatively allow room for wheelchairs and wheelie walkers to be transported with clients.

The Flexible Local Transport Solutions Program is one way we are working to provide equitable and dignified access to public transport.



2. Policy context for access and inclusion

The Action Plan is guided by State, Commonwealth and International laws and policies.

In Victoria, people with disability are protected against discrimination in the use of public transport services under State and Commonwealth laws. Under the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (Vic) (EOA) and the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth) (DDA) it is unlawful to discriminate on the basis of disability in the provision of goods and services (including transport services), and in relation to the access or the use of public premises. The following disability standards have been made under the DDA:

- Disability (Access to Premises - Buildings) Standards 2010 (Cth) (APS)
- Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002 (Cth) (DSAPT)

Action plans are a strategy for identifying and changing practices that may result in discrimination against people with disability. Under the DDA, preparation of an action plan is voluntary, however it must meet certain requirements. This Action Plan meets the requirements of an action plan under the DDA.

This Action Plan will assist our transport agencies to fulfil the duty under the EOA to take reasonable and proportionate measures to eliminate discrimination as far as possible. The implementation of this Action Plan will also support the objectives of the *Transport Integration Act 2010* (Vic) (TIA), in particular the transport system objective of social and economic inclusion.

This objective will be supported by minimising barriers to accessing the transport system and by providing tailored infrastructure, services and support for persons with disabilities. The implementation of this Action Plan will also support the transport portfolio in meeting its obligations under the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* (Vic) and the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. This will occur by providing equitable and dignified access to services, facilities, planning, communications and employment processes.

This Action Plan also supports *Absolutely Everyone - Victorian State Disability Plan 2017 – 2020* - the overarching framework to support mainstream services and environments to improve the lives of people with disability. Pillar One, *Inclusive Communities*, 'Key priority 3: Public transport', sets out the Victorian Government's commitment to improving access to public transport and point-to-point transport services, including wheelchair accessible vehicles. *Absolutely Everyone - Victorian State Disability Plan 2017–2020* is also a key way in which the Victorian Government is implementing the *National Disability Strategy 2010–2020*, endorsed by the Commonwealth and all State and Territory governments.

A framework for access and inclusion

We are delivering accessibility outcomes by removing barriers to enable a public transport network that caters for as many people as possible. We have taken the opportunity to focus on the Social Model of Disability to influence the development of this Action Plan.

The Social Model of Disability is outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and defines 'disability' as:

'a long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment which in interaction with various barriers may hinder a person's full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.'

This model highlights the impact of barriers placed by society on people with disability, rather than a person's own impairment. It puts the person at the forefront and highlights that it is the environment or negative attitudes as the disabling factors for people with disability. In embedding access and inclusion as core business, we will create a culture where the environmental and attitudinal barriers are removed, and accessibility is widely considered in all policies, processes and decisions.

Australia has an ageing population. The accessible characteristics of our public transport system can also determine whether an older person can remain independent and contribute to their communities and families. With an emphasis on providing a framework for access and inclusion, removing barriers will have a significant positive impact on increasing independence for our ageing population.



3. Progress to date

Public Transport

Our demonstrated good progress towards accessible public transport across Victoria since 2013, and our achievements against the *Accessible Transport in Victoria Action Plan 2013 – 2017*, are summarised below.

The structure of this section follows the four priorities in the Action Plan 2013 – 2017.

Priority One: Customer service

People with a disability and those with mobility restrictions can expect to receive an equivalent level and quality of customer service, information and support from public transport service providers.

We have continued to support the partnership with Travellers Aid to strive towards an inclusive public transport network for all community members. Travellers Aid provides meaningful services for people with disability, such as fully accessible toilets with ceiling hoist, adult change table and experienced and qualified client support officers, medical companions to accompany people to and from medical appointments, a buggy service at Southern Cross Station and Seymour Station to assist people with disability to travel throughout the stations, and low-cost mobility equipment hire.

V/Line gained accreditation for the international Communication Access Symbol in 2016, making V/Line the first public transport organisation in the world to achieve this accreditation, along with the public transport call centre and information hubs. V/Line provides communication tools such as an alphabet board, picture and sentence boards and reminder and journey cards.

V/Line also introduced a quarterly Accessibility Update newsletter for customers and stakeholders and created an online booking system for passengers with disability who hold a Travel Pass to allow an alternative way to plan their journey.

Metro Trains Melbourne (MTM) now have hearing loops available at 39 metropolitan stations to assist in communication and customer service for people with hearing impairments and the deaf community. In addition, all premium stations, as well as 60 other stations across Melbourne, have display boards to show train times and destinations.

Yarra Trams provided accessibility training for its drivers on induction as well as a refresher course, including guidance on communication with passengers with disability. Additionally, since 2015, all A, B and C Class trams have been fitted with Vehicle Passenger Information Systems (VPIS), representing 74 per cent of trams now fitted with VPIS enabling automated next stop information in audio and visual formats. This includes information on when the next accessible stop will come up, free tram zone areas and whether the tram doors open on the left or the right side of the vehicle.

Priority Two: Consultation and community engagement

Active engagement by transport agencies with a range of stakeholders, including people with a disability or mobility restriction and older people, to ensure they are adequately consulted about ways to improve access to the network and any changes to public transport infrastructure or services.

The Department of Transport as PTV, in partnership with Vision Australia, Guide Dogs Victoria and Yooralla, implemented the 'Travelling in the Shoes of Others' program to increase awareness of public transport accessibility issues. This program has strengthened the Department of Transport's relationship with transport accessibility groups and is now a core component of the public transport staff induction program. The Department of Transport as PTV also held major forums for people with disability and their carers to obtain meaningful feedback on whole-of-trip planning to improve accessible transport.

We continued to build partnerships across the tourism sector to improve the visitor experience on public transport. Major collaborations included Destination Melbourne, the Victorian Tourism Industry Council, the City of Melbourne and regional tourism groups and organisations. This collaboration supports the key factors in enhancing visitor experience; a sense of welcome; transport networks; integrated messaging; digital connectivity, and accessibility.

The Public Transport Access Committee (PTAC) members were appointed in 2016 to provide independent advice to the Minister for Public Transport and the Department of Transport on issues related to transport accessibility. The committee provides a direct consumer and community voice for inclusive and accessible public transport, advocating for the needs of people with disability, the ageing population and vulnerable groups.



PTAC has contributed to many public transport initiatives, including:

- the review and endorsement of Department of Transport Vertical Access Requirements and Design Guide
- provision of accessible toilets at metropolitan stations
- advocating for Changing Places facilities across Victoria, including opportunities for Changing Places facilities as part of the Metro Tunnel project and stations upgraded as part of level crossing removal program.

PTAC has been part of our engagement on commercial passenger vehicle reforms and broader review of point-to-point transport services. PTAC has had input into the design and roll out of the bigger, better metro trains, along with accessibility improvements across the tram network, to ensure safe and reliable access.

Yarra Trams' Accessibility Reference Group (ARG) has been running since 2014 and was created to ensure the community had the opportunity to be consulted on new projects and asset upgrades. Yarra Trams' ARG includes representatives from 13 key disability and support group organisations along with the Public Transport Ombudsman Office.

In 2015, V/Line set up an ARG to assist with the implementation of its 2015–2018 Accessibility Action Plan. V/Line has since been involved in the user consultation on Caroline Springs Station that resulted in an upgraded accessible toilet and an additional protective barrier to shield customers in the waiting room from automatic sliding doors. In 2018, V/Line

developed and widely promoted an online customer survey for people with disability to engage the community on aspects of accessible transport and services. In 2019, V/Line published its 2019–22 Accessibility Action Plan, which aims to build on the improvements achieved to-date. There is still much to be done, and V/Line is working towards fully meeting the needs of customers in regional Victoria. This includes upgrading V/Line trains, and extensive staff training.

In 2016, MTM convened its first ARG to ensure passengers engagement in accessibility outcomes and inclusive service. The ARG continues to provide strategic advice on improvements, as well as participating in consultations for modifications of the network.

Priority Three: Access to public transport services

Travelling on trains, trams, buses and coaches is to be made progressively more accessible to people with a disability or mobility restriction and older people, by identifying barriers to access and making improvements to public transport services.

We have worked with our transport operators to identify and remove multiple barriers to public transport services for people with disability over the last five years. However, the challenge remains with our large and complex tram network in ensuring accessibility standards are met and improving access to transport services. With one of the largest tram networks in the world, the Victorian Government is undertaking significant upgrades and rolling stock replacement programs to improve accessibility.



Our trams are progressively being replaced. The first low-floor high capacity E-Class Tram was delivered and deployed in 2013 on route 96. The Victorian Government ordered 10 new trams in the 2019-20 state budget to further expand the modern, accessible and high capacity E-Class fleet. This is in addition to the 90 E-Class trams already delivered and on order, bringing the total to 100. All 100 trams will be in service by mid-2021. This will bring the total number of low-floor accessible trams of all types on the network to 200.

Significant changes to the network have also enabled greater access to low-floor trams on route 58 (previously Route 55 and Route 8) to provide improved services to the Parkville medical precinct.

The Victorian Government is improving the accessibility of Melbourne's tram network by building accessible tram stops and matching them with newer, more accessible trams.

The 2019-20 State Budget committed \$3.1 million to investigate options to streamline the design and construction of accessible tram stops, and to prioritise construction of tram stop upgrades across the network.

Building accessible tram stops significantly improves public transport options for all passengers, including people who use a wheelchair, have a vision impairment, or are travelling with prams or luggage. Of more than 1700 stops on Melbourne's tram network, nearly a quarter are now fully accessible.

Prior to 2013, passengers travelling on MTM services had to rely on onboard announcements, visible displays or the

assistance of the driver to know when they were approaching or had arrived at their stop. This was identified as a barrier to independent travel. In response, the Stop Here App was developed and rolled out. The Stop Here App gives passengers with disability the power to navigate the rail network independently, providing an alternative to traditional methods of communication. The App uses the GPS location and speed on a passenger's smart device to determine when they are arriving at, have arrived or are departing a station. The App was the recipient of the Victorian Disability Award for Excellence in Accessible Communication and Technology in 2015.

SmartBus vehicles are now able to 'meet' the bus stop at the kerb and eliminate a 'step' to board the bus. SmartBus stops have tactile ground surface indicators that are used to help people with vision impairment. More than 80 per cent of Melbourne's bus services, 65 per cent of metropolitan bus stops and 56 per cent of regional bus stops are wheelchair accessible.

We have delivered some significant achievements in recent years, including delivering the \$1.75 billion Regional Rail Revival Program, which will upgrade Victoria's regional passenger network.

We have allocated \$2.3 billion to build 65 High Capacity Metro Trains, which will increase capacity and reduce crowding on Victoria's busiest rail corridor and service the Metro Tunnel. The first of these new bigger trains, which are being rolled out onto the network from 2020, will have additional access features, including 28 allocated spaces for people with disability

throughout the train, a fixed semi-automatic boarding ramp for primary boarding, as well as a secondary portable boarding ramp, passenger intercom in each allocated space for two-way communication with the driver, dynamic route maps and passenger information displays with audio and visual about the journey and the next stop, and hearing loop coverage throughout the train.

Ongoing upgrades of tram stops to make them accessible and procurement of more of the modern and bigger low floor E-class trams will enable us to keep a steady pace in improving the accessibility of our tram services. The latest achievements include upgrading the Route 96 stops to provide easy access, with all stops on this route soon to become accessible.

In January we built six new accessible tram stops on Nicholson St, as part of our work towards making Route 96 Melbourne's first fully accessible tram route.

Priority Four: Access to facilities

Access to buildings and public transport infrastructure will be based on universal design principles, particularly where the network is expanded or upgraded.

Recent achievements to improve the accessibility of the network include upgrading Route 96 stops at St Vincent's Hospital and the Melbourne Museum to level access stops and the Middle Park tram stop upgrade, as well as the approval of upgrades to level access for the last two remaining stops on this route in January 2020.

Increased access to facilities has also been progressed. The 2018-19 State Budget allocated funding to deliver improvements to the Victorian public transport accessibility program, including the Essendon Station Enabling Works, the upgrade of the Watergardens train station and the Oakleigh station upgrade.



This builds on the 2015-16 Budget which invested \$14.8 million over two years to fund accessibility upgrades, including the:

- installation of Raised Boarding Platforms in six stations;
- shelter upgrades across nine stations;
- accessible toilet installations and upgrades across 10 stations;
- lift upgrades to the Watergardens station;
- installation of Tactile Ground Surface Indicators at eight station,
- as well as the City Loop stations;
- upgrades to 14 platforms between the Camberwell and Box Hill Stations and to the Clifton Hill Station;
- and installation of audio-visual passenger information on trams (69 A-Class, 36 C1-Class and 5 C2-Class trams).

2018 marked the return of the first passenger train to Mernda since 1959 including three new stations with accessible and inclusive facilities at Middle Gorge, Hawkstowe and Mernda.

As part of continuous improvement, V/Line has delivered upgrades to a number of existing stations with the installation of:

- Boarding Assistance Zones on platforms,
- online bookings for customers with disability,
- development of station Accessibility Maps and other infrastructure projects to increase access at stations.

V/Line has also continued to work with coach operators to increase the number of accessible coaches available for V/Line services.

Following a trial in 2013, MTM trialed changes to the recommended height, as well as modifications to the platform gap fillers for an improved boarding experience. There are now 153 raised boarding platforms installed across 63 stations.

2018 marked the return of the first passenger train to Mernda since 1959 including three new stations with accessible and inclusive facilities at Middle Gorge, Hawkstowe and Mernda.



TRAVEL PASS

DOOG

pakite

Please
don't
feed
the
dog

THREE NEW STATIONS; MIDDLE GORGE, HAWKSTOWE AND MERNDA

When the 8-kilometre Mernda Rail Extension opened in August 2018, it brought transport to Melbourne's flourishing outer suburbs, as well as connections to schools, shopping centres and the CBD.

Each station was built with the area's surrounds in mind; for example, Mernda Station is inspired by the shape of an Australian rural homestead. The new Mernda Town Centre will eventually adjoin the new station, connecting commuters to shops and an entire transport hub.

New low-floor bus routes connect to the three new stations at Middle Gorge, Hawkstowe and Mernda, with close to one thousand train services running each week.

The three new stations at Mernda, Hawkstowe and Middle Gorge have been designed using universal and equitable access principles.

The stations accommodate people with a disability, the elderly, people with prams and children, people with luggage or shopping and more. In fact, Middle Gorge station (adjacent to Marymede Catholic College), is used by hundreds of students each day, helping to ease congestion on the busy Plenty Road nearby.

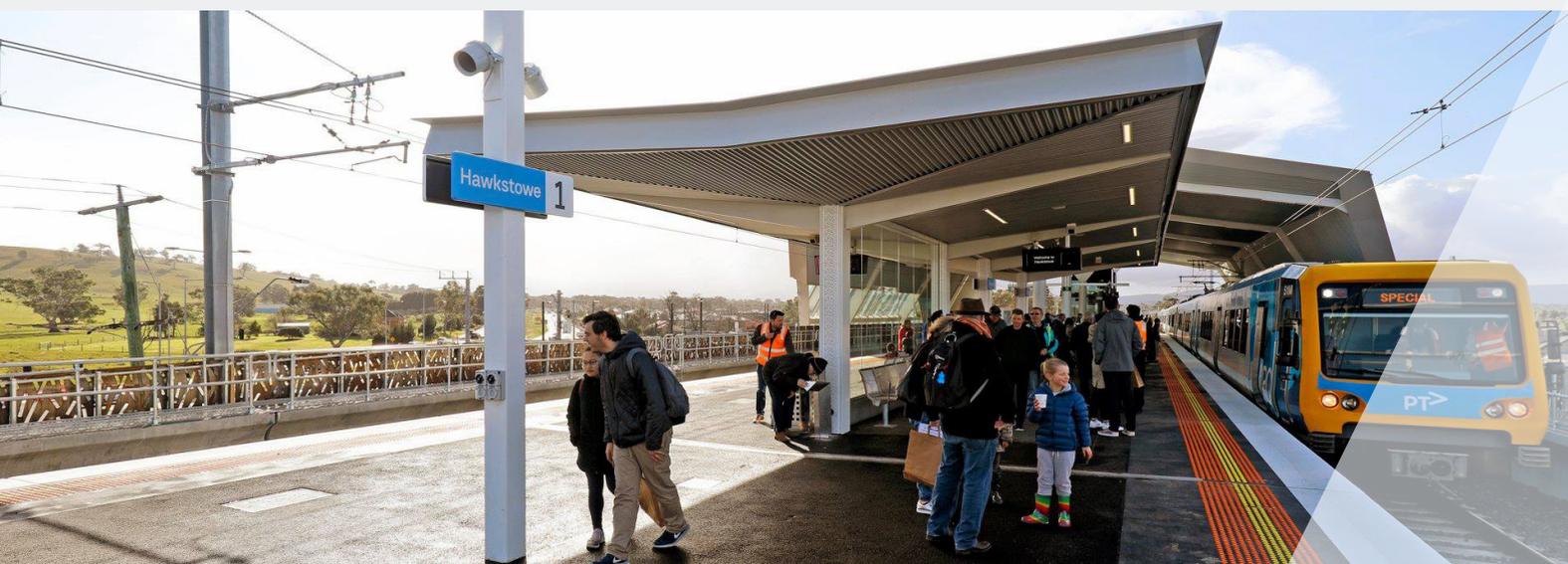
The stations have been designed with accessibility as a key feature. They meet the: *Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1992* requirements and the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002.

Australian Standard AS1428 – Design for access and mobility.

Public Transport Victoria's 2016 Vertical Access Requirements and Accessibility Reference Guide, which are based on universal design principles.

At Mernda and Hawkstowe stations, the design includes two oversized lifts with back-up power for passengers to access the elevated platforms.

Middle Gorge Station is at ground level, however, there are also two oversized lifts with back-up power to access the pedestrian underpass. There are accessible toilets and car parks at each station.



Commercial Passenger Vehicles

The Action Plan includes commercial passenger vehicles in its framework.

Reforms to the commercial passenger vehicle industry are already working to complement accessibility improvements for public transport. When the *Commercial Passenger Vehicle Industry Act 2017* came into effect on 9 October 2017, there were 636 licensed wheelchair accessible taxis in Victoria. Since that time, over 230 additional wheelchair accessible vehicles entered the industry as at the end of June 2019.

At the end of June 2019, the number of conventional unbooked vehicles in Victoria had doubled. Each of those vehicles are required to facilitate the Multi-Purpose Taxi Program (MPTP) user subsidy scheme – therefore there are more vehicles than ever before offering subsidised travel for eligible people with disability. The industry regulator, Commercial Passenger Vehicles Victoria (CPVV) administers the MPTP. The Victorian Government will continue to monitor these trends in the commercial passenger vehicle industry to ensure there is ongoing supply of wheelchair accessible commercial passenger vehicles, as well as vehicles that can facilitate passengers to take MPTP trips.

We are also investigating ways to expand the MPTP to more commercial passenger vehicles. Expanding access to the MPTP will provide MPTP members with genuine choice and access to a range of services as well as a net increase in the number of commercial passenger vehicles that can facilitate access to public transport services.

The Victorian Government's commercial passenger vehicle reforms are designed to improve accessible commercial passenger vehicle services, particularly in regional areas. CPVV pays a lifting fee when a driver loads and unloads an MPTP passenger travelling in a wheelchair or scooter into a wheelchair accessible vehicle (WAV), and the lifting fee has been increased to \$21.10 per trip, funded from an additional \$25 million allocated to fund improvements to services for people with disability. The government has also appointed a Disability Commissioner to CPVV to continue its drive to make commercial passenger vehicle services more accessible.

Each of these initiatives provide opportunities to improve the nexus between traditional public transport services and other transport options.

RIDESHARE FOR MPTP PASSENGERS

In the future we aim to introduce more transport options for MPTP passengers.

As part of a new MPTP Expansion Project, we're currently partnering with Booking Service Providers to trial technology that may enable them to carry MPTP passengers, subject to strict controls.

We're working with industry to ensure their technology is compatible with ours, that they can offer a safe service and that entitlements don't change (passengers receive the full subsidy and don't have to pay a lifting fee).

Following the successful completion of their trial as part of the MPTP Expansion Project, Oiii vehicles are now providing services to MPTP passengers.

Oiii vehicles operate in Melbourne and use a tablet device that acts as a card reader, GPS and trip meter. The tablet displays a driver's identification, records MPTP member details, calculates MPTP member subsidies and processes payments, when providing commercial passenger vehicle services to MPTP members.



4. Role of the public transport sector agencies

From 1 July 2019, three organisations – VicRoads, Public Transport Victoria and the Department of Transport – came together as one department.

This change is all about making it easier to move around and stay connected to jobs, education, recreation and each other, whatever way you travel.

It means the way we plan and operate the transport system will match the way people and travel on it.

Like other global cities around the world, we will be integrated and focused on where people need to go, rather than what mode we use.

The Department of Transport delivers the aims of the *Transport Integration Act 2010* (Vic) (TIA) to ensure an integrated and sustainable transport system.

Commercial Passenger Vehicles Victoria (CPVV) (formerly the Taxi Services Commission) regulates the commercial passenger vehicle industry in Victoria.

Like other global cities around the world, we will be integrated and focused on where people need to go, rather than what mode we use.



5. Actions

The Department of Transport (DoT) is tasked with leading, prioritising and driving the key actions outlined in this Action Plan.

PRIORITY ONE: CUSTOMER, COMMUNITY AND ENGAGEMENT

People with disability have equitable, dignified and responsive access to customer service and are provided the opportunity to interact and engage to identify continuous improvement.

OBJECTIVE 1. Frontline staff are equipped with tools and resources to assist customers with disability.

ACTIONS	OUTCOME	MEASURE	TIMEFRAME	AGENCY
1.1 Disability awareness training will be provided to all frontline staff.	Transport operator staff demonstrate disability confidence in assisting customers with disability	How many staff have been trained. Increase customer satisfaction via feedback mechanisms.	Ongoing	DoT CPVV
1.2 Access and inclusion tools and resources are developed and implemented to ensure frontline staff can assist customers with disability.	Transport service staff are aware of accessibility information to assist customers.	Increase customer satisfaction via feedback mechanisms.	Year 2	DoT CPVV

OBJECTIVE 2. Accessible information and assistive technology continues to be available to all passengers to assist with planning and using public transport services.

ACTIONS	OUTCOME	MEASURE	TIMEFRAME	AGENCY
2.1 Continue to provide accessible options in timetables, ticketing and route information in accessible formats.	Access to information provides easier end to end travel for people with disability.	Information is readily available for people with disability.	Ongoing	DoT CPVV
2.2 Websites continue to meet Level AA compliance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0).	Access to information provides an easier end to end travel experience for people with disability.	Increase customer satisfaction via feedback mechanisms.	Ongoing	DoT

OBJECTIVE 3. People with disability have increased opportunities to engage with transport operators to provide feedback on all aspects of public transport issues.

ACTIONS	OUTCOME	MEASURE	TIMEFRAME	AGENCY
3.1 Develop and implement inclusive and equitable community consultation guidelines for Lead project agencies.	People with disability are included in all aspects of community consultation.	Increased consultation with people with disability.	Year 1	DoT
3.2 Conduct forums to inform people with disability about the implementation of the Accessible Transport Action Plan.	People with disability are engaged to provide innovative solutions for the implementation of the plan.	Increased consultation with people with disability.	Year 1 Year 2 Year 3 Year 4 Year 5	DoT CPVV
3.3 Continue to promote and consult with the disability sector and broader community for all major infrastructure projects.	People with disability are included in all aspects of community consultation.	Increased consultation with people with disability.	Year 1	DoT
3.4 Ensure effective and ongoing consultation through PTAC is maintained, with a minimum of four meetings per year are held.	People with disability are included in all aspects of community consultation.	Increased consultation with people with disability.	Ongoing	DoT
3.5 Actively promote Rural and regional consultation opportunities where appropriate.	People with disability in rural and regional areas are provided opportunities for consultation.	Increased consultation with people with disability.	Year 2	DoT CPVV

OBJECTIVE 4. Customer Service Charters include access to public transport for people with disability.

ACTIONS	OUTCOME	MEASURE	TIMEFRAME	AGENCY
4.1 Review and align transport operator Customer Service Charters to ensure consistent access requirements are included for people with disability.	People with disability are included in the Charters for fair and equitable customer service outcomes.	Increase customer satisfaction via feedback mechanisms.	Year 1	DoT CPVV
4.2 Explore opportunities to establish an online portal with information on all accessible information and services that support accessible public transport.	People with disability have improved access to information in one place.	An online portal is available with access information from all transport operators.	Year 3	DoT

OBJECTIVE 5. Provide transparent and inclusive emergency protocols to inform people with disability.

ACTIONS	OUTCOME	MEASURE	TIMEFRAME	AGENCY
5.1 Accessibility is included in the development of emergency procedures and in consultation with people with disability.	People with disability are informed on emergency procedures and protocols.	Emergency protocols and procedures are developed and implemented.	Year 1	DoT CPVV

PRIORITY TWO: ACCESS TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES

People with disability will have increased access to train, tram, bus and coach, ferry and commercial passenger vehicle services including responsive and timely information on disruptions, cancellations and major events.

OBJECTIVE 1. Improve accessible information to assist people with disability to have a safe and easy end to end journey.

ACTIONS	OUTCOMES	MEASURE	TIMEFRAME	AGENCY
1.1 Continue to update and expand information and data on access features to assist with travel planning for people with disability.	People with disability can plan their transport journey with confidence.	Access features are reviewed, updated and monitored to ensure accurate information is available.	Ongoing	DoT CPVV
1.2 Scope the development of access feature information in Apps to enable safer and easier travel planning options in real time for people with disability.	People with disability have equitable and dignified access to information to plan their journey.	Online information is made available to people with disability to enable them to efficiently plan their journey.	Year 2	DoT

OBJECTIVE 2. Ensure major disruption coordination, including transport replacement and coordination activities, take into account and cater for the needs of people with disabilities.

ACTIONS	OUTCOMES	MEASURE	TIMEFRAME	AGENCY
2.1 Explore innovative solutions in alternative transport services for people with disability who are unable to access transport during disruptions, cancellations and major events.	People with disability will experience limited impact when changes in service occur.	Management of disruptions includes remedial actions for people with disability.	Year 1	DoT PTV

OBJECTIVE 3. Continue to upgrade 'next service' information with access features at public transport facilities.

ACTIONS	OUTCOMES	MEASURE	TIMEFRAME	AGENCY
3.1 Railway stations to continually be upgraded to have an electronic screen display of next service information and provide timely arrival and departure information via audio service.	People with disability have access to real time information.	Increased number of railway stations with electronic screen displays.	Ongoing	DoT
3.2 Ensure up-to-date technology is available for hearing loops at train stations and guidelines for routine testing protocols and basic user training are developed.	People with hearing impairments have equitable and dignified access to customer service at train stations.	Guidelines are developed, and hearing loops are audited and tested.	Ongoing	DoT
3.3 Work with industry to improve access features into commercial passenger vehicles within Victoria.	People with disability have equitable and dignified access to customer service in commercial passenger vehicles.	Research and analysis reports are completed with access feature options for people with disability.	Year 2	DoT CPVV
3.4 Scope the opportunity for access features and access boarding for ferries.	People with disability have equitable and dignified access to customer service in accessing ferry services.	Research and analysis reports are completed with access feature options for people with disability.	Year 3	DoT
3.5 Tram stops to continually be upgraded to have visual display information of next service or printed timetable display and, audio bollards.	People with disability have access to real time information.	Increased number of visual display information and audio bollards at tram stops.	Ongoing	DoT
3.6 Bus stops and interchanges to continually be upgraded to include visual display information of next service or printed timetables and audio bollards.	People with disability have access to real time information.	Increased number of visual display information and audio bollards at bus stops.	Ongoing	DoT

PRIORITY THREE: ACCESSIBLE PROCESSES AND SYSTEMS

People with disability will benefit from inclusive and accessible processes and systems.

OBJECTIVE 1. Department of Transport and transport operators have inclusive policies and processes to support and promote accessibility.

ACTIONS	OUTCOME	MEASURE	TIMEFRAME	AGENCY
1.1 Include accessibility criteria in procurement, contract management activities and internal requirements for whole-of-organisation purchases.	Requisition of all business purchases, including new trams, trains, buses, coaches and wheelchair accessible vehicles are fully accessible.	Contracts include additional accessibility criteria.	Year 2	DoT CPVV
1.2 Embed mandatory consideration of access features to all changes and variations to the public transport network and its operations.	People with disability benefit from additional access features included in public transport upgrades and changes.	A checklist for network changes or variations to network operations is developed and implemented.	Ongoing	DoT
1.3 Develop guidelines for accessible options in timetables, ticketing and route information.	People with disability benefit from additional access features included in public transport services.	Guidelines are developed and implemented.	Year 3	DoT

OBJECTIVE 2. Department of Transport and transport operators provide accessible feedback mechanisms for all passengers..

ACTIONS	OUTCOME	MEASURE	TIMEFRAME	AGENCY
2.1 Review feedback processes to remove barriers and ensure they are accessible.	People with disability can easily access processes and systems on a fair and equitable basis.	Barriers are removed for people with disability to provide feedback.	Year 1	DoT CPVV
2.2 Ensure feedback systems are updated to include a consistent approach with an access related category for the purpose of continuous improvement.	Systemic issues are identified and resolved in a timely manner.	Increased feedback and input on access issues.	Year 3	DoT CPVV

OBJECTIVE 3. Internal Access Standards are developed and maintained.

ACTIONS	OUTCOME	MEASURE	TIMEFRAME	AGENCY
3.1 Develop and implement a process to aim for DDA and DSAPT compliance for all new projects.	People with disability have dignified and equitable access to new and upgraded facilities and networks.	Increased compliance with DDA and DSAPT.	Year 2	DoT CPVV
3.2 Establish a monitoring and review process for DDA and DSAPT compliance of projects.	People with disability have dignified and equitable access to new and upgraded facilities and networks.	Increased compliance with DDA and DSAPT.	Year 3	DoT CPVV
3.3 Ensure an evidence-based approach is used to prioritise facilities for upgrade or redevelopment across the public transport network and build in accessibility outcomes.	People with disability benefit from upgraded and redeveloped facilities and networks.	Facilities upgrades are prioritised using established evidence-based methods.	Ongoing	DoT
3.4 Review the audit and monitoring framework for public transport facilities in Victoria.	People with disability will benefit from accessible public transport facilities.	Audit and monitoring frameworks are reviewed and implemented.	Ongoing	DoT
3.5 Review the Signage Master Style Guide to include consistent audio announcements, and improved access features.	People with disability will benefit from accessible public transport facilities.	The Signage Master Style Guide is updated and communicated.	Year 2	DoT

OBJECTIVE 4. Ensure systems and processes are accessible.

ACTIONS	OUTCOME	MEASURE	TIMEFRAME	AGENCY
4.1 Develop and maintain a facility matrix across the public transport network to provide access features for use in a Facility Access Guide.	People with disability are enabled to make informed decisions to plan their journey.	A facility matrix is developed and maintained.	Year 3	DoT
4.2 Explore innovative technology solutions and continuous improvements in response to access features and information.	People with disability have access to up-to-date access features across the network.	Technology is included and embedded as options for solutions for the future.	Ongoing	DoT CPVV
4.3 Improve the accessibility of processes for applying for travel passes, concessions and MPTP.	People with disability can easily access applications for discounted travel.	Multiple accessible options are available for people with disability to apply for concessions and travel passes.	Year 2	DoT CPVV

OBJECTIVE 5. Governance & Reporting.

ACTIONS	OUTCOME	MEASURE	TIMEFRAME	AGENCY
5.1 Embed committed Senior Leaders and champions to demonstrate the commitment to access and inclusion.	Access and Inclusion becomes part of core business and is promoted within each organisation.	Staff are disability aware and have greater engagement and capability to implement access and inclusion.	Year 1	DoT CPVV
5.2 Quarterly present to PTAC on progress with the implementation of the Action Plan, outcomes achieved and next steps.	People with disability are included in the process of accountability of the Action Plan.	PTAC provides feedback on increased satisfaction of progress reports.	Ongoing	DoT CPVV
5.3 Establish a senior leader governance forum for the Action Plan.	The Action Plan is progressed, and accountability is cascaded within each organisation.	Staff are disability aware and have greater engagement and capability to implement access and inclusion.	Ongoing	DoT Director of Transport Accessibility and Inclusion
5.4 Report on the progress of the actions and key accessibility metrics, in DoT's annual report.	Transparency and accountability is available to people with the disability and the community.	Increased transparency and accountability for actions within the Action Plan.	Ongoing	DoT CPVV

PRIORITY FOUR: ACCESS TO FACILITIES

Universal design principles and dignified access for buildings and public transport infrastructure will be included in network expansions and upgrades.

OBJECTIVE 1. Prioritise facilities for upgrade or redevelopment across the public transport network and build in accessibility outcomes.

ACTIONS	OUTCOME	MEASURE	TIMELINE	AGENCY
1.1 Utilise audit results and evidence-based research to set priorities for upgrades or redevelopments.	People with disability benefit from upgraded facilities and networks.	Increased accessible facilities across the public transport network	Ongoing	DoT CPVV
1.2 Ensure information about taxi ranks and commercial passenger pick up points is available to assist with travel planning for people with disability.	People with disability benefit from upgraded facilities.	Information about taxi ranks have been updated to assist with travel planning for people with disability.	Year 3	DoT CPVV
1.3 Investigate options for reviewing access to ferry terminals for accessibility requirements.	People with disability will benefit from accessible ferries.	Review completed..	Year 3	DoT
1.4 Establish an implementation plan to progressively upgrade ferry terminals for access and inclusion.	People with disability will benefit from accessible ferries.	An implementation plan is developed.	Year 4	DoT

OBJECTIVE 2. Improve connectivity and interconnections between modes of transport to enhance broader access.

ACTIONS	OUTCOME	MEASURE	TIMELINE	AGENCY
2.1 Continue to improve connections and access between railway stations bus and tram interchanges/stops where new services are introduced.	People with disability benefit from continual access to public transport with greater connectivity.	Audits of connections between modes of transport are completed and monitored.	Ongoing	DoT
2.2 Continue to improve way-finding and signage at stations, stops and interchanges.	People with disability have increased access to way-finding options.	Way-finding features are audited and monitored for continuous improvement.	Ongoing	DoT
2.3 Continue to ensure alterations to existing routes and services maintain and improve net access requirements for all users.	People with disability have increased benefit from accessible public transport.	Alterations to routes and services are maintained with access requirements.	Ongoing	DoT
2.4 Continue to improve access to our roads, shared path network including parking, pedestrian and bike riding infrastructure, and crossing points.	People with disability benefit from improved connectivity and reduced barriers to built infrastructure.	Developing a management plan to identify opportunities to improve access.	Ongoing	DoT

OBJECTIVE 3. Improve access to tram stops across the metropolitan network.

ACTIONS	OUTCOME	MEASURE	TIMELINE	AGENCY
3.1 Continue to implement level access tram stops on tram routes where low-floor trams have been or will be deployed.	People with disability have equitable and dignified access to trams.	Increased number of accessible routes.	Ongoing	DoT
3.2 Continue to construct level access stops to allow safe access to and from trams for people with disability.	People with disability have equitable and dignified access to trams.	Increased number of accessible tram stops.	Ongoing	DoT
3.3 Develop the Stop Rollout Strategy to investigate options to streamline the design and construction of accessible tram stops and to prioritise the construction of tram stop upgrades across the network.	Increased efficiency of stop delivery and improved accessibility outcomes	Production of Stop Rollout Strategy	Year 1 and 2	DoT

OBJECTIVE 4. Improve access to railway stations across Victoria

ACTIONS	OUTCOME	MEASURE	TIMELINE	AGENCY
4.1 Continue to identify access barriers to existing buildings and facilities and develop a priority list to address barriers and improve accessibility outcomes.	People with disability have equitable and dignified access to railway stations.	Railway stations are audited, according to the applicable contractual framework, to support continuous accessibility improvements.	Ongoing	DoT
4.2 Continue to implement access solutions to address the boarding gap barrier for people with disability.	People with disability can access trains safely and independently.	Decrease the size of the boarding gap at increased locations on the network.	Ongoing	DoT
4.3 Continue to increase the availability of accessible toilets and scope options for Changing Places facilities at railway stations.	People with disability have increased access to public amenities.	Increased number of accessible bathroom facilities at train stations.	Ongoing	DoT

OBJECTIVE 5. Improve access to bus and coach services across Victoria.

ACTIONS	OUTCOME	MEASURE	TIMELINE	AGENCY
5.1 Continue to ensure new bus stops and major upgrades at existing bus stops and interchanges are designed to achieve accessibility outcomes.	People with disability have equitable and dignified access to buses.	Increased number of accessible bus stops.	Ongoing	DoT
5.2 Continue to identify access barriers to existing bus stops and interchanges and progressively remove them and improve accessibility outcomes.	People with disability have equitable and dignified access to buses.	Increased number of accessible bus stops.	Ongoing	DoT
5.3 Ensure connecting pathways and way-finding between bus interchanges and railway stations are direct and easily accessible.	People with disability have equitable and dignified access to bus and railway connections.	Improved connecting pathways and signage.	Ongoing	DoT

PRIORITY FIVE: WORKPLACE ACCESSIBILITY

Inclusive practices for employment of people with disability will create accessible work environments.

OBJECTIVE 1. Build an inclusive culture for people with disability.

ACTIONS	OUTCOME	MEASURE	TIMEFRAME	AGENCY
1.1 Review induction and annual organisational training modules to ensure disability awareness training is included.	People with disability are included in the workplace.	Induction training modules include disability awareness training.	Year 1	DoT CPVV
1.2 Review workplace adjustment procedures to support candidates and employees with access requirements.	People with disability are enabled to reach their full potential.	Workplace adjustment processes are reviewed and implemented.	Year 1	DoT CPVV
1.3 Build a repository of resources available to support inclusive workplaces and increase disability awareness.	Staff are 'disability confident'.	Tools and resources are available to assist in building inclusive workplaces.	Year 3	DoT CPVV
1.4 Increase awareness among staff of the Accessible Transport Action Plan.	Staff are aware of their responsibilities in the Action Plan.	Actions are progressed and implemented.	Year 1	DoT CPVV

OBJECTIVE 2. Build an inclusive environment for people with disability.

ACTIONS	OUTCOME	MEASURE	TIMEFRAME	AGENCY
2.1 Ensure workplaces are audited for accessibility and a long-term plan created for any remedial upgrades.	People with disability face fewer barriers in the workplace.	Audits are completed of workplaces and an action plan developed for remedial upgrades.	Year 2	DoT CPVV

OBJECTIVE 3. Increase employment opportunities for people with disability.

ACTIONS	OUTCOME	MEASURE	TIMEFRAME	AGENCY
3.1 Ensure recruitment processes are accessible for people with disability.	Barriers are removed for people with disability in the recruitment process.	Increased number of applications of people with disability.	Year 1	DoT CPVV
3.2 Support the active engagement and recruitment of people with disability.	Build a recruitment culture that values and highlights the business benefits of employing people with disability, and actively seeks to attract people with disability.	Increased number of applications of people with disability.	Year 2	DoT CPVV
3.3 Reduce barriers to people with disability in obtaining and maintaining sustainable and meaningful employment.	People with disability are included in training and development opportunities.	Employee engagement survey – increased job satisfaction.	Year 1	DoT CPVV

6. Implementing the Action Plan

We are creating change for people with disability to enable equitable and dignified access to public transport across Victoria. Progress on implementation will be reported in the Department of Transport Annual Report. Implementation plans will allocate responsibility in more detail and will guide our work to continue progress for access and inclusion across the public transport network. The Action Plan will be communicated to executives and staff through the departmental and agency internal communication channels.

Over the five-year life of the plan, we will consult with people with disability, PTAC, Victorian Disability Advisory Council (VDAC) and the Accessible Public Transport Operations Committee (APTOC). What we learn through consultation will be used to review and evaluate the policies and programs within the Action Plan.

The Action Plan 2020 – 24 is available on the Department of Transport website in a range of accessible formats.



7. Appendices

Acronyms

ACRONYM	DESCRIPTION
AHRC	Australian Human Rights Commission
APS	Access to Premises Standards 2010 (Cth)
APTOC	Accessible Public Transport Operations Committee
ARG	Accessibility Reference Group
CPVV	Commercial Passenger Vehicles Victoria
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
DSAPT	Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002 (Cth)
EOA	Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
HCMT	High Capacity Metro Train
MTM	Metro Trains Melbourne
MPTP	Multi-Purpose Taxi Program
PTAC	Public Transport Access Committee
PTV	Public Transport Victoria
TIA	Transport Integration Act 2010
VDAC	Victorian Disability Advisory Council
VPIS	Vehicle Passenger Information Systems
WCAG	Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

Definitions

Action Plan	Refers to this document, Accessible Public Transport in Victoria Action Plan 2020 - 2024.
Disability	Disability is an evolving concept and disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.
Commercial Passenger Vehicles	A commercial passenger vehicle service is the carriage, for a fare or other consideration, of one or more passengers in a motor vehicle.
Employee Engagement Survey	An annual survey conducted to capture statistics and meaningful data on employee satisfaction and engagement in the organisation.
Metro Trains	Melbourne's metropolitan rail service.
Public Transport Network	Victoria's public transport network comprises train, tram, bus and coach services.
SmartBus	One of Melbourne's network of bus services. Key aspects of the service include more frequent services, extended hours of operation to include late evening and Sunday services, improved timetable information at bus stops, road space priority along certain routes and priority at particular traffic lights and level kerb entry.
Transport Operators	Includes the agencies Metro Trains, V/Line, Yarra Trams and Metro and Regional Bus Operators.
V/Line	Victoria's regional train and coach network.







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