

METRO TRAINS MELBOURNE

ACCESSIBILITY ACTION PLAN 2015–2018

CEO FOREWORD

A proud railway for everyone, every day

At Metro, we strive hard to deliver our vision of a proud railway for everyone, every day.

To make that vision a reality, we have invested heavily in developing the operational expertise required to run a modern railway. At the same time, we have ramped up our focus on the customer, so that all of our operational planning now takes place with the customer top of mind.

Customer service is a top priority, as we strive to deliver people to their destinations safely and seamlessly every time. We believe that rail should be all inclusive, bringing independence and confidence to people from all walks of life.

The Metro Accessibility Action Plan 2015–2018 highlights our commitment to bringing meaningful and collaborative improvements to our customers. To keep pace with change, we are committed to refining the plan over its lifespan, particularly as our customers inform priorities through the many feedback channels available to them. As the plan evolves, we will be transparent in our successes and learnings. Decisions will be made based on the voice of the customer, as we continue to work alongside Public Transport Victoria in the operation of a system shaped by our customers.



Andrew Lezala
Chief Executive Officer

Who we are

Metro Trains Melbourne operates the city's metropolitan train service. Our network consists of 203 six carriage trains across 851 kilometres of track, and we transport 415,000 customers each day. Metro aims to encourage the Melbourne community's vibrant and ever evolving lifestyle, by providing a seamless transport solution to keep customers connected.

With 15 train lines, 218 stations and 228.1 million passenger journeys per year, Metro plays a vital role in ensuring Victorians are able to get wherever they need to go.

Vision

Our vision is to be a proud railway for everyone, every day.

Mission

Our mission is to run Melbourne's growing railway with continuous improvement in safety, punctuality, reliability and customer service.

Values

Safety – we are safe, always

Teamwork – we are strongest as a team

Excellence – we strive to be the best

Passion – we always find a way

Honesty – we are true to our customers, our colleagues and ourselves

Introduction

As the franchise operator under the authority of Public Transport Victoria (PTV), Metro reflects the Victorian Government and PTV's commitment to creating a public transport system that is accessible for all Victorians.

Through an aligned objective of creating a service Victorians value and choose to use, the Metro Accessibility Action Plan 2015–2018 (the Plan) captures the intent of the Accessible Public Transport in Victoria: PTV Implementation Plan 2013–2017 and provides realistic deliverables within Metro's own remit.

In a complex environment with many legacy issues, the Plan focuses on a reflective combination of the prioritisation of infrastructure upgrades to meet customer needs, as well as the provision of good customer service in removing many of the barriers associated with a heritage train network.

Background to this document

The Plan was developed to communicate a program of initiatives which aim to improve access for people with a disability, as well as support the objectives of the Disability Discrimination Act 1992, the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport (DSAPT) and the Equal Opportunity Act 2010.

In line with the Accessible Public Transport in Victoria Action Plan 2013–2017, this Plan shifts away from the former approach of reaching accessibility only through compliance with DSAPT, which can often bring about inconsistent outcomes for customers as infrastructural improvements are gradually installed. The Plan incorporates the voice and needs of the customer in prioritisation and decision making, as well as the role of staff in creating an accessible public transport system.

The actions have been developed based on formal feedback, consultation with disability groups and providers, and look to review current procedures to better align with accessible outcomes.

Objective

An accessible Metro Trains Melbourne is a service which customers are proud of and able to easily use. The customer's voice is reflected in the service they receive and the decisions that we make, as the railway increasingly strengthens community connections.

PROGRESS 2012–2015

Metro's previous Accessibility Action Plan provided the business with key areas of focus and progress for 2012 to 2015. While what has already been achieved should be acknowledged, we also recognise that there is much more to be done. Below are the key progress milestones within the lifespan of the former plan:

Customer Service staff/ Authorised Officers training

Through the Metro Training Academy, all station staff and Authorised Officers undertake training and assessment in assisting customers with disabilities. This training is aligned and mapped to a nationally recognised unit of competence (TLII2020A – Provide assistance to customers with individual needs) and contextualised to suit the needs of our customers.

Within the last financial year, 57 multi-modal Authorised Officers, 64 Metro Authorised Officers and 98 station staff have completed the training. Overall, this number represents 15% of our total frontline staff receiving training in just the last year.

Driver training

Driver training includes instruction relating to identifying and assisting customers with individual needs, such as deployment of wheelchair ramps and general skills such as communication.

They are trained in the correct method of positioning wheelchair ramps for customers and in using these ramps in circumstances when customers are experiencing mobility difficulties with boarding and exiting trains.

The latest edition of 'Train Talk', which is a training DVD provided to all drivers, features a section on adequately assisting customers with individual needs. There is a focus on the impact of over-carrying and the need to be patient when customers communicate their destination. Customer consultation also informed us to redesign and improve the 'post-it-note' handed to drivers advising of destination points.

Moving like a Metro training

The 'Moving like a Metro' training has been developed and will be rolled out to all frontline Customer Service staff, approximately 1000 in total, throughout 2015/16.

The training builds on the theoretical concepts covered during the delivery of the Signature Service training over the last eighteen months. This learning initiative consolidates these learnings through an experiential based training course which provides an immersive environment within a station in which staff will learn through personal reflection, review and coaching as they participate in a series of scenarios. These scenarios include, amongst other topics, providing tailored and personalised assistance to our customers with individual needs.

Staff assistance

The 'red' button on the station customer information consoles has staff coverage from first to last train. Customers at unstaffed stations, or customers unable to locate a staff member, are encouraged to use the button to seek emergency or disability assistance. Metro, in conjunction with Vision Australia and Guide Dogs Victoria, has arranged additional on-site training to enable vision impaired customers to navigate towards the red button.

Equipping staff

Frontline staff are now equipped with iPads to assist in providing customers with information in different formats. The addition of Apps to specifically aid access and provide staff with tools to assist customers with individual needs is being explored in conjunction with Scope (disability services provider).

Authorised Officers Community Education Unit (CEU)

Our CEU provides customers and the community with information on how to safely use Metro services. These sessions are developed to suit the specific needs of the group and aim to facilitate confidence on public transport. The CEU assists in raising awareness of the services and facilities we provide, so that our customers with individual needs can navigate the system with ease.

Try before you ride

In 2014 and 2015, Metro participated in 'Try before you ride'. The day consisted of a stationary train and tram where people with a disability were encouraged to gain confidence in boarding and exiting in a safe environment.

Metro will continue to participate in the program with the support of PTV and in conjunction with Yarra Trams, Transdev, Taxi Services Commission and V/Line.

Raised Boarding Platforms

72 Raised Boarding Pads have been installed with Platform Gap Fillers to improve both the vertical and horizontal gap for customers boarding with mobility devices.

Directional decals to boarding points

Directional decals to platform boarding points were installed at all stations, except those with bi-directional running. These decals were complemented by additional decals at the boarding point, indicated by the universal symbol for access. These decals were installed to assist customers who are unfamiliar or lack confidence in where to be in position for the driver to provide boarding assistance.

'No bikes first carriage door' decals

Decals have been applied to platforms informing customers that no bicycles are permitted at the first door of the first carriage, to ensure allocated spaces are available to customers with mobility aids.

It is now recognised as an offence to carry a bicycle within the allocated space at the first door of the train.



NEXT STEPS



Priorities

In line with the intent of the PTV Accessible Action Plan, Metro has developed a series of actions beneath the four priority areas. This includes improvements in the areas of:

- > customer service
- > community consultation and engagement
- > access to facilities
- > access to public transport.

Each priority includes a brief overview of what these key areas mean for our customers.

Actions

The actions developed represent the steps Metro will take to ensure the four priority areas are addressed. This includes short and long term actions, dependent on the nature of the progress needed, level of priority and the formulation of a realistic timeline.

Measures of success

In measuring the success of our actions, we will be using a number of data sources. We recognise that using just one measure may not provide a realistic snapshot of our network. We are using a combination of:

- > complaints monitoring
- > customer satisfaction surveys
- > targeted customer consultation
- > statistical data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics
- > compliance monitoring through the PTV audit data.¹

¹ In 2014, PTV undertook an audit of all train stations in Victoria to assess their accessibility.

Priority one: Customer service

Metro strives to provide a high level of service for all customers. It's important that we utilise our staff and communication channels to provide customers with the right tools to access our services with greater ease.

What does success look like?

Our customers can expect a high level of service each time they travel with us. Staff assistance will be consistent and reliable, and information readily available in different formats to provide customers with confidence in planning and completing their journey.

ACTION	TIMELINE
To increase the awareness of accessibility, managers will complete the PTV experiential training 'Travelling in the shoes of others' and then explore further rollout across the business	October 2015
Introduce an internal survey to gauge staff knowledge on accessibility issues and inform future internal engagement	January 2016
Customer communication officers will remotely provide on-board announcements during service changes	April 2016
Partner with Scope to develop a face-to-face training module and communication tools for Authorised Officers and customer service staff	June 2016
In partnership with PTV, explore an SMS assistance service for customers with communication difficulties	December 2016
Develop an app based disability awareness tool to include communication tools (both customer and staff facing), training videos and a training module for frontline staff. The app will be available to all station staff through iPads	December 2016
Deliver a face-to-face training module to all Authorised Officers, Customer Service Managers and Customer Relations team, as well as embed in driver training	January 2017
Update the Metro website to be Level AA compliant with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines	January 2017
Upgrade of red and green buttons on customer information consoles to include braille and raised symbols	June 2017
Fifteen Authorised Officers trained in basic AUSLAN through Vicdeaf, as a pilot. This will improve interactions with hearing impaired customers during myki checks, service disruptions and general assistance	December 2017

Priority two: Community engagement and consultation

Including the voice of the customer in the way we make decisions is important to reach the best customer outcome. We know that through the engagement of our local communities and groups, Metro can provide a service that meets the needs of all customers.

What does success look like?

Our customers will have input into our network evolving for the better by including their voices in the decisions we make. We will regularly engage a range of stakeholders, including disability groups, and use feedback to influence positive changes.

ACTION	TIMELINE
Engage a customer focus group including customers with a range of needs, to highlight network features which help or hinder their journey, eg 'Try Before You Ride', Guide Dogs Victoria workshop	December 2015
Give customers and community groups more options to provide feedback by developing a feedback tool for the Community Education Unit	January 2016
Metro Community Education Unit (CEU) and Travellers Aid will collaborate in delivering safety and travel information to individual needs groups	January 2016
Develop a consultation framework for projects impacting, or with the potential to impact, accessibility. The framework will include both an internal and external matrix	January 2016
Coincide the introduction of the Accessibility Action Plan with staff roadshows to highlight the role of different areas of the business in the implementation of the plan	March 2016
Raise safety awareness amongst customers travelling with prams when boarding/exiting trains, as highlighted through formal customer feedback. Customer information and CEU community group engagement will focus on this customer group	June 2017
Introduce a suite of internal events to coincide with the International Day for People With Disability to raise awareness of accessibility issues in the Public Transport network	Annually

Priority three: Access to public transport services

Metro works with Public Transport Victoria to identify opportunities to improve the accessibility of existing train fleet, and ensure the best outcomes for customers when purchasing new trains.

What does success look like?

Customers will experience increased accessibility as older trains are refurbished to better cater to their needs. New trains will be well-designed and contribute to creating an easy journey. Customers will find improved features and innovative solutions to issues raised through feedback.

ACTION	TIMELINE
Integrate different areas of the business into a formal review process when assessing fleet modification outcomes	January 2016
Review driver disability awareness module to align with training provided to frontline staff	June 2016
Partner with PTV to introduce better signage and educate customers seeking on-board disability assistance to use the Passenger Emergency Intercom	December 2016
Develop an ongoing customer behaviour campaign to encourage customers to offer priority seats and vacate allocated spaces	Ongoing
Partner with PTV to ensure the procurement of fleet provides customers with the best accessible outcome	Ongoing

Priority four: Access to facilities

All Metro customers will have access to facilities within and around our stations. We recognise the importance of stations being easy to use and navigate, as well as their place in providing an accessible journey.

What does success look like?

There will be more accessible facilities at stations, including toilets and wayfinding. Customers will have an active voice in prioritisation of upgrades and the design of new stations to achieve the most accessible outcome.

ACTION	TIMELINE
Establish an internal working group to develop a strategy for infrastructure improvements. This strategy will inform the prioritisation of applications for PTV funding and support the Customer Experience standards implementation	Group established by December 2015
Using PTV audit data and customer consultation, Metro will identify and prioritise accessibility improvements which can be included in maintenance and project works	June 2016
Partner with PTV to develop solutions to address the boarding gap barrier	Ongoing



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call **1800 800 007**

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