

Media Release

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Accessibility a focus at AusRAIL to mark International Day of People with Disability

The Australasian Railway Association (ARA) will host a dedicated accessibility stream at AusRAIL today as it marks International Day of People with Disability.

ARA Chief Executive Officer Caroline Wilkie said the stream would discuss the rail industry's work to keep improving access to public transport services for people with disability.

She said the stream reflected on the theme of the day to *Build back better: toward a disability-inclusive, accessible and sustainable post COVID-19 world*.

"The rail industry has worked extensively to make rail as accessible as possible for people with disability in recent years," Ms Wilkie said.

"While significant gains have been made, there remains work to do to keep improving through the replacement or retrofitting of ageing infrastructure and rollingstock.

"The importance of safe, convenient and accessible public transport has come to the fore this year and it is essential that people with disability also enjoy those benefits across the network."

Ms Wilkie said the ARA worked closely with public transport operators to ensure accessible rail was an ongoing focus for the industry.

A number of organisations will take part in the accessibility stream at AusRAIL today, kicking off with a discussion on reforms of the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport currently underway.

"The ARA is a strong supporter of these reforms, as is the wider industry, and it is important we ensure their swift progress to support the work of our operators and government agencies," Ms Wilkie said.

Representatives of V/Line, Metro Trains Melbourne and Yarra Trams will discuss communication access as part of the stream, while attendees will also hear about accessible rail in NSW from Transport for NSW.

“This is a long term focus for the ARA and our members and we look forward to continuing to advance this issue today,” Ms Wilkie said.

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