

Temporary Exemptions Report

October 2015 - September 2016

The logo for Queensland Rail, featuring a stylized 'Q' and 'R' in a square, followed by the text 'QueenslandRail' in a sans-serif font. The logo is positioned on a red background with diagonal stripes.

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Executive summary

Queensland Rail is committed to providing accessible rail services for people with disabilities.

Queensland Rail works with the community and industry partners to ensure, to the maximum extent practicable, that services are accessible so all customers can get to their destination safely and with ease.

Upgrade programs are continuing across Queensland Rail's network to provide independent access for customers with disabilities to rail premises, infrastructure and rollingstock. Existing infrastructure, rail constraints and operational requirements mean that Queensland Rail will continue to face challenges in meeting some specifications. However, significant research, consultation and resourcing have been invested in developing alternative and practicable solutions to provide access in the rail environment.

The temporary exemptions process has provided a mechanism to highlight and acknowledge rail industry constraints whilst working on viable solutions. Further, in granting certain exemptions the Australian Human Rights Commission's reasoning and decision process takes into account many of these unique rail issues, such as narrow gauge.

This report provides information relating to the terms and conditions of a number of exemptions, many of which are applicable to Queensland Rail's services. The report highlights Queensland Rail's ongoing efforts to deliver optimal accessibility outcomes and the complexities of practically implementing a number of accessibility requirements within the rail environment.

Introduction

Australian Human Rights Commission

On 1 October 2015 the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) gave notice of its decision in relation to the Australasian Railway Association's (ARA) application for a number for temporary exemptions to the:

- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) (DDA)*;
- *Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002 (Cth) (DSAPT)*;
- *Disability (Access to Premises - Buildings) Standards 2010 (Cth) (APS)*.

Overall, the AHRC granted 29 temporary exemptions subject to specified terms and conditions. The majority of exemptions granted have a five-year timeframe (in force until 1 October 2020) with one exemption having a reduced two-year timeframe.

The AHRC decision, ARA application, consultation, and a list of all exemptions granted can be found [here](#).

Exemptions granted by the AHRC are subject to terms and conditions with which ARA members must comply. Importantly, a number of exemptions require reporting to the AHRC and for operators to make this reporting available on the ARA website.

Queensland Rail is an ARA member.

Background

Section 55 of the DDA gives the AHRC the power to grant temporary exemptions from certain provisions of the DDA. 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 DDA, while the exemption remains in force. Because any temporary exemption should be consistent with the objects of the DDA, the circumstances in which it will be necessary or appropriate to grant such exemptions are limited.

Scope of this report

This report is provided in relation to exemptions that include conditions requiring reporting to the AHRC and the provision of information on the ARA and Queensland Rail websites. It does not include commentary on all of the exemptions granted by the AHRC.

With that stated, Queensland Rail may also be utilising current exemptions with no reporting conditions attached by the AHRC.

This report is for the period 1 October 2015 to 30 September 2016. It will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis for the duration of the current exemption period.

1. Information and customer service

Ref.	Clause	Exemption summary	Reporting condition
1.1	DSAPT 2.6 Access paths – conveyances	An access path is only required at a single door rather than all doors of existing rail conveyances.	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.
1.2	DSAPT 8.2 Boarding – When boarding devices must be provided	A manual or power assisted boarding device is only required at a single door rather than all doors of a rail conveyance.	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.
1.3	DSAPT 17.5 Signs – Electronic notices	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.	Progress in the development and availability of alternative passenger information display systems.

1.1 Information on access paths onboard trains, accessible train doors and equivalent access measures

Customer information on the City network

Queensland Rail provides information about access paths onboard trains, accessible train doors and equivalent access measures through a variety of methods and formats.

Pre-journey, planning information can be found on the Queensland Rail website [Access for All](#) pages. This includes information about access onboard trains, allocated spaces, priority seating, the emergency intercom and assistance provided by train guards.

To talk with employees about onboard access, customers can call 13 12 30 or text 0428 774 636. During a customer's journey, a range of features integrate to convey information about access paths.

At stations:

- The assisted boarding point is where Queensland Rail recommends customers with disabilities wait for the train, as this area is in close proximity to the accessible carriages and accessible train doors.
- The assisted boarding point is indicated by the international symbol of access on the platform (typically a mat with a raised tactile surface).
- At many stations the assisted boarding point is located on a higher section of the platform, enabling easier access to the train from the platform for people who have difficulties negotiating a step.
- Train guards actively monitor the assisted boarding point and can provide assistance to board or disembark, along with locating the access path, priority seating or using the allocated spaces.



Onboard:

- Accessible doors on the City network fleet display the international symbol of accessibility on the outside and inside of the door.
- Onboard allocated spaces and priority seating are located in the accessible carriages and are typically positioned adjacent to the vestibule connecting to the doorway.
- If an onboard accessible toilet is provided, it is always within a designated accessible carriage. The toilet can be accessed from the accessible doorways, allocated spaces and priority seating.

Customer information on the Travel and Tourist networks

Queensland Rail's Travel and Tourist services are all booked services.

Detailed accessibility information is provided for customers on the Queensland Rail Travel [website](#), via downloadable fact sheets. Alternatively, information can be obtained in person at a Travel Centre or via a phone call to the Customer Contact Centre.

Information provided includes:

- direct assistance that can be provided by employees;
- position and location of onboard allocated spaces;
- options for travelling with a wheelchair or mobility scooter;
- booking procedures and safe boarding procedures.

Internal carriage dimensions are available on request and in some circumstances customers can arrange a viewing or onboard trial to confirm requirements before booking.

During a journey, either station or onboard employees are available to assist with locating accessible doors, allocated spaces, booked seating and sanitary facilities.

Information for Queensland Rail employees

Queensland Rail provides training in disability discrimination awareness to all front-line employees. Additionally, employees who provide assistance to customers with disabilities receive tailored training to ensure they are skilled and prepared to deliver a high standard of customer service.

The training for City network guards includes information on where onboard allocated spaces are located and which train doors should be used for deploying the ramp and assisting customers with disabilities.

Travel and Tourist onboard teams also receive tailored training in providing customer service for people with disabilities. This training includes information on accessible train doors and how to provide assistance to board or disembark, if required.

Travel Center employees and the reservations team also receive training in how to manage an accessible booking for customers with disabilities. This includes determining what type of service, seating arrangements and level of assistance best suits a person's specific travel requirements.

1.2 Information on using boarding devices and equivalent access measures

Customer information on the City network

Information on using the portable boarding ramp and employee assistance is provided through a variety of formats.

On Queensland Rail's website, the [Access for All](#) pages include detailed information on boarding assistance and how to request use of the ramp, including:

- a link to the Safe Boarding video, which gives people a visual step-by-step guide to using the ramp. It also shows people with different types of mobility devices using the ramp.
- the [Station Access Guide](#), which provides written information on the assisted boarding point, using the ramp, and seeking staff assistance. The Station Access Guide is also available in hard copy format at selected stations and distributed to disability sector organisations.

- downloadable copies of flyers for customers with disabilities such as 'Tips for safe and easy access'. Flyers are distributed to disability sector organisations and suppliers of mobility devices/assisted living products.

For people who have a disability and are new to travelling by train, or want to refresh their travelling skills, Queensland Rail runs quarterly Rail Safety and Orientation Days.

At these events, members from the Accessibility Team are on hand to take people through a station and a stationary train in a relaxed and controlled environment.

People have the opportunity to learn about a variety of accessibility features found across the City network; ask questions of station staff and train crew; and practice boarding, disembarking and moving through a carriage.

Customer Information on the Travel and Tourist network

Accessibility information, including use of boarding devices, is provided for customers on the Queensland Rail Travel [website](#), in person at a Travel Centre, or by phone call to the Customer Contact Centre on 1300 131 722.

The portable boarding ramp used on the Travel network is the same type as that used on the City network. Customers can board or disembark the Tilt Train or Spirit of Queensland services using the portable boarding ramp, which is kept onboard and deployed by staff. The ramp and staff assistance can be provided at any door upon request, however, it is primarily used by customers accessing the allocated spaces.

On the Tourist network, Kuranda Scenic Rail utilises a passenger lift at Kuranda and Freshwater stations. The portable boarding ramp is available at Cairns station.

Access for customers using mobility devices is currently limited on other Travel network services. Queensland Rail recommends discussing travel arrangements with employees to determine if other services may suit requirements.

Information for Queensland Rail employees

Queensland Rail provides training in disability discrimination awareness to all front-line employees. Additionally, employees who provide assistance to customers with disabilities receive tailored training to ensure they are skilled and prepared to deliver a high standard of customer service.

The training for City network guards includes specific instruction on how to use the portable boarding ramp. This entails:

- a classroom learning experience;
- a practical assessment where the guard has to safely deploy the ramp; and
- a written assessment component.

Tutor guards also provide mentoring and on-the-job learning experiences for trainee guards to further develop their skills and knowledge.

Travel and Tourist onboard teams also receive tailored training in how to safely deploy the portable boarding ramp and use the passenger lift (Kuranda and Freshwater stations). The training also includes information on providing assistance for customers with disabilities.

1.3 Passenger Information Displays

Queensland Rail provides information at stations in a variety of formats.

Large LCD or LED screens display timetable information at a number of City network stations. The visual information provided by these screens shows services scheduled arrival times, final destinations, stopping pattern, arrival platform and time until departure. All of these screens display information for longer than 10 seconds and are updated in real-time.

Additionally, next train information consoles found on station platforms use smaller electronic displays or touch screens to provide direct timetable information for individual customers in a visual and audible format. Again, these displays last longer than 10 seconds. Touch screens also allow the individual customer greater choice over what information they obtain.

In addition, the majority of City network stations have audible announcements two minutes before a train arrives at the station. These announcements inform customers of the train's destination and arrival platform. As the train arrives at the station there is a second announcement.

2. Consultation and customer feedback

Ref.	Clause	Exemption summary	Reporting condition
2.1	DSAPT 5.1 Resting points – When resting points must be provided	Compliance with clause 5.1 is not required for existing rail premises and existing rail infrastructure to the extent that site constraints prevent compliance.	Consult with local user groups to identify key locations where it is anticipated that customers will be waiting or require rest. Outcome of consultations and locations of non-compliance.
2.2	DSAPT 11.2 Handrails and grabrails – Handrails to be provided on access paths	Rail platforms are exempt from clause 11.2.	Where a request is made but the installation of a handrail does not proceed, the ARA member concerned provides a written report on the request and the reasons for not taking action.

2.1 Provision of resting points at stations

Consultation in relation to resting points

Queensland Rail's Accessibility Reference Group (ARG) is the primary forum for engagement with various disability sector groups. Its members represent a wide cross section of disability sector organisations. The ARG meets on a quarterly basis and provides valuable input into decision-making.

Members are consulted in relation to major infrastructure projects

including every station accessibility upgrade. Member input and feedback is requested during all stages of the project from concept, design and construction, with direct interaction and presentations to the group by Project Managers and design teams. Members have the opportunity to view design drawings and comment broadly on accessibility provisions and more specifically on fixtures and fittings such as resting points.

Provision of resting places is typically considered as part of consultation on any station accessibility upgrade. Member feedback on the need for resting places has been noted in relation to taxi ranks, bus stops (within station precincts) and passenger set down areas.

Location of non-compliance (where resting points may be required)

Queensland Rail undertook a review of all stations that have received an accessibility upgrade to determine if there were any locations where resting places were not provided every 60m on a primary path of travel. Additionally, the review also took into account any secondary paths of travel through a station environment. Three stations were identified through the review process as having constraints to the provision of resting places:

Indooroopilly station – There are limited resting places along the primary path of travel on platforms 3 and 4. These two platforms are located on an extremely narrow island platform. In order to achieve the required access path widths, a compromise was necessary between the allocation of seating and, the provision of an accessible path of travel. Consequently, the access path has been prioritised where the platform width is narrow and railings have been installed to provide customers with a ‘leaning’ point.

Ferny Grove station – There is a lack of resting places on secondary paths of travel within the station car park. Ferny Grove station is geographically a large station. It is a community hub, which provides access to public transport and the CBD for local residents and people living in the surrounding suburbs. The large car park surrounds the end-of-line station and provides entry/exit points from multiple locations to the station entrance. The provision of resting places was prioritised in key locations through out the station precinct such as, the bus stops, taxi zones, loading bays, the main station entrance and along the platforms.

Sandgate station – There is a lack of resting places on a secondary path of travel through a section of the car park (not the principle car park). Land and rail corridor constraints limit the room available in order to provide the required number of car parks and accessible paths of travel. Given the above, accommodating resting points, with the required set back from the accessible path of travel, proved to be challenging. The provision of resting places was prioritised within the station and the principle car park, which includes bus stops, taxi zones and passenger loading areas that connect to the main station entrance.

2.2 Customer feedback and handrail locations

Queensland Rail has not received any customer feedback in relation to installing handrails at any station on any network since 1 October 2015.

3. Station design (including train/ platform interface)

Ref.	Clause	Exemption summary	Reporting condition
3.1	DSAPT 2.1 APS H2.2 (1) Access paths – Unhindered passage (rail crossings)	Flange gaps of up to 75mm are permitted where a level crossing forms part of an access path on rail premises or rail infrastructure. 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.	Action taken to improve safe use of level crossings where they form part of an access path; Progress made in the removal of level crossings; and Any developments in research into possible technical solutions for bridging flange gaps. Which rail stations have inaccessible entrances?

Ref.	Clause	Exemption summary	Reporting condition
3.2	DSAPT 2.4 APS H2.2 (3) Access paths – Minimum unobstructed width	<p>For existing rail premises and existing rail infrastructure:</p> <p>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;</p> <p>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; and</p> <p>Platform edge warning TGSIs are permitted to intrude into access paths.</p>	Which rail stations have restricted paths of travel?

Ref.	Clause	Exemption summary	Reporting condition
3.3	DSAPT 4.2 APS H2.2 (7) Passing areas – Two-way access paths and aerobridges	For existing rail platforms a passing area every 9m along any two-way access path that is less than 1800mm wide is permitted where it is not possible to provide one every 6m due to structural or heritage constraints.	Which rail station platforms do not provide passing spaces every 6m where any two-way access path is less than 1800mm wide?
3.4	DSAPT 6.4 Slope of external boarding ramps	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.	The number of locations where boarding ramp slopes of 1 in 8 or better cannot currently be achieved; Measures to be taken to increase the number of locations where external boarding ramp slopes of 1 in 8 or better will be achieved; Results of examination by the operator of alternative methods for achieving accessible boarding.

3.1 Pedestrian Level Crossings and Access Paths

Actions to improve safe use of level crossings

Queensland Rail is committed to constantly improving the personal safety and the security of its customers. To this end, Queensland Rail has developed and trialed new low-cost innovations at two high-risk pedestrian level crossings.

Cannon Hill and Coorparoo stations have been upgraded with painted markings and signage designed to safely guide pedestrians across the level crossings. Footprints are used to indicate the direction of travel and where it is safe to walk. Additional pavement-level warning messages also inform customers of the risk of incurring a fine if they stray from the path.

These sites have previously been identified as having high volumes of reported near misses and pedestrian violations. However, during the trial period there was significant 40 to 50 per cent reduction in reported level crossing violations.

Queensland Rail has identified a number of additional high-risk pedestrian level crossings that would benefit from the enhanced pavement surface markings and is now considering using this strategy at further locations.



Level crossing safety campaigns

Queensland Rail utilises social media, digital marketing, station signage and electronic information to deliver safety campaigns in relation to pedestrian level crossings. Below are some of the images taken from campaigns which have been rolled out in 2015 and 2016.



Don't gamble with your life this Easter break
Please obey all warning signs and signals at level crossings.
queenslandrail.com.au/levelcrossings

Queensland Rail Limited ABN 71 132 181 090



Don't gamble with your life
Please obey all warning signs and signals at level crossings.
queenslandrail.com.au/levelcrossings



Removal of level crossings

When upgrading an existing station which has a level crossing, Queensland Rail works to create an alternative accessible path of travel. This path provides a grade separation between the tracks and pedestrian access. It does not include the level crossing and typically involves the installation of a footbridge with lifts and stairs.

Where appropriate, the level crossing is then removed or becomes the secondary path of travel. Recent examples where upgrades have resulted in the removal of level crossings include:

- **Geebung station** - a footbridge with lifts and stairs now provides access to platforms.
- **Wulkuraka station** - a footbridge with lifts and stairs now provides access to platforms.

Research developments and technical solutions

The Rail Flange Gap Risk Reduction Project is currently being progressed by The Australasian Centre for Rail Innovation. This project will conduct an investigation of available treatments for rail flange gaps and trial a variety of solutions to provide advice on the safest and most suitable solution.

Further information on the project can be found [here](#).

Inaccessible entrances to stations

At existing stations there may be multiple entry/exit points. When upgrading a station, careful consideration is given to how customers utilise the station and what the main paths of travel are. The most important aspect of station design is that all customers, including those with a specific requirement, can safely access a station and

board a train (and vice versa). Queensland Rail's approach to upgrading existing stations focuses on this customer requirement and provides a 'primary path of travel' through a station precinct.

The primary path is also the accessible path of travel through a station precinct. It is critical to ensuring that customers are able to safely and independently use Queensland Rail services as it provides connectivity between all essential facilities and information. For stations that have been upgraded this entails a clear and unobstructed path from a principal pedestrian entrance to each platform, linking between platforms and all accessible facilities provided.

The primary path may extend to multiple entry/exit points (e.g. if cross corridor access is required) or a single entry point (e.g. if access is via one side of the station or the station is at the end of the line).

All of the stations listed below provide a primary path of travel through the station precinct. Inaccessible entrances at these stations may have been retained for multiple reasons including community feedback, such as the level crossing at Mitchelton station, or difficulties in upgrading the entrance to achieve access, such as the subway at Indooroopilly station.

Bowen Hills station – There are two footbridges at Bowen Hills Station which are located at either end of the platforms. One provides stair-only access and the other provides lift and stair access to and between all platforms.

Central station – The existing subway and entrance via Creek Street both provide stair-only access. The entrance on the corner of Ann Street and Edward Street provides steep ramp and stair access. Lift, escalator and stair access is provided to and between all platforms via a central concourse which connects to the main entrance, station facilities, shops and retail areas. There is also lift access from Wickham Terrace and from Ann Street and the Anzac Square subway.

Darra station – The footbridge at Darra station connects to a car park and the end of the platforms, providing stair only access. Lift, stair and ramp access is provided from the subway. The subway also connects to the accessible parking bays, taxi zone passenger loading areas, bus stops and station facilities.

Grovely station – The centrally located footbridge provides lift and stair access to and between all platforms within close proximity to the assisted boarding point. There is a level crossing at one end of the station which provides pedestrian access over the tracks and through the station car park and adjacent roadway.

Indooroopilly station – The existing subway at Indooroopilly station provides stair-only access to and between platforms. The subway is located at one end of the platforms. The station concourse situated at the opposite end of the platforms provides lift and stair access to and between all platforms, as well as cross-corridor access. The lifts also connect to the main station entrance, station office and amenities. Note that upgrading the subway to provide lifts may not be feasible with land (surrounding roads and infrastructure) and topographical constraints (rail corridor, proximity to Brisbane River).

Milton station – The existing subway at Milton station provides stair-only access to and between platforms. The subway is located at one end of the platforms. The centrally located footbridge provides lift and stair access to and between all platforms. Additionally, the footbridge provides cross corridor access to the streets either side of the station. The lifts are within close proximity to the assisted boarding points and station facilities.

Mitchelton station – The centrally located footbridge provides lift and stair access to and between all platforms within close proximity to the assisted boarding point. There is a level crossing at one end of the station which provides pedestrian access over the tracks and the adjacent roadway. When the station was upgraded, community feedback and consultation showed a strong preference to retain the

level crossing rather than closing this inaccessible entrance.

Oxley station – The centrally located subway provides lift, stair and ramp access to platforms, within close proximity of the boarding point. Additionally the subway provides cross-corridor access, connects to the bus interchange, station car park and the local shopping area. The footbridge located at one end of the platforms provides stair-only access.

Sandgate station – The centrally located footbridge provides lift and stair access to and between all platforms within close proximity to the assisted boarding point. There is a level crossing at one end of the station which provides pedestrian access over the tracks and the adjacent roadway.

South Brisbane station – The centrally located subway provides lift and stair access to and between all platforms within close proximity to the assisted boarding point. Towards one end of platform 1, a steep special events ramp has been retained post upgrade. This ramp is only used during special events to prevent crowding and assist with passenger flow.

Woodridge station – An existing timber footbridge providing stair-only access to the island platform has been retained. Alternatively, the subway provides lift access to the island platform.

3.2 Path widths

Path widths at existing stations are often constrained due to track alignment, signals and mast on platforms, topography, narrow rail corridors and surrounding infrastructure. When upgrading stations with such constraints, precedence is given to achieving required path widths on a 'primary path of travel'. This primary path extends from the accessible main entry/exit points to the assisted boarding points on platforms, between platforms and accessible station facilities.

Queensland Rail reviewed path widths on primary paths for all upgraded stations. Stations listed below have been identified as having constraints to path widths:

Bowen Hills station (platforms 3 and 4) – Access to the platforms is via a footbridge at the end of the platforms with a lift adjacent to stairs. The platform is extremely narrow and curved at the ends. The path width to the lift is constrained due to the location of the stairs. The stairs have been positioned just behind the cope allowing for the maximum width of platform.

Caboolture station (platform 1) – The platform width narrows where the exiting station office is located. Customers must go past the station office in order to reach the assisted boarding point on platform 1.

Corinda station (all platforms) – The platform path width narrows where the lift shaft is located on the island platforms. Customers must exit the lift, turn 180 degrees and travel alongside the lift shaft to reach the assisted boarding point. In order to achieve the widest section of platform adjacent to the lift, the lift was positioned towards one cope on the island platform, far as possible. There was a fine balance as to how much the lift could be offset due to emergency egress requirements. Note that masts along the platforms also reduce the path width.

Eagle Junction station (platforms 2 and 3) – The old station office located in the middle of platforms 2 and 3 restricts path width near the assisted boarding point.

Petrie station (platform 1) – The platform path width narrows where the lift is located on platform 1. Note an alternative path of travel has been created behind the lift and via the bus interchange.

South Brisbane station (platforms 2 and 3) – Path widths are restricted where the stairs are located on the narrow island platform. In order to reach the assisted boarding point from the lift, a customer

must go past the existing stairs and heritage shelter.

Toowong station (all platforms) – Path widths are restricted where the stairs are located on the narrow island platforms. In order to reach the assisted boarding point from the lift a customer must go past the stairs.

3.3 Passing spaces on platforms

Where possible, Queensland Rail ensures that upgraded stations have a maximum of 6m between passing spaces on a pathway less than 1.8m wide. However, in relation to upgrading existing narrow platforms it is challenging to try and balance access requirements with the need to provide physical infrastructure such as, stairs and lifts, in a constrained space. In consideration of this balancing act, Queensland Rail prioritises the provision of accessible path widths and passing spaces along the primary path of travel. A review of passing spaces along primary paths has identified the stations below as having platform constraints:

Bowen Hills station (platforms 3 and 4) – Access to the platforms is via a footbridge at the end of the platforms with a lift adjacent to stairs. The platform is extremely narrow and curved at the ends. Passing spaces on the path to the lift cannot be provided due to the location of the stairs. The stairs have been positioned just behind the cope allowing for the maximum width of platform. However, turn taking for people with mobility devices may be required.

Caboolture station (platform 1) – The platform width is narrow where the exiting station office is located. As the station office is over 6m in length there are restrictions to passing spaces for customers going to or from the assisted boarding point.

3.4 Boarding

Boarding ramp slopes

In 2014 and 2015, Queensland Rail undertook a comprehensive survey of all the platforms on the City network. The platform clearance relative surveys determined the vertical and horizontal gap between the train footboard and the platform coping and whether these gaps were within rail tolerances. The overall aim of the exercise was to determine the strike potential for each platform but survey data, in particular vertical gaps, can also be used to calculate indicative boarding ramp slopes.

The gradient of a boarding ramp slope is determined by multiple variables, however the key factor is the vertical gap between the height of the station platform and the height of the train tread plate. Platforms on the City network are constructed at two different heights and are classified as low level or high level. High level platforms can either extend for the full length of the platform or are localised at the assisted boarding point (nominally the middle of the platform).



All platforms on the Travel and Tourist networks are classified as low level.

For the majority of low level platforms, boarding ramp slopes of 1 in 8 or better cannot currently be achieved. Note that at some low level platforms which have a convex curve and a track cant on the outer rail, a 1 in 8 slope may be attained.

The [Station Access Guide](#) lists all City network stations and also provides information on whether platforms are high or low level. Currently, 36 City network stations have high level platforms.

Measures taken to reduce boarding ramp slopes and alternative methods for achieving accessible boarding

Providing high level platforms is a core component of Queensland Rail's Station Upgrade Program. Queensland Rail is committed to continually improving its station facilities to provide equivalent access for all customers.

The prioritisation of accessibility upgrades is determined by considering a range of factors including patronage, nearby community facilities, existing degree of accessibility, proximity of station to alternative accessible stations or services, function of the station in the overall transport network and projected population growth.

As part of the City network Station Upgrade Program, fourteen City network stations have been identified for station accessibility upgrades. Construction has commenced at five stations: Graceville, Dinmore, Alderley, Newmarket and Nambour Stations. Additionally, planning and design work is currently underway for Strathpine, Boondall and Morayfield stations. At the end of the projects, all of these stations will be independently accessible.

Significantly, the recently announced upgrade to platforms at Central Station will include platform raising where the assisted boarding points are located. This key project will result in greater accessibility for the majority of customer journeys, as Central station has the highest patronage figures on the City network.

Additionally, construction work at South Bank station will result in platform 1 being raised for the full length of the platform.

When this work is completed the majority of inner city stations will have high level platforms at one or more assisted boarding points: Central, Roma Street, Fortitude Valley, South Brisbane, South Bank and Bowen Hills stations.

On the Travel and Tourist networks the Accessibility Strategy Team is currently undertaking accessibility audits at stations and onboard services. Any identified opportunities for improving accessible boarding will be investigated.

Queensland Rail is also currently reviewing the customer experience on Travel and Tourist network services for people with a disability. This review is broad in its scope, taking a holistic view and incorporating:

- the effectiveness of communication during the booking process
- safe boarding and disembarking train services (particularly in relation to the use of portable boarding ramps)
- the on-train journey (including assistance available whilst on-board)

Through the assessment process, opportunities for improving processes and equipment will be determined.

4. Train design

Ref.	Clause	Exemption summary	Reporting condition
4.1	DSAPT 15.3 Unisex accessible toilet — ferries and accessible rail cars	If toilets are provided, a unisex accessible toilet without airlock is not required in every accessible rail car. Exemption is limited to ARA members constrained by space limitations arising from narrow gauge rail services.	Which services are affected (i.e. do not have an accessible toilet in every accessible car)?
4.2	DSAPT 15.4 Toilets – requirements for accessible toilets — ferries and accessible rail cars	Compliance with clause 15.4 is not required for narrow gauge and standard gauge accessible rail cars.	Consult with people with disability to identify the dimensions that best balance the requirements for accessible paths of travel and circulation space inside accessible toilets. Outcome of consultations.

4.1 Onboard accessible toilets

City network

On the existing City network fleet all train consists provide accessible carriages. Currently, vehicle classes IMU 100, 120 and 160 provide onboard unisex accessible toilets. There is a total of 42 IMU 100, 120 and 160 vehicles which have three carriages per unit. For each unit there is one accessible carriage where the unisex accessible toilet is located.

Travel and Tourist network

On the existing Travel network fleet, the [Spirit of Queensland](#) (RailBed Car B and Premium Economy Seating Car E) and [Tilt Train](#) (Business seat Car A) provide accessible carriages. For each of these services the accessible toilet facilities are located in the accessible carriages.

The [Kuranda Scenic Rail](#) provides one accessible carriage per service. The onboard unisex accessible toilet is located within this accessible carriage.

4.2 Consultation for onboard accessible toilets

A great deal of thought, effort and innovation has been employed to make the required parts of a train accessible to customers with disabilities. If prescribed dimensions cannot be met, Queensland Rail is committed to consulting with people with disabilities to implement alternative solutions that provide functional access outcomes.

In relation to onboard accessible toilets, Queensland Rail is heavily constrained by its narrow gauge railway tracks and rollingstock

design limitations. This means that the carriages are necessarily narrow in width in order to fit on the infrastructure and also travel through some tunnels. This limitation remains regardless of whether the rollingstock is new or existing.

Given the above, onboard accessible toilets and adjacent access paths have been the focus of extensive consultation for Queensland Rail. Most recently, consultations with disability sector organisations and customers with disabilities were held as part of the New Generation Rollingstock Project (in 2014 and 2015) and the design and construction phases for the Spirit of Queensland trains (in 2012 and 2013). Consultation participants highlighted the following:

- The necessity of achieving a balance between an adjacent access path and onboard toilet cubicle dimensions.
- A wider door way (in some cases curved) may allow someone to angle their mobility device in order to best utilise the available space or turning room.
- The advantages of having push buttons to open/close and lock the door, as opposed to a sliding door with a manual lock.
- The dimension required from the centerline of toilet pan to the far wall (1150mm) is important to assist with side transfers.
- Duress buttons placed in locations that can be reached if someone is on the ground or sitting on the toilet.
- The importance of effective colour contrast and tactile signage.

Feedback from consultation in relation to onboard accessible toilets and adjacent access paths has been incorporated into rollingstock design, where possible, for both projects.

Next steps

Queensland Rail will publish this report on its website in addition to registering the document with the Australian Human Rights Commission. Exemption terms and conditions will continue to be monitored through:

- an annual review of this report. A core component of this review will be the monitoring of identified projects and initiatives.
- coordinating community engagement activities and consultations with the disability sector and customers with disabilities.
- continuing to consult with the Accessibility Reference Group to provide feedback on all major infrastructure and rollingstock projects.
- ongoing engagement with the Accessibility Reference Group to provide opportunities for dialogue with key external stakeholders including, advocates and groups with insight into particular needs and issues.
- ensuring actions, new initiatives and extensions identified in this plan are implemented and monitored by the relevant program areas within Queensland Rail.

These methods provide monitoring, transparent reporting and ongoing commitment to working with customers with disabilities. Queensland Rail will continue to create and deliver an accessible rail network that benefits everyone and contributes to an inclusive community, with the associated social and economic advantages.

For more information

This report, along with other useful resources, is available at queenslandrail.com.au.

Queensland Rail is committed to providing accessible services to Queenslanders from all culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. If you have difficulty in understanding the report, please contact Queensland Rail on 13 16 17 and we will arrange an interpreter to share the report with you.

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