



CHAPTER 7

Accessible transport

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Public transport services in Victoria are progressively being made accessible to people with disabilities, to comply with the provisions of the Commonwealth Government's *Disability Discrimination Act (1992)* and the Victorian Government's *Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport (2002)*.

All metropolitan and most V/Line trains are wheelchair accessible, along with most metropolitan and V/Line stations.

New trams and buses are being delivered with low floors for easy access, while an increasing number of tram stops in the Melbourne CBD and elsewhere on the tram network are being made into accessible stops.

Access for people using wheelchairs and mobility aids

Metropolitan

Trains

All metropolitan trains are wheelchair-accessible via a manual ramp deployed by the driver from the front carriage. Passengers who need assistance boarding trains should wait on the platform near the front of the train.

Most metropolitan train stations are wheelchair-accessible and Premium stations have wheelchair-accessible toilets. Passengers should phone Connex on **1800 700 105** to inquire about particular requirements such as obtaining assistance from station staff at Premium stations or travelling in large groups.

Trams

Low-floor trams have two allocated spaces for passengers using wheelchairs or mobility aids, directly inside the first set of double doors. They also have a call button so that passengers who need assistance getting off the tram can alert the driver to deploy a bridging plate at the door threshold.

People using wheelchairs and scooters can currently access low floor trams from platform stops on Routes 109, 96, 6, 8 and 72. At the time of this manual going to press, there are more than 200 accessible 'platform'-style tram stops on the Melbourne tram network.

The Department of Transport's Public Transport Division in conjunction with Yarra Trams and local councils are undertaking programs to increase the number of accessible trams stops. During 2008, more accessible stops will be commissioned. Contact Yarra Trams on **1800 800 166** for more information on accessible routes and stop locations.

Buses

Over 50 per cent of bus services in Melbourne use wheelchair-accessible low-floor buses, including SkyBus and NightRider services. Additionally, certain regional city routes are operated with low-floor buses. The driver deploys a manual ramp from the door at the bus stop kerb.

Passengers should contact the relevant operators to find out which services are operated with low-floor buses. Some bus companies' timetables also show which services are operated by low-floor buses.

A demand responsive wheelchair-accessible bus is available for travel between St Kilda, Port Melbourne, Flinders Street and Southern Cross stations. It can transport up to three passengers in wheelchairs and four other passengers.

Metcard fares apply to this service. For bookings, phone **1800 012 061**.

Regional

V/Line trains and coaches

All V/Line stations are wheelchair accessible. All trains are accessible via a portable wheelchair ramp deployed by the conductor on request. Space for passengers with disabilities on trains may be limited and passengers may be restricted to particular parts of the train.

Conductors and station staff are available on request to further assist passengers.

Wheelchair accessible toilets are available on all Sprinter and V/Locity railcars, while limited accessible toilet facilities are available on locomotive-hauled services. Some V/Line coach services are wheelchair accessible.

Passengers with disabilities should phone **136 196** for information on which services are most suitable for their needs. Bookings for passengers using wheelchairs or scooters on V/Line rail and coach services are required at least 24 hours in advance.

Mobility aids

Your mobility aid (wheelchair, scooter or motorised vehicle) needs to:

- Fit within an allocated space of 1300mm (length) x 800mm (width)
- Be no more than 750mm wide at a height 300mm above the ground to fit between the wheel axles of a bus

Additionally, the total weight of the mobility aid, its user and any attendants must be less than 300kg, as this is the maximum load for boarding devices such as ramps.

Mobility aids that exceed these standard wheelchair dimensions (800mm wide x 1300mm long) may not be able to be accommodated.

Service animals

Assistance animals

Only animals identified on an Assistance Animal Pass can travel for free on all Victorian public transport services.

All other animals travel subject to the conditions stated on pages 80 of this manual.

Assistance Animal Pass

The Assistance Animal Pass has been developed to assist people with an ongoing disability (including issues relating to ageing and psychiatric illness) who are unable to use public transport without an assistance animal. The Assistance Animal Pass will only be issued to people whose animals have been trained with the necessary training to travel on public transport.

Animals that have only been trained to provide companionship and support at home will not qualify for the Pass.

The Assistance Animal Pass is separate from the Companion Card (see page 60). If an applicant requires both an assistance animal and a companion to travel on public transport, they must apply for **both** an Assistance Animal Pass and Companion Card.

The Assistance Animal Pass is only issued to people who can demonstrate that their assistance animal alleviates the effects of their disability.

Types of assistance animals covered by the Assistance Animal Pass include:

- Guide Dogs: trained to help blind or visually-impaired people
- Hearing Dogs: trained to help deaf or hearing-impaired people
- Mobility Support Animals: trained to help people with physical disabilities who use wheelchairs or have difficulty moving
- Medical Alert Animals: trained to assist their handlers before and during a medical emergency
- Psychiatric service animals: trained to provide support to people with psychiatric disabilities.

The Metlink Central Pass Office (CPO) will manage the Assistance Animal Pass application process, assessment of animal suitability and issue of Assistance Animal Pass. Contact the Metlink CPO on **9619 1159** or **9619 1650**.