

Ms Jenny Gabriele
Manager, Legislative and Regulatory Projects
Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources
GPO Box 2392
Melbourne VIC 3000

1 June 2015

Dear Ms Gabriele,

Re: Transport (Compliance and Miscellaneous)(Conduct on Public Transport) Regulations 2015 (proposed regulations)

The Public Transport Ombudsman Limited (PTO) would like to make a submission to the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources in respect of the proposed regulations.

The PTO is an independent industry based Ombudsman scheme, established to receive, investigate and resolve complaints about public transport services offered by operators that are members of our scheme. Our members include operators such Metro Trains, Yarra Trams, Public Transport Victoria and V/Line.

Since we were established in 2004, we have received a small but steady stream of complaints from consumers who experience difficulty in accessing public transport, often because of the behaviour of other travellers. A common complaint is that a consumer in a wheelchair cannot access the designated area in the first carriage of a metropolitan train because it is occupied by a person with a bicycle who is unwilling to move.

In June 2011 we commissioned an independent survey of 53 organisations representing people who were socially, economically, intellectually or physically disadvantaged and who used public transport. We found that 70% of the people they represented used public transport daily. But when things went wrong they were reluctant or unable to complain - 60% of the organisations that responded said that their clients would not contact our office if they had a complaint about the accessibility of public transport. We therefore believe that the complaints we receive represent only a small percentage of disadvantaged consumers who regularly experience difficulty accessing public transport.



We support the proposed regulations, in particular those that:

- Prohibit a person from bringing a bicycle into a metropolitan train through the first door of the first carriage;
- Prohibit a person from being in possession of a bicycle near the first door of the first carriage; and
- Require a person not in a wheelchair to vacate the designated area upon request for a person in a wheelchair.

We believe that these changes will enhance the ability of public transport operators and their staff to ensure and promote the accessibility of public transport for all users.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed regulations. If you would like any further information, please contact Barbara Schade, PTO Policy and Research Officer on 8623 2125.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Treasure Jennings'.

Treasure Jennings
Ombudsman
Public Transport Ombudsman Ltd.