Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport Guidelines 2026

Contents

Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport Guidelines 2026		**1**
Part 1	**General**	**3**
Part 2	**Access paths**	**6**
Part 3	**Manoeuvring areas**	**8**
Part 4	**Passing areas**	**9**
Part 5	**Resting points**	**9**
Part 6	**Ramps**	**9**
Part 7	**Waiting areas**	**10**
Part 8	**Boarding**	**11**
Part 9	**Allocated space**	**14**
Part 10	**Surfaces**	**15**
Part 11	**Handrails and grabrails**	**15**
Part 12	**Doorways and doors**	**17**
Part 13	**Lifts**	**18**
Part 14	**Stairs**	**18**
Part 15	**Toilets**	**19**
Part 17	**Signs**	**19**
Part 18	**Tactile ground surface indicators (TGSIs)**	**20**
Part 20	**Lighting**	**21**
Part 21	**Door controls, switches and general-purpose outlets**	**21**
Part 24	**Gateways**	**21**
Part 25	**Payment of fares**	**22**

Part 26	**Hearing augmentation — listening systems**	**22**
Part 27	**Information**	**22**
Part 28	**Booked services**	**24**
Part 30	**Belongings**	**25**
Part 31	**Priority seating**	**25**
Part 31A	**Training to prevent disability discrimination**	**26**
Part 33	**Compliance**	**27**
Part 35	**Application of Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport Amendment 2026 (amended Transport Standards)**	**30**
Appendix 1	**Exclusions**	**32**

Part 1 General

Division 1.1 Preliminary

1.1 Name of Guidelines

(1) These Guidelines are the *Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport Guidelines 2026* (the **Guidelines**).

(2) These Guidelines supersede the *Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport Guidelines 2004 (No. 3)*.

1.2 Purpose of Guidelines

(1) The *Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002* (referred to in these Guidelines as the **Transport Standards**) aim to eliminate discrimination against persons with disabilities from public transport services as far as possible.

(2) The Transport Standards specify how the objects of the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (the **Act**) are to be achieved in the provision of public transport services. The objects of the Act are:

a) to eliminate, as far as possible, discrimination against persons on the ground of disability;

b) to ensure, as far as practicable, that persons with disabilities have the same rights to equality before the law as the rest of the community;

c) to promote recognition and acceptance within the community of the principle that persons with disabilities have the same fundamental rights as the rest of the community.

(3) The Transport Standards prescribe national requirements for public transport operators and providers to meet their obligations under the Act. The Act makes it unlawful for any person to contravene the Transport Standards.

(4) Under the Transport Standards, public transport services and supporting premises and infrastructure will become more accessible by:

a) the replacement or upgrading of conveyances, premises and infrastructure in accordance with the timeframes outlined in the Transport Standards; and

b) the requirement that, from the commencement of the Transport Standards, all new public transport assets comply with the requirements of the Transport Standards.

(5) The purpose of these Guidelines is to provide guidance on interpreting and complying with the Transport Standards.

(6) The numbering of the Parts in these Guidelines reflects the numbering of the Parts in the Transport Standards. Because these Guidelines do not deal with all the material covered by the Transport Standards, there are gaps in the numbering.

Example

Part 19 (Alarms) of the Transport Standards is not dealt with in these Guidelines so there is no Part 19 in these Guidelines.

1.3 Direct and indirect discrimination

(1) Discrimination can occur either directly or indirectly.

(2) Sections 5 and 6 of the Act define direct and indirect disability discrimination.

(3) Direct disability discrimination may arise if a public transport operator or provider treats a person with a disability less favourably than another person in a similar situation.

(4) Indirect disability discrimination may arise when the impact of an operator's or provider's service is less favourable for a person with a disability than for a person without a disability.

1.4 Disability

(1) There are many types of disability. Public transport operators and providers should consider all types of disability when implementing the requirements of the Transport Standards to ensure their services are accessible and remove discrimination against persons with disabilities as far as possible.

(2) The term 'disability' is defined in section 4 of the Act.

Division 1.2 Scope of the Transport Standards

1.5 Application of Transport Standards

(1) The Transport Standards apply to all operators and providers of public transport services including the conveyances they use and supporting premises and infrastructure. An operator or provider of public transport may include:

a) the Commonwealth;
b) a State;
c) a Territory;
d) a public authority of the Commonwealth;
e) an agency of a State or Territory;
f) a private sector operator or provider;
g) any other person.

1.6 Community transport services

(1) Community transport services are covered by the Transport Standards only if they:

a) use conveyances to which the Transport Standards apply (see the definitions in the Transport Standards); and
b) are funded or subsidised by charity or public money and offer services to the public.

(2) For example, a bus that only provides private services to persons with disabilities does not need to comply with the Transport Standards. However, a bus that offers a public transport service, in addition to its private services, does need to comply with the Transport Standards when providing public transport services.

1.7 Rides in amusement parks

(1) A ride in an amusement park becomes public transport for the purposes of the Transport Standards if it serves to move the general public from one location to another distant location. For example, a monorail system that connects different areas within the park would need to comply with the Transport Standards.

1.8 Issues not dealt with by Transport Standards

(1) If the Transport Standards do not deal with an issue in relation to public transport, the requirements of the Act may apply in relation to the issue. For example, assistance animals are not directly dealt with in the Transport Standards. However, the Act applies in relation to assistance animals in the same way as it applies in relation to having a disability. This means that it is unlawful to discriminate against a person because they have an assistance animal in the areas of public life covered by the Act, including access to public transport services and facilities. This means it is unlawful for the driver of a conveyance to refuse transport to a person with disability because they are travelling with an assistance animal.

1.9 Supply of disability aids

(1) Passengers sometimes need disability aids such as breathing apparatus, body supports, glasses and hearing aids. Operators are not responsible for the supply or operation of this kind of equipment under the Transport Standards.

(2) However, if an operator or provider has taken possession of a person's mobility aid (because it is not possible for the mobility aid to be used on board the conveyance), then pursuant to the Transport Standards they would need to provide that person with an on board wheelchair or direct assistance to safely board the conveyance and to access on board facilities or services.

(3) Operators and providers should notify a person with disability as soon as possible if they cannot transport a disability aid on board or if the person with disability will need to be separated from their aid during the transport journey.

1.10 Safety

(1) The Transport Standards do not address matters of safety that are dealt with by Commonwealth, State or Territory Governments.

(2) The Transport Standards assume the following:

a) mobility aids have effective braking systems;

b) their users can apply the brakes;

c) mobility aids are stable under normal conveyance manoeuvring forces;

d) passengers will ensure that their wheelchairs and similar mobility aids comply with relevant safety requirements such as criteria for belt anchorage points.

(3) Regulations that require passengers to wear safety belts apply equally to all passengers.

1.11 Other applicable requirements

(1) The Transport Standards operate in conjunction with other laws, regulations and codes that apply to public transport. For example, buses must comply with Australian

Design Rule 58 as well as the Transport Standards. However, adherence to the Transport Standards is not a ground for exemption from other statutory requirements, including fire or safety regulations.

(2) A transport-related building or structure that is used in conjunction with or by passengers travelling on a public transport service may be subject to the Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards 2010 (Premises Standards). The purpose of the Premises Standards is to:

a) ensure that dignified, equitable, cost-effective and reasonably achievable access to buildings, and facilities and services within buildings, is provided for people with a disability;

b) to give certainty to building certifiers, building developers and building managers that, if access to buildings is provided in accordance with these Standards, the provision of that access, to the extent covered by these Standards, will not be unlawful under the Act.

(3) Requirements for some non-building aspects of relevant premises remain in the Transport Standards – for example, design specifications for fixtures and fittings.

1.12 Other applicable requirements — Australian Standards (AS) and Australian/New Zealand Standards (AS/NZS)

(1) Where there is reference in the Transport Standards to certain provisions of industry standards such as Australian Standards (AS) and Australian/New Zealand Standards (AS/NZS), operators and providers must comply with these references.

(2) Operators and providers must comply with the version of the industry standard referenced in the Transport Standards.

1.13 Innovation beyond the Transport Standards

(1) The Transport Standards specify the minimum requirements for the provision of public transport services. Operators and providers of public transport are encouraged to work with persons with disabilities to determine how to exceed the requirements of the Transport Standards to further improve the accessibility of their services, premises, infrastructure and conveyances. Operators and providers are also encouraged to adopt new technologies that improve access to public transport services.

Part 2 Access paths

2.1 General

(1) The concept of an ‘access path’ is used in the Transport Standards to specify requirements for independent movement of passengers through conveyances, premises and infrastructure. The existence of an access path is implicit in many sections of the Transport Standards.

2.2 Continuous accessibility

(1) Operators and providers should install access paths at appropriate locations to ensure continuous accessibility within public transport premises, infrastructure and conveyances and between transport nodes, associated parking facilities and connected premises and infrastructure. Access paths should ensure persons with disabilities experience an equal standard of amenity, dignity and convenience when travelling. In multi-modal terminals and public transport precincts, this may require operators and providers to work with other operators and providers and other third parties. The Act places obligations on all parties to ensure public places are accessible to persons with disabilities. This includes public footpaths and walkways.

(2) Accessible car parking spaces that are associated with premises or infrastructure may not necessarily be located within the precinct or clearly attached to the precinct, but may include parking facilities located nearby that are designed for use by passengers using the public transport precinct.

(3) Connected premises or infrastructure are premises or infrastructure which may be "separate" but considered part of, or intended to serve, the public transport precinct. These services may be close or connected by openings through walls, subways, bridges or walkways. Examples of connected premises or infrastructure may include intermodal terminals, passenger loading zones, taxi ranks and bus stops. For example, a bus stop located in a road reserve that abuts a rail station, which is clearly intended to serve the station, should connect to the station entrance via an access path.

(4) Access paths must also be provided that enable passengers to access public spaces and accessible facilities within the premises or infrastructure, such as accessible toilets.

(5) When considering appropriate locations for access paths, operators and providers should consider the following:

a) Access paths should not require people who require a ramp at an entrance to travel a significantly further distance to use the entrance than other people;

b) Access paths should be located as close as possible to drop off points servicing a building entrance;

c) Parts of buildings and associated buildings should be connected by access paths suitable for use by persons with disabilities;

d) Access paths should allow access to areas within buildings used by the public;

e) Access paths should connect main points of a public pedestrian entry to the allotment boundary.

2.3 Avoidance of hazards on access paths

(1) Operators should avoid hazards created by poles, columns, stanchions, bollards and fixtures alongside access paths. For example, operators and providers should avoid the use of short posts to prevent delivery vehicles from driving onto parts of pedestrian areas. Similarly, they should avoid having commercial signs projecting from walls or portable 'sandwich' advertising boards.

2.4 Use of access paths for other purposes

(1) Access paths are often used for other purposes, such as standing areas, but it is expected that passengers will be able to transit them and that they will be cleared for persons with disabilities when required.

2.5 Power assisted and automatic doors on access paths

(1) When conditions allow, power-assisted and automatic doors are recommended for all doors opened by passengers on access paths in conveyances, public transport premises and infrastructure.

2.6 Access paths on conveyances

(1) The intent of the Transport Standards is to make clear that access paths are three-dimensional spaces that have a vertical dimension that must be free from obstructions to allow a person using a mobility device to navigate the path. Where a clear vertical space that extends to the ceiling or roof of the conveyance is not possible, the Transport Standards provide that the vertical dimension must extend at least 1500 mm, measured from the floor of the conveyance, to allow a person sitting in a mobility device to navigate the path.

Part 3 Manoeuvring areas

3.1 General

(1) The Transport Standards recognise that space restrictions and design limitations of many conveyances can inhibit the movement of passengers using wheelchairs or mobility aids. These design limitations include driver location, engine position and roof height restrictions.

(2) It is the intent of the Transport Standards that manoeuvring areas are free from obstructions and intrusions to ensure that wheelchair users may use them to rotate or orient themselves to independently access public transport.

(3) Manoeuvring areas may be used for other temporary purposes, such as fare payment, as long as they remain available for use, if required, by passengers using mobility aids.

3.2 Obstructions in manoeuvring areas on conveyances

(1) The intent of the Transport Standards is to make clear that manoeuvring areas are three-dimensional spaces that have a vertical dimension that must be free from obstructions to allow a person using a mobility device to navigate the area. Where a clear vertical space that extends to the ceiling or roof of the conveyance is not possible, the Transport Standards provide that the vertical dimension must extend at least 1500 mm, measured from the floor of the conveyance, to allow a person sitting in a mobility device to position themselves in the manoeuvring area.

3.3 Co-location of manoeuvring areas with access paths and allocated spaces

(1) The intent of the Transport Standards is that manoeuvring areas are co-located with access paths and allocated spaces to reduce travel distance and difficulty in sometimes crowded conveyances.

Part 4 Passing areas

4.1 Width of passing areas

(1) The intent of the Transport Standards is that passing areas be wide enough for 2 passengers, each using a mobility aid, to pass one another.

4.2 Passing on access paths

(1) The Transport Standards assume that a passenger using a mobility aid should not have to move more than 6 metres along an access path to allow another passenger using a mobility aid to pass.

Part 5 Resting points

5.1 Resting points on access paths

(1) Mobility aid spaces beside resting point seats should be positioned to ensure the mobility aid does not protrude into the access path. The resting point should be configured so that the backrest of the resting point seat aligns with the backrest of a device positioned in the allocated space.

(2) Where more than one resting point is provided along an access path, resting points should be placed on alternating sides of the access path in equal or near equal proportions.

Part 6 Ramps

6.1 Ramps on access paths

(1) Examples of ramps that may be found on access paths include step ramps and kerb ramps.

6.2 Minimisation of fixed gangway gradients

(1) Fixed gangways are access paths that are distinct from static ramps and walkways. In tidal environments fixed gangways vary in gradient according to the tidal cycles. This cyclical variation of gradient introduces problems for designers as the specifications for ramps and walkways differ according to access path gradient.

(2) Fixed gangway design must minimise gradients at all tides to make the access path as accessible as possible. The specification of a 1:14 fixed gangway gradient 'for at least 80% of the high and low tide levels' is offered as a concession for site specific technical difficulties rather than defining an optimal performance outcome.

6.3 Maintaining accessibility of fixed gangways affected by extreme tidal regimes

(1) In some locations that experience extreme tides, maintaining a 1:14 fixed gangway gradient over 80% of the tide range may not be possible. In these locations a process of co-design to reach an equivalent access solution should be considered. See sections 33.3 to 33.5 of the Transport Standards in relation to equivalent access.

6.4 Nationally consistent chart datum and tide tables

(1) Ensuring nationally consistent outcomes for fixed gangway gradients requires an agreed chart datum point. The chart datum point from which the slope of the fixed gangway 'for at least 80% of the high and low tide levels' is calculated is derived from established industry standards in **AS 3962 (2020) clause 1.3.6,** *Guidelines for design of marinas*.

(2) The source of the tidal ranges derived from chart datum is the Australian National Tide Tables (AHP 11). These are the nationally consulted tables.

Part 7 Waiting areas

7.1 General principle

(1) The general principle is that operators and providers should make seats and space available to persons with disabilities wherever waiting areas are provided. Waiting areas include any of the following that offer seating and/or shelter:

a) Departure lounges in airports (including at gates) or coach terminals.
b) Any rail station platform, light rail platform or tram stop platform.
c) Bus stops, bus interchange platforms and bus station platforms.
d) Taxi ranks and passenger loading zones.
e) Ferry wharves and pontoons.

(2) If a boarding point does not have seating and / or shelter associated with it, it would not be classed as a waiting area.

a) Examples of this would be a basic accessible bus or tram stop comprising only a slab or platform, tactile ground surface indicators and signs, or a basic accessible taxi rank comprising boarding points only.
b) Stops used exclusively for disembarkation and where no seating or shelter is provided are not considered waiting areas.

(3) Where multiple providers share responsibility for a space, including waiting areas, operators and providers may need to work with other operators and providers and third parties to ensure there are enough accessible facilities, including waiting areas. The Act places obligations on all parties to ensure public places are accessible to persons with disabilities.

Part 8 Boarding

8.1 Requirements apply to all boarding devices

(1) The requirements in Part 8 of the Transport Standards that relate to boarding devices, apply to a boarding device, regardless of whether the boarding device is stored on board the conveyance or in connected premises or infrastructure.

8.2 Independent access

(1) Independent boarding should be provided at all accessible entrances to a conveyance, noting that some entrances will only become accessible upon the deployment of a boarding device in accordance with section 8.2 of the Transport Standards.

(2) Although operators may be responsible for activating boarding devices, this should not be seen as diminishing the principle that independent access is desired under the Transport Standards. In instances like this, operators and providers should explore emerging mechanisms to provide independent boarding.

(3) The design constraints of some conveyances are such that the operator or provider may choose to provide equivalent access through direct assistance. This should not be seen as diminishing the principle that independent access is desired under the Transport Standards.

8.3 Nominated assistance boarding points

(1) A nominated assistance boarding point is a designated location where passengers can talk to staff about boarding, or to receive information and assistance with boarding.

(2) Persons with disabilities should be able to easily identify a nominated assistance boarding point using signage and TGSIs.

(3) Operators and providers should seek to achieve equivalency, to the greatest extent possible, for amenity and access to facilities from the nominated assistance boarding point (e.g. provision of information, shelter).

8.4 Bus, tram and light rail boarding points

(1) The extent of the boarding point on a bus or tram stop, bus interchange or bus station, or light rail station platform, varies with the layout of the infrastructure. Broadly, it includes the area in which boarding devices must be deployed, and in which people must manoeuvre to enter the boarding device or conveyance door. It would not include any waiting area with seats and/or shelter that may be provided at the stop or platform.

(2) For a number of bus and tram stops and some light rail stations there will be locations (i.e. hilly areas, road reserves or other public areas that have limited space) where a compliant boarding point via either a prescriptive or equivalent access solution may not be achievable. In these circumstances, processes for assessing unjustifiable hardship may be considered.

(3) While cross fall (see fig. 1) can often be dealt with through excavation and retention work, gradient is constrained by road gradient (see fig. 2). Gradients

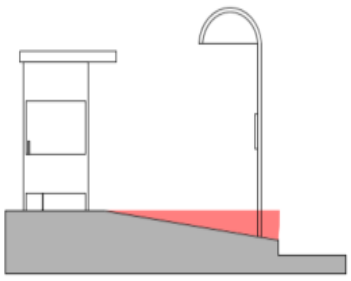

Fig. 1: Crossfall

of boarding points and roads will need to closely align as any difference between the gradient of the boarding point and that of the road will compromise the accessible deployment of the boarding ramp.

(4) Where boarding points intersect with bicycle paths or shared pathways, appropriate measures should be in place to ensure the technical requirements for the pathways do not conflict with those of the boarding point. Further, the priority of people boarding or alighting from the service at the boarding point, over other transient users of the space, should be promoted.

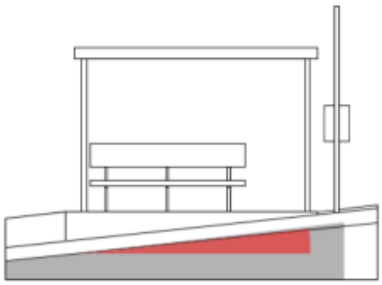

Fig. 2: Longitudinal gradient

8.5 Train and ferry boarding points

(1) The longitudinal and crossfall gradients for bus, tram and light rail boarding points, as outlined in section 8.1B of the Transport Standards, may also be appropriate gradients for the safe design of train and ferry boarding points. These gradients may be varied when required by platform and rolling stock interfaces, gangway design, and fluctuating tide levels.

8.6 Hail-and-ride boarding points

(1) The intent of the Transport Standards is for a passenger to hail these services from any safe and accessible point. The point should be at a location where a hail and ride vehicle can safely and lawfully stop, with consideration given to factors such as road rules and clear sightlines for conveyance operators. In some instances, the accessibility of the stop may be achieved using portable ramps or by using existing kerb ramps at or adjacent to the boarding point. It is the responsibility of the operator to ensure that the passenger can board the vehicle from this accessible boarding point.

(2) Vehicles may have either side or rear loading boarding devices. Passengers with mobility aids should be able to cross kerbs to board rear loading conveyances. This may be achieved using portable ramps or by using existing kerb ramps at or adjacent to the boarding point.

8.7 Ramp edge barriers

(1) Edge barriers may be curved, chamfered or tapered at either end to reduce the likelihood of catching ankles, wheelchair footplates or the like as a passenger enters the ramp.

(2) Ramp edge barriers should contrast in luminance and colour with the ramp surface.

(3) Vertical edge barriers should be the only object protruding more than 7 mm from the surface of the ramp.

8.8 Removable gangway maintenance

(1) A removable gangway should be maintained and subject to regular inspection to ensure the gangway continues to meet the requirements of the Transport Standards. This includes ensuring:

a) there is no distortion of the side or edge barriers;

b) the anti-slip surface is adequately secured and does not present a trip hazard;

c) if applicable, the roller or wheels revolve freely;

d) the stanchions, handrails and side barriers can be easily erected, if applicable, and are secured in position; and

e) luminance contrast requirements of handrails and edge barriers are maintained.

(2) When deployed, a removable gangway may be convex in profile.

8.9 Notification by passenger of need for boarding device

(1) Passengers with disability must be able to communicate the need for boarding assistance at the time of need for unbooked services, rather than through prior booking, to ensure persons with disabilities are to have the same flexibility and amenity as other passengers.

(2) For booked services, the need for boarding assistance should be confirmed at booking.

(3) Notification by the passenger of the need for a boarding device or assistance may be through verbal or visual communication with staff, instead of a device or other formal request system, where appropriate.

8.10 Identification of lead stops

(1) Lead stops offer an effective means for passengers who have mobility, vision or cognitive impairments to board their bus at locations where multiple buses might be standing at the kerbside. The bus will come to the waiting passenger as opposed to the passenger having to locate their bus.

(2) Having a clearly identifiable lead stop will permit passengers to wait for their service in the correct location. This may be achieved using a combination of cues including overhead and tactile signs, TGSIs and smartphone wayfinding or other electronic device solutions. Customer liaison officers should also be considered to assist persons with disabilities to locate the lead stop, particularly at times of peak crowding.

(3) When providing lead stop solutions, the overall service and bus operations should be considered and coordinated. This should include clearly identifying the lead stop boarding point and providing training to bus drivers to highlight why lead stop arrangements promote accessible boarding and to ensure they understand the requirements.

8.11 Taxi ranks and passenger loading zones

(1) Intermediate vehicle spaces in a taxi rank might also be made accessible at the discretion of the asset owner.

(2) Line marking should be installed to delineate accessible vehicle spaces in a taxi rank or loading zone. The rear section of the accessible taxi space should be boldly marked to warn the drivers of following vehicles in the queue not to encroach into the accessible taxi space.

(3) When choosing the location for a taxi rank or loading zone, the gradient and cross fall, as well as the traffic volume of the road, should be considered.

(4) Where possible, taxi ranks and loading zones brought into existence temporarily for short-term purposes should have the same specifications as permanent taxi ranks and

loading zones. This includes taxi ranks and loading zones used for special events or during periods of disruption.

(5) Accessible taxi ranks and loading zones should be connected via access paths to facilities and infrastructure.

(6) The Transport Standards requirements only apply to the extent that an asset is within the control of the operator or provider. Private property owners and government often own or manage off-street carparks that may incorporate passenger loading zones. Although these parties may not be considered operators and providers under the Transport Standards, general obligations under the Act may still apply.

8.12 Accessible parking spaces in infrastructure off-street carparks

(1) The demography of the precinct in which a carpark is located should be considered when determining the ratio of accessible parking spaces to be provided. Locations that have a population of residents or visitors who are likely to have a higher proportion of Australian Disability Parking Permits than average should consider installing more than the minimum number of accessible parking spaces.

Part 9 Allocated space

9.1 Manoeuvring area not to be compromised

(1) Consolidating allocated spaces provides extra space to accommodate people using larger mobility aids. If allocated spaces are consolidated, operators and providers should ensure the access path leading to each space and the associated manoeuvring area dimensions are not compromised in the allocated space consolidation design.

9.2 Buses

(1) Any passenger seat that is not in the allocated space is considered a ‘fixed’ seat.

9.3 Movement of mobility aid in allocated space

(1) Operators and providers should consider measures to minimise or contain the movement of mobility aids in allocated spaces when in transit. The type of forces and movements to be contained will be different for each mode and should be considered when developing solutions to contain movement. Containment of movement may be done by installing passive or active restraining systems.

(2) An active restraint anchors a wheelchair or mobility aid into an allocated space. Anchorage belts are an example of active restraints.

a) Regulations that normally require passengers to wear safety belts apply equally to all passengers. This means that operators of services on which safety belts are mandatory must provide restraints for use by persons with disabilities. Similarly, passengers need to use safety belts if they are compulsory, unless the passengers have an official exemption.

(3) A passive restraining system contains movement of a wheelchair to within an allocated space. A vertical surface that restricts the movement of a wheelchair is an example of a passive restraint.

a) An operator may rely on the sides of a conveyance, or a padded rail on the aisle side of the allocated space, to act as passive restraints against excessive sideways movement of a mobility aid. The allocated space could be located behind a bulkhead to prevent forward movement. The passive restraints bounding an area of this kind would then prevent a wheelchair from rolling or tipping.

Part 10 Surfaces

10.1 Surfaces of access paths

(1) The Transport Standards require access paths to be slip resistant, and stable and level across their width.

10.2 Access path terminating at door of conveyance

(1) The surfaces of an access path that terminates at the door of a conveyance must be stable, slip resistant and of a texture that does not impede mobility.

Part 11 Handrails and grabrails

11.1 Handrails on access paths

(1) Handrails should be provided along access paths wherever passengers are likely to require additional support or passive guidance, in addition to being provided in overbridges and subways.

11.2 Handrails in overbridges and subways

(1) Continuous handrails on overbridges and in subways assist people with vision impairment in wayfinding and offer support to people who have fatigue or balance difficulties. If a concourse serves as an overbridge or subway, handrails may need to break at service-related facilities and fixtures.

(2) Safety and access should not be compromised by the installation of continuous handrails on overbridges and subways. If retrofitting handrails to existing narrow overbridges or subways, the viability of the access path must be considered. Free-flowing two-way access and emergency egress should not be compromised by installation of handrails.

(3) If 1800 millimetres or more clear space between opposite handrails cannot be achieved on overbridges and subways, one or both handrails should be omitted. If only a single handrail is viable due to space constraints, the continuous handrail should be on the side of the overbridge or subway on which the stairs, lifts or ramps enter.

(4) It is important that design accounts for safety concerns such as potential shorting from overhead wires.

11.3 Handrail warning indicators

(1) People with visual impairment use handrails as a wayfinding method by running their hand along the 'top' of the handrail to guide them. Placing the warning indicator on the upper surface of the handrail will support wayfinding through ensuring consistency in design to assist passengers to identify an approaching interruption.

11.4 Grabrails in allocated spaces

(1) Grabrails should be fitted in such a way that they are functional for passengers in mobility aids using the allocated space. Grabrails may have a combination of horizontal, vertical or angled alignment as the use of the space dictates. The most functional outcome can be achieved through a process of consultation and co-design with persons with disabilities.

11.5 Grabrails on access paths onboard conveyances

(1) Persons with disabilities who are ambulant (able to walk) may benefit from grabrail support while travelling between the conveyance door and priority seating. They may also benefit from door mounted grabrails when boarding or alighting and in some circumstances, when the conveyance is moving. This is particularly the case where passengers must negotiate a step up or down such as at entrance doors or beside steps in aisles. If practicable, grabrails might also be located adjacent to priority seats as an aid to sitting and standing. These grabrails will also benefit other passengers entering or exiting a conveyance or who stand while the conveyance is in transit.

(2) Buses and coaches are required to comply with various national and state requirements for grabrails. For example, in coaches or seat belted buses any grabrails fitted in the accessible area or the access path must meet the requirements of the Australian Design Rules if they encroach into head impact zones. 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.

(3) Many school buses do not have allocated spaces. While grabrails on access paths should comply with this guidance, the guidance does not trigger a requirement to install allocated spaces with associated grabrails in school buses.

11.6 Luminance contrast of handrails and grabrails

(1) For conveyances, Appendix B of AS1428.1 (2021) may provide guidance regarding the testing for the luminance contrast of handrails and grabrails when viewed against surrounding surfaces.

(2) Where luminance contrast must be achieved against a background or surface of variable colour, the dominant colour of the background should be the contrasting surface tested. In instances where there are small fixtures, fittings or signage that vary from the dominant colour and it is challenging to measure the luminance contrast of these surfaces, operators and providers should consult with people with disability and consider equivalent access solutions to ensure there are no barriers to accessibility and that handrails and grabrails remain easily distinguishable from surrounding surfaces.

(3) In some instances, operators and providers may experience challenges measuring the luminance contrast of handrails and grabrails against transparent backgrounds or surfaces, such as vehicle windows or clear internal panels. Luminance contrast

testing is only required against fixed surfaces within two metres that can be meaningfully measured. Luminance contrast requirements do not extend to variable or transient backgrounds and surfaces within two metres of a handrail or grabrail that are visible through a transparent surface while the vehicle is moving.

Part 12 Doorways and doors

12.1 Kinds of doors

(1) The Transport Standards allow for doors that are automatic, power assisted or manual, provided they do not present a barrier to independent passenger travel.

(2) Automatic doors are preferable along an access path, and power-assisted doors are required for unisex accessible toilet facilities.

12.2 Doors on access paths

(1) Doors may be fully automatic. If power assisted or automatic doors are installed, cavity sliding doors give the best result for accessibility and are the least likely to be damaged. Wall mounted sliding doors are also an option. Passengers often misunderstand the operation of power assisted or automatic swing doors or become impatient with them. By pushing them they will often damage the mechanism causing the door to malfunction.

(2) If for technical, safety or operational reasons passengers are not able to operate or open doors and gates on access paths, doors and gates should be opened by an authorised and trained staff member. For example, for safety reasons, only ferry deckhands are permitted to open the ferry boarding gates. Likewise, for operational reasons bus drivers will open the doors of their vehicles for all passengers. Drivers of wheelchair accessible taxis will open the boarding doors for passengers in wheelchairs or other mobility aids. Cabin crew on wide bodied aircraft may open accessible toilet doors.

(3) In locations that lack electrical power it may not be practicable to have power assisted doors. In these locations rising butt hinges or other means of allowing doors to self-close, and that have very light closing pressure, should be considered.

(4) The internal geometry of a legacy conveyance may prevent manual controls for power assisted doors being placed at least 500 mm from an internal corner. Equivalent access solutions should be considered in these circumstances. See sections 33.3 to 33.5 of the Transport Standards in relation to equivalent access.

12.3 Activation of doors on conveyances

(1) On conveyances, it is acceptable for passengers or staff to activate only particular doors at stops rather than have all doors open unnecessarily. In such cases, and if not all doors are accessible, the Transport Standards provide that the accessible doors be clearly identified.

12.4 Clear opening of doorways

(1) Where a glass panel could be mistaken for a doorway, it should also comply with clause 6.6 of AS1428.1 (2009) for safety purposes.

12.5 Vertical height of doorways

(1) The intent of the Transport Standards is that passengers using mobility aids should be able to enter conveyances without having to lower their heads or change their normal posture.

Part 13 Lifts

13.1 Technical specifications

(1) In some instances, AS1735.12 (2020) will present technical requirements for fixtures and fittings within lifts that differ to requirements referenced in the Transport Standards. For example, AS1735.12 (2020) requires the space between the handrail and the wall within a lift car to be less than that required by AS1428.1 (2021), which is referenced in Part 11 of the Transport Standards. In this instance, the wider space between handrails and walls permitted by Part 11 would take precedence. Other technical anomalies should be dealt with in the same manner.

Part 14 Stairs

14.1 Stairs, escalators and inclined travellators not to be only means of access

(1) The requirement for an access path to be provided, as outlined in the Transport Standards, means that stairs, escalators and inclined travellators cannot be the sole means of access in premises or infrastructure. However, stairs, escalators and inclined travellators are acceptable as an optional route on an access path.

(2) The intent of the Transport Standards is that stairs should not be the only means of access to a conveyance nor should they prevent passengers accessing essential on-board services such as food service or toilets. However, unavoidable differences in levels may mean that some sections of a conveyance might not be available to all passengers.

14.2 Stairs on trains

(1) People who have disabilities that do not affect their capacity to walk or climb stairs will benefit from stairs that are safe and fit for purpose. Stair and handrail geometry are constrained by the availability of space in carriages. However, other features such as luminance contrast of tread nosings and handrails are unaffected by space and are important safety features for people who have low vision.

(2) A width of 850 mm is suitable for stairs on trains, where design and space constraints allow.

14.3 Stairs on buses

(1) Double deck buses employ stairs as the means of accessing or exiting the top deck. These stairs require handrails for passenger safety and support.

(2) Steps address level changes within decks and at doors. While handrails are not required at single steps on buses other than those at doors, suitable grabrails should be considered. These grabrails will assist passengers negotiate the step and offer support while the bus is in transit.

(3) The intent of the Transport Standards is that handrails fitted to the inside of a bus door are available for passengers to negotiate the step onto the bus and use as support where required.

Part 15 Toilets

15.1 Location

(1) If toilets are provided there should be accessible toilets in sufficient numbers to enable persons with disabilities to reach and use toilets with equal amenity, dignity and convenience as other passengers. Accessible toilets should therefore be connected to allocated spaces and priority seats via access paths, or direct assistance to reach the accessible toilets should be provided.

15.2 Size

(1) The intent of the Transport Standards is that there will be sufficient clear space in an accessible toilet to allow a person using a mobility aid to move between the various fixtures and to exit by moving in a forward direction. However, it is accepted that some larger mobility aids may have to exit by reversing. This implies that solutions, such as two-way swinging doors and remote locking controls, may need to be considered.

15.3 Equal proportion of left- and right-hand configurations

(1) If two or more accessible toilets are provided in a set of rail cars or on a ferry, the toilets should be available in left and right hand in equal or near equal proportions. If unisex accessible toilets of left and right hand are in sections of trains or ferries reserved for a particular class of travel, operators should assist passengers in other classes, and who require use of a unisex accessible toilet of that hand, to use the toilet and then return to their seating area.

Part 17 Signs

17.1 Location of signs

(1) When considering where to place signs, operators and providers should consider the location where people are likely to wait for services or where they can be visible during transit.

(2) Customer crowding levels expected at each location should also be considered. For example, in uncrowded or transient type spaces where passengers are not waiting or congregating, low level signs may be appropriate.

(3) Signs should be visible from nominated accessible boarding points and waiting areas and seen by passengers regardless of the access path they have used.

17.2 Signs identifying accessible features or facilities

(1) The Transport Standards requires operators and providers to provide signs identifying accessible features and facilities provided in a room. This includes accessible sanitary facilities, accessible adult change facilities, accessible pedestrian entrances and spaces with a hearing augmentation system.

17.3 Digital information screens

(1) The location of digital information display screens should take into consideration environmental factors such as glare to ensure legibility of screens during different periods during the day. Design considerations of screen housings should minimise the impact of glare.

(2) Digital information screens should not be the only format information is provided in.

17.4 Braille design requirements

(1) If a tactile arrow is used in a tactile sign, the corresponding arrow provided for braille readers should be a braille arrow.

Part 18 Tactile ground surface indicators (TGSIs)

18.1 Directional tactile ground surface indicators

(1) Directional TGSIs should be used to:

a) provide a safe route.

b) give directional cues to deviate from the regular path of travel to get to a key destination or facility such as boarding points or help or information points.

c) signal a point of entry / exit to a facility or pedestrian crossing.

(2) The use of Directional TGSIs should be minimised through good design and providing other natural wayfinding cues such as shorelines. This should be achieved through consultation and co-design with persons with disabilities, particularly people who have vision impairments and use TGSIs.

(3) The placement of TGSIs should consider the safest and most efficient route for people with vision impairment to assist in navigation and orientation whilst minimising the impacts to other passengers.

18.2 Integrating wayfinding elements

(1) The appendices of **AS 1428.4.2 (2018)** include guidance on how to integrate TGSIs and other wayfinding elements to achieve better outcomes for transport users.

18.3 Tactile ground surface indicator installation at railway stations

(1) When installing TGSIs on existing railway stations with severe site restrictions, the TGSIs may need to overlap on the access path. Refer to clause 3.4 of AS1428.4.1 (2009) for further guidance.

Part 20 Lighting

20.1 Design

(1) Lighting designers should consider the guidance below in designing lighting associated with public transport infrastructure to meet the performance-based standard outlined in the Transport Standards,:

a) enclosed zones should comply with requirements in **AS/NZS1680.2.1 (2008)**.

b) unenclosed zones should comply with requirements in **ASNZS1158.3.1 (2020) Amd 1:2024**.

c) lifts should comply with requirements in **AS1735.12 (2020)**.

(2) Many elements within a public transport environment are not outlined in the standards above. Operators and providers should ensure appropriate lighting levels are provided for each part, area or element to enable safe completion of tasks. For example, wayfinding, signage, feature lighting and advertising should be serviced by an appropriately level of lighting to enable passengers and operators alike to read and interact with these features.

Part 21 Door controls, switches and general-purpose outlets

21.1 Application is only to doors for public use

(1) The intent of the Transport Standards is that the requirements in Part 21 only apply to controls designed for operation by the general public.

Part 24 Gateways

24.1 Access gates

(1) The intent of the Transport Standards is that passengers using mobility aids are able to pass from an unpaid to a paid area of a station, terminal or interchange. For example, a person in a mobility aid must be able to pass through a boarding gate at an airport terminal.

Part 25 Payment of fares

25.1 General principles

(1) All passengers must be prepared to pay fares when required. This does not prevent concessions being made available to passengers. Anyone who has difficulty with standard payment systems may expect special arrangements to be made.

25.2 Carers, assistants and assistance animals

(1) Some passengers may need to be accompanied by a carer, assistant or assistance animal. Assistance animals are not subject to a fare. A carer should be prepared to pay a fare. In some jurisdictions, a companion card may be issued allowing carers to travel free of charge.

(2) Carer, assistant and assistance animal are terms defined in the Act.

25.3 Requirements for an accessible fare system

(1) Fare systems may include ticket and digital ticket vending machines, cashless reload devices, validation devices and check-in kiosks. These may be installed at public transport infrastructure, premises, and on conveyances.

Part 26 Hearing augmentation — listening systems

26.1 Hearing augmentation — conveyances

(1) If the requirements in the Transport Standards relating to hearing augmentation for conveyances cannot be met for technical reasons, an equivalent access process may be considered. See sections 33.3 to 33.5 of the Transport Standards in relation to equivalent access.

(2) Assistive listening systems require testing for interference from other electromagnetic sources prior to deployment and should be maintained every 6-12 months to ensure the system continues to meet the requirements of the Transport Standards.

Part 27 Information

27.1 Access to information about public transport services

(1) Operators and providers should expect requests for information in formats such as Easy Read, Auslan, braille, audio, digital files of various formats and large print.

27.2 Timely provision of information

(1) Information formats that are less frequently requested should be supplied in a timely manner following the request. This is best achieved by having master copies available of the less commonly requested formats that can be quickly reproduced and

supplied to passengers. Some formats or mediums may take longer to produce than others.

(2) Providing requested information that was not immediately available in a 'timely' manner means that an operator or provider would supply the information in the shortest practicable timeframe. Timeframes will vary based on the medium of the information and the capacity of the operator or provider.

27.3 Passenger location during journey

(1) The intent of section 27.6 of the Transport Standards is to ensure all passengers have access to information to allow them to successfully alight public transport at the correct stop or destination.

(2) Information about stops during a public transport journey should be provided in a timely manner, allowing sufficient time for a person to respond and successfully alight public transport at their stop.

(3) When a passenger cannot see the visual information screen, operators may provide direct assistance. This may include alerting the passenger when the conveyance reaches their stop.

27.4 Information during service disruption

(1) A planned disruption is an event that impacts the normal operation of a public transport service that has been instigated by an operator or provider. For example, routine maintenance, road works, construction, and cleaning.

(2) An unplanned disruption is an event that impacts the normal operation of a public transport service that has been instigated by factors outside the reasonable control of an operator or provider. This may include a vehicle breakdown, power outage, fire, weather and natural disasters, emergency situations where the driver cannot access controls such as a major collision, or situations where emergency services have taken control of the vehicle, such as a police incident.

(3) During unplanned disruptions, operators and providers should provide information in a variety of formats in as timely a manner as is reasonably practicable.

27.5 Communicating accessibility features of conveyances, premises and infrastructure

(1) Operators and providers may use different terminology to describe their services. To meet their obligations, operators and providers should provide clear definitions of the terminology used.

(2) To meet the requirements of section 27.9 of the Transport Standards, operators and providers should publish information about mobility, functionality, information and communication, safety and wayfinding. Examples of features that may be communicated include:

a) Accessible car parking
b) Assistance Animal Toileting Facilities
c) CCTV
d) Colour contrast / illuminated strips for stairs
e) Emergency Help Point
f) Escalator

g) Hearing augmentation system (type and coverage)
h) Information Help Point
i) Lift
j) Low tide wharf access
k) Public Announcement system for passenger information
l) Raised platform / stop
m) Staffed or unstaffed station
n) Stairs
o) Tactile ground surface indicators
p) Tide dependent gangway and ramp gradients
q) Wayfinding
r) Wheelchair accessible bus
s) Wheelchair accessible parking space
t) Wheelchair accessible payphone
u) Wheelchair accessible toilet (including Left- or Right-hand access)
v) Wheelchair ramp boarding assistance.

(3) Solutions to barriers may include deployment of ramps or the provision of direct assistance.

27.6 Information and communications technology

(1) Any ICT hardware, services or software intended for public use by a public transport operator or provider should be accessible to persons with disabilities. For example:
a) Being guided by AS/EN301549 (2020) when procuring products.
b) Meeting the requirements of WCAG 2.1 AA for mobile, web and non-web software and where feasible those of WCAG 2.1 AAA.

(2) Examples of information and communications technology may include:
a) Websites
b) Mobile apps
c) Digital fare systems
d) Screens used to display public transport information
e) Other technologies outlined in AS/EN301549 (2020), such as technologies with two-way voice communication, technologies that provide access to emergency services, and technologies that allow videos to be played.

Part 28 Booked services

28.1 Appropriate seats on booked services

(1) Passengers should identify their particular seating needs at the time of booking so they can book an appropriate seat for their needs. For example, an appropriate seat may be closest to the toilet to suit a particular person's needs.

(2) While operators must accommodate passengers to the extent possible, it may not always be possible to fully accommodate the need. For example, if a person with similar requirements had already booked the seat, that person would have priority.

(3) Appropriate seats do not require signs or other means of differentiation from other seats and may be the same design and configuration as other seats.

Part 30 Belongings

30.1 Transport of portable disability aid

(1) Disability aids include mobility, prosthetic and medical equipment. Examples of mobility aids are manual or powered wheelchairs, scooters, walkers, braces, canes and crutches. Examples of prosthetic and medical aids include hearing aids, communication devices, prostheses and breathing equipment.

(2) An operator should expect to carry a passenger's disability aid on the same conveyance as the passenger. Operators should treat a disability aid as cabin or accompanied baggage. If an operator needs to stow a passenger's disability aid in a compartment away from the passenger, the operator should expect to carry the aid as priority baggage.

(3) If an operator or provider has taken possession of a person's mobility aid (because it is not possible for the mobility aid to be used on board the conveyance), then pursuant to the Transport Standards they would need to provide that person with an on board wheelchair or direct assistance to safely board the conveyance and to access on board facilities or services.

(4) Operators and providers should notify a person with disability as soon as possible if they cannot transport a disability aid on board or if the person with disability will need to be separated from their aid during the transport journey.

30.2 Entitlement to baggage allowance

(1) The carriage of a disability aid should not diminish a passenger's entitlement to normal baggage allowance. An operator should not charge for carrying a disability aid unless regulations set fees for luggage handling or for the time taken to load luggage. For example, in some States, taxis are permitted to have their meters running while drivers load luggage.

Part 31 Priority seating

31.1 Priority seating and allocated spaces

(1) Priority seats and allocated spaces must be available to persons with disabilities wherever waiting areas are provided.

(2) Further information about waiting areas is provided at Part 7 of these Guidelines.

31.2 Penalties for failing to vacate priority seats on request

(1) State regulators may choose to issue penalties to passengers who refuse to vacate priority seats on operators' request.

31.3 Use of folding seats in allocated spaces as priority seats

(1) Operators should only use folding seats for priority seating in allocated spaces if:

a) the folding seats do not disadvantage passengers using mobility aids who require the use of allocates spaces; and

b) the minimum number of priority seats are provided as fixed seats elsewhere in the conveyance.

31.4 Identification of passengers eligible for priority seats

(1) Operators or providers may choose to issue people eligible for priority seating with a form of identification. Passengers should not be obliged to participate in the identification regime and their eligibility for priority seating should not be affected by non-participation.

31.5 Accommodation of assistance animals

(1) Assistance animals should always travel with their handlers. A space underneath priority seats that is sufficient to accommodate assistance animals must be available. If this space cannot be provided, an operator or provider must provide equivalent access to ensure a safe space is available for accommodating the animal with their handler. See sections 33.3 to 33.5 of the Transport Standards in relation to equivalent access.

Part 31A Training to prevent disability discrimination

(1) The Transport Standards require operators and providers to develop and implement disability-specific training for public transport staff to ensure staff understand their obligations to support safe and dignified travel for persons with disabilities and to prevent discrimination against persons with a disability from occurring in relation to the provision of public transport services.

a) This should include programs that educate conveyance operators about the barriers persons with disabilities may face at different stages of a journey and training in accessibility matters relevant to their roles. This may include information about customer service, procurement, and the use and upkeep of accessible features, including boarding ramps, wheelchair lifts and hearing augmentation systems.

b) Training should include information on the obligations staff have under the broader framework of the Act, such as the rights of persons travelling with assistance animals.

c) If appropriate, training programs should incorporate practical elements to equip staff with skills required to perform their duties safely.

d) Persons with disabilities or groups representing persons with disabilities should be consulted in the development and evaluation of training programs. Content should be co-designed, and sessions should be conducted or co-facilitated, by persons with disabilities.

e) Refresher sessions should be held on a routine basis and content should be updated to reflect feedback provided by persons with disabilities.

(2) Community attitudes are one of the main barriers to non-discriminatory access for persons with disabilities. To counter any inherent discrimination in the provision of public transport services, it is recommended that staff orientation and education programs include components on disability awareness and rights.

Part 33 Compliance

33.1 Meaning of *equivalent access*

(1) Non-discriminatory access to public transport may require some adjustments by operators and providers to existing methods of service delivery.

(2) 'Equivalent access' refers to alternative methods of assisting persons with disabilities to use public transport where there are unavoidable constraints on unassisted access or an alternative solution may provide a greater level of access.

(3) For example, when a station upgrade in one location presents engineering difficulties, a rail network operator may choose to upgrade a nearby station as a priority and take reasonable interim steps for passengers to use the accessible station until the difficult location has been made accessible.

33.2 Provision of direct access

(1) An operator or provider may provide equivalent access through direct assistance to a person over and above that provided to other passengers as follows:

a) before and after travel;

b) during boarding and alighting; and

c) while travelling.

33.3 Assistance before or after travel

(1) If an operator cannot provide services in a way that is accessible to persons with disabilities, they can assist passengers with:

a) information about the service; or

b) the purchasing and validation of a ticket.

33.4 Assistance during boarding and alighting

(1) Persons with disabilities can be assisted to board or alight from conveyances, such as coaches and aircraft, through the provision of:

a) mobility aids on conveyances where design constraints prevent use of a person's own mobility aid; or

b) assistance in moving from a wheelchair into a fixed seat if an allocated space is not provided.

(2) In giving assistance, the operator may decide that persons with disabilities should board before, and alight after, other passengers.

33.5 Assistance while travelling

(1) Once on board, persons with disabilities may request assistance with:

a) information about the approach of their stop; or

b) moving to and from on-board facilities such as toilets; or

c) information or advice if there is an unscheduled change to services, or the timeframe does not allow for information to be provided in a preferred format.

33.6 Non-compliance due to unjustifiable hardship

(1) The Transport Standards recognise there may be limitations to an operator or provider being able to comply with the Transport Standards, for example due to constraints that are part of the safe and effective operation of public transport services or due to exceptional geographical factors affecting the ability to comply with certain requirements.

(2) The Transport Standards recognises that an operator or provider need not comply with the provisions of the Act if it can be demonstrated that making the adjustments required would place an unjustifiable hardship on the operator or provider.

(3) The definition of ***unjustifiable hardship*** that appears in the Transport Standards is based on the definition in the Act. If this definition expands on the definition in the Act, it should be considered as being in addition to and, to the extent possible, consistent with the definition in that Act.

33.7 Obligation to comply to the maximum extent possible

(1) Notwithstanding an unjustifiable hardship defence, if an operator or provider cannot comply with all requirements of the Transport Standards, the Transport Standards require compliance to the maximum extent possible.

(2) In such a case, and if a complaint is lodged with the Australian Human Rights Commission, the operator or provider will be required to establish the grounds upon which full compliance with the Transport Standards imposes unjustifiable hardship on the operator or provider in relation to the operation of the service.

33.8 Matters to be taken into consideration when arguing unjustifiable hardship

(1) The Transport Standards include a checklist of factors that may be taken into consideration in determining whether compliance with a requirement would involve unjustifiable hardship. The checklist is not exhaustive.

(2) It is intended that the checklist will assist the Australian Human Rights Commission, the Federal Court of Australia or the Federal Circuit Court by outlining the major matters relevant to public transport.

(3) An operator or provider that is seeking to prove unjustifiable hardship must also prove that the opportunities for providing equivalent access have been exhausted.

(4) For example, after consulting with relevant authorities and passengers about equivalent access, a ferry operator may conclude that difficult topographical conditions at a wharf presents unique problems and may choose to argue unjustifiable hardship.

33.9 Exemptions

(1) The Australian Human Rights Commission has the power to grant temporary exemptions from certain provisions of the Act. Temporary exemptions may be granted for up to five years at a time and may be granted subject to specified terms and conditions. The effect of a temporary exemption is that discrimination covered by the exemption is not unlawful under the Act, while the exemption remains in force.

(2) Before granting an exemption to the Transport Standards, the Australian Human Rights Commission must consider the advice of a committee with representatives from the Commonwealth, the States and the Territories that deals with transport policy. The Australian Human Rights Commission may also consult any other body or person about the exemption.

33.10 Complaint to the Australian Human Rights Commission

(1) The primary means of ensuring compliance with the Transport Standards is through a complaint to the Australian Human Rights Commission.

(2) If a person believes that a public transport service is failing to implement the requirements of the Transport Standards or adhere to the compliance schedule set out in the Transport Standards, the person may lodge a complaint with the Australian Human Rights Commission.

(3) A complaint may be lodged with the Australian Human Rights Commission by an aggrieved individual or any person or group on behalf of one or more aggrieved persons.

33.11 Investigation of complaint

(1) The Australian Human Rights Commission must investigate and, if appropriate, attempt to conciliate the complaint. If conciliation is unsuccessful, in certain circumstances legal proceedings may be commenced in the Federal Court of Australia or the Federal Circuit Court. The Court may make orders as it sees fit, including an order requiring a respondent to pay compensation for any loss or damage suffered, or a course of conduct to redress any loss or damage suffered by an applicant.

33.12 Complaint alleging discrimination

(1) Any issues not covered by the Transport Standards remain subject to the existing provisions of the Act. It should be noted also that a complaint of discrimination may still be made even though there has been compliance with the Transport Standards.

33.13 Further information

(1) See the Act and the *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986* for further information about the obligations and processes involved in making a complaint in relation to non-compliance with the Transport Standards.

33.14 Submission of action plan to the Australian Human Rights Commission

(1) Operators or providers may indicate their intention to comply with the Transport Standards by submitting an action plan to the Australian Human Rights Commission in accordance with section 64 of the Act. An action plan would be an important consideration in any subsequent hearing of a complaint.

Part 35 Application of Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport Amendment 2026 (amended Transport Standards)

35.1 Intent of Part 35

(1) Part 35 of the Transport Standards outlines when operators and providers must be compliant with the requirements introduced by the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport Amendment 2026 (***amended Transport Standards***).

35.2 Projects in planning or procurement at commencement of the amended Transport Standards

(1) At the commencement of the amended Transport Standards there will be projects for new public transport infrastructure, premises and conveyance, or projects to substantially upgrade existing infrastructure, premises and conveyances, in the planning process.

(2) If a project has not reached the approach to market stage (in relation to the procurement or substantial refurbishment or alteration of conveyances) or has not received a relevant approval (in relation to the construction or substantial refurbishment or alteration of premises or infrastructure), the project will need to meet the requirements of the amended Transport Standards that apply to new and substantially refurbished or altered assets and infrastructure.

(3) If a project has reached the approach to market stage or received a relevant approval, the project will not need to meet the requirements of the amended Transport Standards that apply to new or substantially refurbished or altered assets or infrastructure. The project will be required to comply with the requirements of the Transport Standards as existed before the amended Transport Standards came into effect (***the non-amended Transport Standards***). If the asset is substantially refurbished at a later date, then the new requirements of the amended Transport Standards would apply to the refurbishment.

35.3 Projects under construction at commencement of the amended Transport Standards

(1) At the commencement of the amended Transport Standards there may be new public transport infrastructure, premises or conveyances under construction and existing public transport infrastructure, premises or conveyances undergoing substantial refurbishment or alteration.

(2) If a project is already under construction or approval to approach the market has been granted at commencement of the amended Transport Standards, the project will not

be required to meet the new requirements that apply to new or substantially refurbished assets. The project will be required to comply with the requirements of the non-amended Transport Standards. If the asset is substantially refurbished at a later date, then the new requirements of the amended Transport Standards would apply to the refurbishment.

35.4 Application of amended Standards to existing trains and trams

(1) Section 35.2 preserves the timeframe for trains and trams to be compliant with the requirements of the non-amended Transport Standards (31 December 2032). Section 35.2 also provides that operators of existing trains and trams must also comply with the new requirements in the amended Transport Standards by this target date if those trains and trams remain in service at that date.

35.5 The non-amended Standards continue to apply to existing assets

(1) The non-amended Transport Standards provided target dates for different public transport assets to comply with the requirements of the Transport Standards. With the exception of trains and trams which have until 31 December 2032, these target dates for other public transport assets have now passed. Section 35.3 confirms that unless otherwise provided by Part 35, the non-amended Transport Standards continue to apply, on and after the commencement day, to operators and providers of existing conveyances and existing premises and infrastructure.

(2) Operators and providers remain liable to ensure that their existing services are compliant with the non-amended Transport Standards.

35.6 Implementation for existing assets with a prescribed timeframe for compliance

(1) Where the tables in Part 35 indicate that requirements will apply after the end of a transitional period (5-year or 10-year), this means that existing assets must be compliant with these requirements by the end of this transitional period. If the requirement relates to a process such as information provision, processes must be in place so that operators and providers are compliant by the end of the transitional period.

(2) These requirements would also apply to new public transport assets that come into service on or after the amended Transport Standards take effect.

35.7 Implementation for new and substantially refurbished assets

(1) Where the tables in Part 35 indicate that requirements apply on and after the commencement day to new assets, this includes conveyances, premises, infrastructure that are substantially refurbished or altered on or after the commencement day or when the amended Transport Standards come into force.

(2) Conveyances that are ‘second-hand,’ but are imported for use as public transport in Australia on or after the commencement day of the amended Transport Standards, are also considered to be new and must comply with the amended Transport Standards.

35.8 Meaning of 'substantial refurbishment or alteration'

(1) Substantial refurbishments or alterations are large scale upgrades that could involve both capital works (construction) or installation of replacement assets (including both structural and non-structural components).

(2) Note that it is the particular upgrading, reconstruction or refurbishment that must comply with the Transport Standards and not the infrastructure as a whole. For instance, providers don't have to put in a lift if they are only upgrading their information system or constructing a waiting room.

Appendix 1 Exclusions

1.1 Exclusions for dedicated school buses

Dedicated school buses have been excluded from the operation of the following physical access provisions of the Transport Standards:

Provision	Details
3.2	Obstructions in manoeuvring area – conveyances
3.4	Co-location of manoeuvring areas with access paths and allocated spaces - conveyances
8.2	When boarding devices must be provided
8.3	Use of boarding devices
8.4	Hail-and-ride services
8.5	Width and surface of boarding devices
8.6	Maximum load to be supported by boarding device
8.6A	Boarding ramps
8.6B	Slope of external boarding ramps
8.7	Requesting use of boarding device to alight
9.1	Minimum size for allocated space
9.1A	Unobstructed vertical dimension of an allocated space
9.1B	Information must be provided – priority access of allocated spaces
9.4	Number of allocated spaces to be provided — buses
9.7	Consolidation of allocated spaces
9.9	Use of allocated space for other purposes
9.10	International symbol of accessibility to be displayed
9.11	Movement of mobility aid in allocated space
9.12	Access for persons in wheelchairs etc
10.1	Compliance with Australian Standards for conveyance surfaces
10.3	Slip resistance for buses and coaches
11.3	Handrails on steps and stairs - conveyances
11.4	Handrails above access paths

Provision	Details
11.5	Grabrails must comply with applicable Australian Standard
11.6	Grabrail to be provided where fares are to be paid
11.7	Grabrails to be provided in allocated spaces
12.1	Doors on access paths
12.4	Clear opening of doorways
12.6	Automatic or power-assisted doors
14.1	Stairs not to be sole means of access
14.4	Specific requirements – buses

1.2 Exclusions for small aircraft

Small aircraft have been excluded from the operation of the following physical access provisions of the Transport Standards:

Provision	Details
3.3	Limited on-board manoeuvring
8.2	When boarding devices must be provided
8.3	Use of boarding devices
8.5	Width and surface of boarding devices
8.6	Maximum load to be supported by boarding device
8.6A	Boarding ramps
8.6B	Slope of external boarding ramps
9.1	Minimum size for allocated space
9.1A	Unobstructed vertical dimension of an allocated space
11.3	Handrails on steps and stairs – conveyances
11.4	Handrails above access paths
11.5	Grabrails must comply with applicable Australian Standard
11.6	Grabrail to be provided where fares are to be paid
12.1	Doors on access paths
14.1	Stairs not to be sole means of access