



Transport
for NSW

Temporary Exemptions to the Australian Human Rights Commission

Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport
Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings)
Standards)

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1 Introduction

Transport for NSW (TfNSW) was established in November 2011 and is the lead agency of the NSW Transport cluster. TfNSW leads the development of a safe, efficient, integrated transport system that keeps people and goods moving, connects communities, and shapes the future of our cities, centres and regions.

TfNSW is responsible for planning, policy, strategy, regulation, funding allocation and other non-service delivery functions for all modes of transport in NSW. These include road, rail, ferry, light rail, point-to-point, regional air, community transport, cycling and walking.

TfNSW is a member of the Australasian Railway Association (ARA). On 1 October 2015, the Australian Human Rights Commission granted temporary exemptions to members of the ARA in relation to various provisions of the *Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002 (Cth)* (Transport Standards) and the *Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards 2010 (Cth)* (Premises Standards).

TfNSW provides this report in collaboration with its rail operating agencies Sydney Trains and NSW Trains in relation to exemptions with annual reporting requirements as conditions of the exemptions.

The rail operational agencies, Sydney Trains and NSW Trains, are responsible for front line service delivery. Their focus is delivering reliable, safe and accessible transport services. Sydney Trains is the operator and maintainer of train services across metropolitan Sydney and also maintains regional NSW rail services other than the Country Rail Network. NSW Trains provides intercity and regional train services under the name NSW TrainLink. Intercity services operate between Sydney, Newcastle, Maitland, Bombaderry, Southern Highlands, and Lithgow whilst regional services operate throughout NSW and into Victoria, Queensland and the Australian Capital Territory.

TfNSW is currently delivering access audits across the train network. The outputs from these audits will assist in future planning initiatives and projects to remove barriers to accessibility where practically achievable. The audit findings will also be integrated into existing customer information channels to provide more accurate information on accessibility features at stations to make journey planning for all customers easier.

This report is for the period 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2020.

To provide feedback in relation to this report, please contact:

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Website: transportnsw.info
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2 Key achievements

Future Transport 2056 is our 40 year vision for a modern and connected roads and public transport network that gives people the freedom to choose how and when they get around, no matter where they live and work. Accessibility remains a core outcome area of the Future Transport 2056 and is supported by the *TfNSW Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2018-2022*. The Plan has over 160 actions and is our commitment to reducing and eliminating the barriers people face in accessing public transport.

TfNSW is continuing to implement actions in the Plan with some of the key achievements highlighted below:

- In April 2020, TfNSW opened the second stage of the CBD and South East Light Rail following the launch of the first stage in December 2019. The new light rail line features 19 fully accessible stops across a 12km route. The stops are designed to service major transport hubs and create easy interchange points with buses, trains, ferries and the Inner West Light Rail.
- The Transport Access Program continues to provide upgrades and improvements to infrastructure across the existing transport network to make services more accessible. The NSW Government has invested more than \$2 billion in the Transport Access Program since 2011. This financial year, \$313 million is being invested to improve accessibility at train stations and ferry wharves. A total of \$969 million has been allocated over the next four financial years for upgrades to metropolitan and regional train stations, and ferry wharves.
- Announced on 27 February 2019, the Redfern Station Upgrade aims to reduce congestion and improve accessibility at Redfern Station by constructing a new pedestrian concourse with lifts and stairs at one of the busiest stations in the network. The project has embedded a customer-centred approach to design by undertaking activities such as in-depth customer interviews using virtual reality models and photo-realistic images of the design, and observations of existing customer behaviours at Redfern Station and other similar environments.
- TfNSW continues to make improvements to the provision in customer information. In the past 12 months the transportnsw.info, Opal Travel App and the Transport bot have all been independently recognised for their accessible content.
- Improvement in accessibility to train fleet continues with the delivery of projects such as the New Intercity Fleet and Regional Rail fleet which will offer the highest level of comfort and amenity for all customers.

As well as delivering improvements to services and infrastructure, TfNSW continues to engage with the disability and ageing sector through regular forums with the Accessible Transport Advisory Committee (ATAC). During the reporting period there have been five ATAC meetings, 38 meeting presentations and twenty project consultations.

In FY2019/2020 there were over 282 and 31 million Opal trips in the Sydney Trains and Intercity networks respectively. Almost nine percent of these trips were made by Opal Gold Card holders which includes significant numbers of older people and people with disability.

Both networks have seen a reduction in patronage in comparison to previous years due to the global pandemic.

The impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) across Australia continues to be felt. During this period TfNSW has seen continued delivery of infrastructure projects such as the Transport Access Program. TfNSW and its operating agencies have also maintained services to assist NSW safely move around and return to jobs, and supporting businesses so they can plan for their workforces. Measures have been put in place to help customers travel safely, including enhanced cleaning, extra services and physical distancing measures.

3 Temporary exemptions from the Transport Standards and Premises Standards

The following information provides an update on the reporting requirements for temporary exemptions granted on 1 October 2015 to the *Disability Standard for Accessible Public Transport 2002* (Part A) and the *Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards 2010* (Part B). This is the fourth yearly report on the temporary exemptions.

Numbers and headings contained within this report correspond to the sections of the Transport Standards to which the relevant exemption applies. The equivalent Premises Standard exemptions are included in parentheses.

3.1 Part 2.1 Access paths – unhindered passage (H2.2)

Temporary exemption: rail premises and rail infrastructure.

For a period of five years, flange gaps of up to 75mm are permitted where a level crossing forms part of an access path on rail premises or rail infrastructure.

Reporting requirements for the period 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2020:

a) Action taken to improve safe use of level crossings where they form part of an access path.

The Level Crossing Improvement Program (LCIP) managed by TfNSW, provides funding to accelerate improvements to level crossings at priority sites across NSW, raise community awareness of level crossing safety issues and promote new technology to improve level crossing safety.

The TfNSW Transport Infrastructure Plan provides LCIP funding of \$7.3 million a year to 2025-26. This translates to an allocation of \$36.5 million for the LCIP from 2015-16 to 2019-20, which allows for the planning and completion of future priority level crossing upgrades.

Customers are able to access information on level crossing safety by visiting transportnsw.info. Information available includes the safety features of level crossings, general safety advice and further advice for mobility device users using level crossings.

To improve the safety of pedestrian level crossings, maintenance works have been completed across multiple sites including:

- Bell replacements
- Equipment replacements including motors and pedestrian lights
- Implementation of remote monitoring equipment
- Upgrade of signage and boom mechanisms

A project has also continued to improve the audible warning systems for pedestrians.

In addition to infrastructure improvements, the following safety initiatives have also taken place during the reporting period:

- Since 2002 we have partnered with road and rail agencies to conduct public education campaigns in regional NSW on level crossing safety. This includes the continuation of the level crossing education campaign, “Don’t rush to the other side” running since 2013.

- Partnering with the TrackSAFE Foundation to promote safety around rail environments including events such as Rail Safety Week. This year, Rail Safety Week ran a combined customer 'Play it safe' campaign with Sydney Trains, Sydney Metro, Sydney Light Rail and NSW Train Link.
- Promoting safe behaviours around rail environments to over 4500 children and young adults through the Sydney Trains Schools Program and through events to engage the wider community around rail safety.

b) Progress made in the removal of level crossings.

In January 2020, five pedestrian crossings were closed on the Carlingford line which is being converted to an accessible light rail system. Further to this, the Transport Access Program also eliminated a level crossing at Fairy Meadow during upgrade works to improve accessibility.

There are more than 3800 level crossings in NSW. Of these more than 1400 are on public roads. To manage the risk to safety associated with pedestrian and rail interfaces, the closure of level crossings in NSW is to be pursued where it is practical and cost effective to do so.

c) Any developments in research into possible technical solutions for bridging flange gaps.

As part of the Transport Access Program, TfNSW is continuing to progress in facilitating a level crossing trial of possible technical solutions to bridge flange gaps. TfNSW has also continued to monitor trials and research conducted in improvements to level crossings by other rail networks and industry in Australia and internationally.

3.2 Part 2.1 Access paths – unhindered passage (H2.2)

Temporary exemption: existing rail premises and existing rail infrastructure.

For a period of five years, an access path is required to provide entrance and exit only at a single boundary point for existing rail stations where providing access at each entrance would require significant structural building work or not be feasible due to space, topographical or heritage reasons.

Reporting requirement for the period 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2020: rail stations which have inaccessible entrances.

Currently 215 of 362 stations on the Sydney Trains and NSW TrainLink network are wheelchair accessible.

The Transport Access Program has continued to deliver eight accessibility upgrades trains stations during this reporting period. During this time six stations have also closed on the Carlingford Line for conversion into a light rail system which will be fully accessible.

Customers are provided with accessible trip planning information through transportnsw.info. This includes trip plans that only include stations that are accessible. Accessible stations are also identified on network maps displayed at stations and through various online channels. Some entrances at some accessible stations do not have step free access. Where this occurs, wayfinding directs customers to the accessible entry point.

Several third-party transport apps provide accessibility information and trip planning, including:

- NextThere: provides information on wheelchair accessibility of services, individual station information including availability of a lift, hearing loops, accessible toilet facilities, tactile ground surface indicators, and wheelchair accessible car parks
- Tripview: has worked with Vision Australia to improve compatibility with screen readers for the vision impaired; provides information on wheelchair accessibility of services
- Metarove: can route customers without services and stations that are not wheelchair accessible; plans stair and gravel-free routes; screen reader support.

Information on accessible entry points is also available in the Sydney Trains Accessible Travel brochure.

3.3 Part 2.4 Access paths – minimum obstructed width (H2.2)

Temporary exemption: existing rail premises and existing rail infrastructure.

For a period of five years, for existing rail premises and existing rail infrastructure:

- where the 1200mm minimum unobstructed width for access paths cannot be met due to structural and technical constraints, an access path with a minimum unobstructed width of 1000mm may be provided
- the 850mm minimum unobstructed width (applicable to doorways and gateways) is also permitted on access paths for the purposes of passing an obstruction limited to less than 800mm in length
- platform edge warning TGSIs are permitted to intrude into access paths.

Reporting requirement for period 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2020: stations with restricted paths of travel.

All wheelchair accessible stations provide an accessible pathway from the entrance of the station to the boarding point.

Customers are provided with accessible trip planning information through transportsw.info. This includes trip plans that only include stations that are accessible. Additionally, accessibility information can be obtained by customers calling 131 500. There are also a number of third party applications available specifically designed to assist customers with a disability to utilise the network such as NextThere and TripView.

Individual station information through transportsw.info can advise customers of features such as:

- Availability of a lift
- Hearing loops
- Accessible toilet facilities
- Tactile ground surface indicators
- Wheelchair accessible car parking

Maps which identify the access points from the station entry to the platform level are available for some locations on transportsw.info, other online channels and at train stations. This information does not provide restricted paths of travel, rather they highlight the exact locations of lifts and escalators and other vertical transport options. These maps are progressively being added to transportsw.info as they are developed in screen reader compatible format.

All new and refurbished infrastructure being delivered by TfNSW, is required to meet the requirements under the Transport Standards.

In 2020, there will be 4 regional stations that will be refreshed (Armidale, Parkes, Wauchope and Blayney). Seats, bins and pay phones have also been removed or relocated at Riverwood and Padstow stations to allow for an accessible path along the building.

There are currently 29 stations in progress or completed under the current Transport Access Program. As stations are upgraded under programs such as the Transport Access Program, many of the restricted paths will be removed.

TfNSW is also currently completing accessibility audits across the train network. This will further identify any restricted paths of travel. Information gathered from this audit will be used to prioritise and package future works to improve accessibility across the train networks.

3.4 Part 2.6 Access paths – conveyances

Temporary exemption: existing rail conveyances.

For a period of five years, an access path is only required at a single door rather than all doors of existing rail conveyances.

Reporting requirement for the period 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2020: measures taken to ensure that staff and passengers are adequately informed of both the access paths available at the doors of existing rail conveyances and the equivalent access measures available.

Customers using mobility aids can enter any door of our rail cars with direct assistance. Operationally, single door boarding occurs to both mitigate the train to platform gap but also to ensure a customer can access all onboard facilities, such as toilets, through the inter-car door.

Sydney Trains and NSW TrainLink provide line markings on platforms to indicate the most suitable boarding point for people using mobility aids. External decals on trains also assist in ensuring customers board from areas that have accessible features including allocated spaces and help points.

Frontline staff are trained to provide direct assistance to customers using a portable boarding ramp and by identifying the most suitable boarding points on the platform for people using mobility aids.

Access paths throughout the length of the train are not accessible to customers with limited mobility due to the double-deck design of many of the conveyances on NSW trains.

Information on accessible travel options and how to obtain assistance is available at transportnsw.info and the Sydney Trains Accessible Travel brochure.

Sydney Trains have also rolled out an initiative to help staff in providing improved customer service when undertaking boarding assistance. The new Boarding Assistance Application runs on station staff mobile phones removing tradition paper based processes allowing staff to be more mobile and remain visible to customers. Staff have commented that the application has considerably improved boarding procedures with clear benefit for customers with disability.

3.5 **Part 4.2 Passing areas – two-way access paths and aerobridges (H2.2)**

Temporary exemption: existing rail platforms.

For a period of five years, for existing rail platforms, a passing area every nine metres along any two-way access path that is less than 1800mm wide is permitted where it is not possible to provide one every six metres due to structural or heritage constraints.

Reporting requirement for the period 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2020: rail station platforms which do not provide passing spaces every 6 metres where any two-way access path is less than 1800mm wide.

The delivery of the Station Refresh Program and Wayfinding Program provides consistency in the placement of platform furniture elements to improve circulation spaces, passing areas and access paths for customers on platforms and concourses. All new and refurbished infrastructure being delivered by TfNSW, is required to meet the requirements under the Transport Standards.

In 2020, there will be 4 regional stations that will be refreshed (Armidale, Parkes, Wauchope and Blayney). Seats, bins and pay phones have also been removed or relocated at Riverwood and Padstow stations to allow for an accessible path along the building.

There are currently 29 stations in progress or completed under the current Transport Access Program. As stations are upgraded under programs such as the Transport Access Program, many of the restricted paths will be removed.

TfNSW is also currently completing accessibility audits across the train network. This will further identify any restricted paths of travel. Information gathered from this audit will be used to prioritise and package future works to improve accessibility across the train networks.

3.6 **Part 5.1 Resting points – when resting points must be provided**

Temporary exemption: existing rail premises and existing rail infrastructure.

For a period of five years, compliance with clause 5.1 is not required for existing rail premises and existing rail infrastructure to the extent that site constraints prevent compliance (rather than only add expense of difficulty).

Reporting requirements for the period 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2020:

- a) **Outcome of consultation**
- b) **Locations of any non-compliance.**

Resting points by way of seating is provided on rail platforms.

Resting points are also included on all newly built infrastructure in accordance with the Transport Standards. In some instances, resting points are not provided at locations as seating would impinge on the accessible path or create safety issues due to narrow platform widths or on existing footbridges. In these scenarios seats are removed or relocated to allow for the maximum extent for clear access paths. In some cases where customer volumes require seating to be removed, resting rails are provided as an alternative.

At large stations on the Sydney Trains network, the requirement to install additional seating in underground tunnels and on concourses would impose significant restraints on pedestrian flows. Given the high volume of customer flows at large stations, the requirement to install seating in these locations would lead to further congestion and negatively impact on customer safety. Seats in these stations are strategically located

to provide adequate resting areas on platforms whilst ensuring customer safety and operational effectiveness is maintained in such a constricted environment.

As part of the current Station Refresh Program and Wayfinding Program, existing seating locations on platforms are being reviewed. Seating is retained, repositioned or additional installed as required to comply with the Transport Standards to provide suitable resting points along platforms.

TfNSW conducts quarterly consultation meetings with peak disability organisations through the Accessible Transport Advisory Committee regarding upgrading existing infrastructure. Community consultation is also undertaken as part of major upgrading of infrastructure under the Transport Access Program. Where additional seating or resting points are requested this is considered in the scope of works. TfNSW also provides accessible seating at interchange facilities such as bus stops, light rail stops, taxi ranks and, where appropriate, kiss and ride facilities.

Customer feedback also captured requests for additional seating. All requests are investigated and evaluated in alignment to requirements in accordance to the Station Components Guide. In all instances of customer initiated requests for seating, sites were either determined to have sufficient seating in alignment to the guide and the Transport Standards or were in locations that would impinge on the access path and as such not progressed.

TfNSW is also currently completing accessibility audits across the train network. This will further identify any areas where resting points are not provided. Information gathered from this audit will be used to prioritise and package future works to improve accessibility across the train networks.

3.7 Part 6.4 Slope of external boarding ramps

Temporary exemption: rail conveyances.

For a period of five years, where the relationship between the platform and rail carriage means that an external boarding ramp can only be provided at a gradient greater than 1 in 8 and less than 1 in 4, ARA members are not required to provide staff assistance in ascending or descending the ramp.

Reporting Requirements for the period 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2020:

- a) Number of locations where boarding ramp slopes of 1 in 8 or better cannot currently be achieved**
- b) Measures to be taken to increase the number of locations where external boarding ramp slopes of 1 in 8 or better will be achieved**
- c) Results of examination of alternative methods of achieving accessible boarding.**

All trains operating on the Sydney and Intercity networks are accessible for customers using mobility devices with direct assistance from station staff or train crew using a platform to train boarding ramp. Factors such as curved platforms and legacy infrastructure can exacerbate the gap between train and platform resulting in continued reliance on direct assistance to board services.

Portable ramps have been distributed to Sydney Trains and Intercity stations. Sydney Trains is currently investigating new ramp products to improve safety for customers and staff. Staff, both station and train crew, are available to assist customers to utilise the portable boarding ramps.

Customers are advised to contact their departure station and inform staff of their needs if they require staff assistance, including whether a boarding ramp is required. Customer service can also be provided to assist when alighting. Customers can

obtain information about boarding ramps and boarding assistance zones in the Sydney Trains Accessible Travel brochure and at transportnsw.info which provides information about accessible facilities at stations.

For booked services, customers are advised to inform NSW TrainLink in advance if special assistance is required. These details will be recorded and passed on to on-board staff. Customers can advise NSW TrainLink of their needs by calling 13 22 32 (NSW TrainLink general enquiries number), 133 677 (National Relay Service for hearing and speech impaired customers) or visiting their nearest Sales Agent to make their booking. Information on NSW TrainLink facilities can also be found at transportnsw.info.

3.8 Part 8.2 Boarding – when boarding devices must be provided

Temporary exemption: rail conveyances.

For a period of five years, a manual or power assisted boarding device is only required at a single door rather than all doors of a rail conveyance.

Reporting requirement for the period 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2020: measures taken to ensure that staff and passengers are adequately informed of both the doors of rail conveyances at which boarding devices are available and the equivalent access measures available.

While technically passengers can board at any door of an accessible train, the variation between the boarding ramp and the rail conveyance may require a dedicated boarding point. These are located at fixed points along a platform with signage indicating where these fixed accessible boarding points are located. External decals on trains also assist in ensuring customers board areas that have accessible features including allocated spaces and help points.

Staff, both station and train crew, are available to assist customers to utilise the portable boarding ramps. Customers are advised to contact their departure station and inform staff of their needs if they require staff assistance, including whether a boarding ramp is required. Customer service can also be provided to assist when alighting.

At unstaffed stations, customers are advised to wait in the designated area on the platform for assistance from train crew. All frontline staff are trained to provide direct assistance to customers using a portable boarding ramp.

Generally on booked services of the NSW TrainLink regional fleet, there are defined cars with an accessible space as not all cars can provide this accessibility. Customers are advised to inform NSW TrainLink in advance if special assistance is required or if they utilise mobility devices. When customers provide this information, the booking system allocates a seating location to the customer that provides the best access to all on-board facilities such as accessible toilets. These details will be recorded and passed on to on-board staff. Information on NSW TrainLink facilities can also be found at transportnsw.info.

Customers can advise NSW TrainLink of their needs by calling 13 22 32 (NSW TrainLink general enquiries number), 133 677 (National Relay Service for hearing and speech impaired customers) or visiting their nearest Sales Agent to make their booking.

Due to the changing patronage needs, a new boarding ramp has been developed, tested and is in manufacturing for use on the Sydney Trains network. The prototype was reviewed in consultation with maintenance teams, station and on board staff and industrial relations representatives, and disability advocacy groups in the TfNSW

Accessible Transport Advisory Committee. The new boarding ramps will be rolled-out as part of a replacement program.

Sydney Trains have also rolled out an initiative to help staff in providing improved customer service when undertaking boarding assistance. The new Boarding Assistance Application runs on station staff mobile phones removing tradition paper based processes allowing staff to be more mobile and remain visible to customers. Staff have commented that the application has considerably improved boarding procedures with clear benefit for customers with disability.

3.9 Part 11.2 Handrails and grabrails – handrails to be provided on access paths (H2.4)

Temporary exemption: rail platforms.

For a period of five years, rail platforms are exempt from clause 11.2 (clause H2.4 (2)).

Reporting requirement for the period 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2020: where a request is made but the installation of a handrail does not proceed, report on the request and the reasons for not taking action.

A previous request for the installation of a handrail at Seven Hills station was completed during the reporting period.

A previous request for an additional handrail was made at Central station. This request is still pending due to heritage considerations and broader changes occurring from major infrastructure projects at the station.

Other customer initiated requests for handrails have been investigated and evaluated for feasibility. A request at Wahroonga station was received to install a handrail on the footbridge. This request will be included as part of the accessibility upgrade for the station under the Transport Access Program which is currently in the design and planning stage.

3.10 Part 15.3 Toilets – unisex accessible toilets – ferries and accessible rail cars

Temporary exemption: accessible rail cars.

For a period of five years, if toilets are provided, a unisex accessible toilet without airlock is not required in every accessible rail car.

Reporting requirement for the period 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2020: which services are affected.

This reporting requirement only relates to NSW TrainLink services.

All existing fleet types (excluding the V-sets) have an accessible toilet at a ratio of one per set. Where longer passenger trains are created by coupling short sets together, for example an eight car OSCAR train, there are two accessible toilets per train. The location of accessible toilets is not always immediately near the allocated wheelchair spaces, as many trains have significantly more allocated spaces than toilets. Level access through the length of the train is not possible due to the double deck saloon layout. In a double deck train configuration in the NSW fleet, an accessible toilet requires all the single deck area of one end of a train car.

The Hunter set has the accessible toilet near the wheelchair spaces, even if not always in the same car, while the Endeavour, XPLOER and XPT have the allocated space adjacent to the accessible toilet in the same car.

V-sets will be progressively replaced as part of the New Intercity Fleet (NIF) program when the new trains come into service. The NIF design includes four-car sets, each with one wheelchair accessible toilet, and six-car sets, each with one wheelchair accessible and one ambulant accessible toilet. NIF services will often amalgamate to operate as a longer train by coupling shorter sets together, similar to OSCAR trains.

On the NIF, a maximum of 2 allocated spaces can be accommodated in the single deck end of the car immediately adjacent to each accessible toilet. There are no airlocks provided with any toilets and all toilets are designated unisex. NIF trains will go into service progressively from late 2020.

The NSW Government is replacing the ageing NSW regional rail fleet of XPT, XPLOER and Endeavour trains. Long and short regional trains in the new fleet will have toilets in every carriage, and regional intercity trains will have toilets in two of three carriages. The Short Intercity and Short Regional trains have one accessible toilet. The Long Regional train will contain two accessible toilets.

All allocated spaces will be located on cars towards the centre of the train, and have access paths to all accessible toilets which are compliant. The first new trains are expected to be running from 2023, with the full fleet coming into service progressively.

On existing long distance services, customers are advised to inform NSW TrainLink in advance if special assistance is required or if they utilise mobility devices. When customers provide this information, the booking system allocates a seating location to the customer that provides the best access to all on-board facilities such as accessible toilets. These details will be recorded and passed on to on-board staff.

Information on the availability of accessible toilets is available on transportnsw.info.

3.11 Part 15.4 Toilets – requirements for accessible toilets – ferries and accessible rail cars

Temporary exemption: narrow gauge and standard gauge accessible rail cars.

For a period of five years, compliance with clause 15.4 is not required for narrow gauge and standard gauge accessible rail cars.

Reporting requirement for the period 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2020: outcome of consultations.

This reporting requirement only relates to NSW TrainLink services.

The first of the New Intercity Fleet (NIF) trains will enter service in late 2020 after a period of testing and commissioning. The NIF train will include fully compliant wheelchair accessible toilets as well as separate toilets designed to support people with ambulant disabilities in some sets. Customer feedback and user testing has formed an integral part in the design phase for the NIF Train and its on-board facilities.

Initial lessons learnt activities for existing fleet were conducted with stakeholder user groups to understand how best to optimise the toilet facilities on-board. Design concepts developed with input from accessibility specialists have been tested by intercity customers and representatives of peak disability organisations using both low and high-fidelity mock-ups of the toilet design. This iterative design process has enabled end users with disabilities to inform the proposed design, helping to ensure a leading standard of safety, accessibility, functionality and comfort for NSW TrainLink customers.

The NSW Government is replacing the ageing NSW regional rail fleet of XPT, XPLOER and Endeavour trains. Long and short regional trains in the new fleet will have toilets in every carriage, and regional intercity trains will have toilets in two of three carriages.

The Short Intercity and Short Regional trains have one accessible toilet. The Long Regional train will contain two accessible toilets. All allocated spaces will be located on cars towards the centre of the train, and will have access paths to all accessible toilets which are compliant.

The project is in its early stages of delivery and the new fleet is still in the design phase. As part of the design process, targeted user groups are being engaged to inform the train design. These include regional and intercity customers, customers with disabilities, customers with special requirements such as cyclists and parents with prams, and NSW TrainLink staff.

The first new trains are expected to be running from 2023, with the full fleet coming into service progressively.

On existing long distance services, customers are advised to inform NSW TrainLink in advance if special assistance is required or if they utilise mobility devices. When customers provide this information, the booking system allocates a seating location to the customer that provides the best access to all on-board facilities such as accessible toilets. These details will be recorded and passed on to on-board staff.

Information on wheelchairs and motorised scooters and the availability of accessible toilets on board existing train fleet is available on transportnsw.info.

3.12 Part 17.5 Signs – electronic notices

Temporary exemption: rail premises and rail infrastructure.

For a period of five years, electronic notices may be displayed at rail premises and rail infrastructure for less than 10 seconds where more frequent updating is necessary because of the frequency of services or the volume of information to be displayed.

Reporting requirement for period 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2020: progress in the development and availability of alternative passenger information display systems.

TfNSW, Sydney Trains and NSW TrainLink comply with this standard.

Collaboration between TfNSW Wayfinding and Sydney Trains led to the installation of interactive touch screens at Central and Circular Quay stations in late 2019.

These two standalone, self-service devices, similar to those found in other transport interchanges overseas, retail centres and elsewhere, enable customers to:

- Find their way inside the station, for example to the toilets or a platform;
- Find their way outside the station, for example to a bus stand or local destination;
- Find next service information to a list of popular locations in Sydney and beyond;
- Discover popular tourist destinations;
- Find Opal / Contactless ticket information.

A 6-month trial was intended to test how this type of device might be suitable for providing customers with wayfinding and information in busy transport interchanges.

The units were temporarily deactivated however as a safety measure relating to COVID-19.

NSW TrainLink also completed a pilot of interactive digital kiosks with touch screen capability on 6 intercity stations. Overall the new technology was well utilised by customers to obtain multimodal transport information, Opal top-up locations, general station information and wayfinding to nearby places of interest.

In the Regional Network, Customer Help and Information Point (CHIP) devices have been installed on 41 regional stations. The CHIP provides both visual and audio customer information. In early 2020, minor upgrades including software enhancements were rolled out to increase the level of safety and security for customers and frontline staff.