

Forest Coach Lines



Accessible Transport Plan

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Introduction

The Disability Discrimination Act requires Bus Operators to meet certain requirements when providing Bus Transport services to those in the community who have special access needs. This plan seeks to ensure that Forest Coach Lines maintains its current compliance, develops plans to ensure future compliance, ensures our operations are consistent with the Disability Discrimination Act and Forest positively improves transport accessibility to the community.

Our Goal

Our goal is to comply with all of the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport as defined in section 31 of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). These standards are to be met by 2022.

Information about services

Timetables - All timetables are published with Disability Access symbols where DDA compliant vehicles will be allocated. Greater than 55% of service trips operated by Forest Coach Lines have DDA compliant vehicles allocated.

Bus Stops - High visibility DDA compliant Bus Stop Plinths have been installed at all stops located on identified strategic corridors. These Plinths display timetables relevant to the stop at which they are located and also indicate those services that will have DDA compliant vehicles allocated to them.

All bus stops are clearly marked with appropriate signage throughout the area. Where signs have been removed or damaged Forest will endeavour to either repair or replace the sign within 7 working days.

Timetables in perspex frames are currently located at some stops enabling passengers to determine the arrival of the next relevant service. Where these cases have been removed or destroyed Forest will endeavour to replace the sign within 7 working days.

Bus Stop Plinths are installed bus stops at all key locations and on strategic bus corridors. Where these have been removed or damaged Forest will endeavour to replace the sign within 7 working days.

Web site - Forest Coach Lines web site (www.forestcoachlines.com.au) has all timetable information with information relating to Low Floor Special needs access vehicles.

131500 - The Transport Information Line assists all passengers in planning their trips where they have special access needs. The trip planner functionality “advanced search” enables the planning of multi-modal trips (bus, train, ferry).

131500 – The Transport Information Line has facilities that can also assist those who are hearing or speech impaired. 131500 – The service also provides for those who come from a non-english speaking background.

Physical Access to Services & Infrastructure

Bus Fleet - All new fleet additions will be DDA compliant. Our current fleet consists of 58 DDA compliant vehicles out of a total fleet of 93 (MBSC contracted) vehicles (62%).

Councils within Forest’s network (Pittwater, Warringah, Kuring-gai & Willoughby) are all currently reviewing Bus Stop infrastructure to ensure DDA legislation compliance (e.g. Ramps, Colour codes etc).

Where possible and if not already scheduled, Forest Coach Lines will with 24 hrs notice allocate an accessible vehicle to a particular service where a one off need is advised. Further, where we are made aware of a regular need for a low floor vehicle for mobility purposes a vehicle will be allocated.

Staff Training and employment practices

New Drivers are employed and trained using an accredited RTO to deliver a Certificate III course – Driving Operations. As part of this course training is provided to Drivers in relation to interacting with passengers that have special access needs.

Customer Awareness Training - As part of our commitment to our passengers Forest will continue to engage both internal and external training options to train Drivers and staff in various aspects of Customer Service. Included in this training are modules on dealing with the disadvantaged.

Forest Coach Lines continues to have Guide Dogs NSW/ACT provide training to our Driver group in relation to dealing with Vision impaired persons. This training assists Drivers to understand the needs, expectations and rights of the vision impaired when travelling on public transport.

Complaints Procedures

Passengers can contact our offices to lodge a complaint either by telephone, fax, email or lodge via our web site.

Due to the provisions of the SMBSC Forest will endeavor to redirect and promote all customer feedback calls to 131500 as the central database for these issues. The Forest passenger relations plan states Forest will endeavour to respond to any complaint within 48 hrs / two working days.

Promoting positive community attitudes

Forest engages the assistance of Guide Dogs NSW/ACT to deliver training to our driver group.

Forest has recently provided bus service orientation workshops to people who attend local Cerebral Palsy Alliance workplaces. These were gratefully acknowledged and will be scheduled again in the future.

All future initiatives for people with disabilities will be marketed to include the wider community.

Key Compliance dates

Item for Compliance	Percentage of Trips Compliance			
	31/12/2012	Compliant	31/12/2017	31/12/2022
Surfaces – on bus	100%	Yes		100%
Handrails and grab rails – on bus	100%	Yes		100%
Payment of Fares – on bus	100%	Yes		100%
Access paths – on bus	55%	Yes	80%	100%
Maneuvering areas – on bus	55%	Yes	80%	100%

Item for Compliance	Percentage of Trips Compliance			
	31/12/2012	Compliant	31/12/2017	31/12/2022
Ramps – on bus	55%	Yes	80%	100%
Boarding Devices – on bus	55%	Yes	80%	100%
Allocated space – on bus	55%	Yes	80%	100%
Doorways and Doors – on bus	55%	Yes	80%	100%
Stairs – on bus	55%	Yes	80%	100%
Toilets (or stops)	55%	Yes		
Controls – bus	55%	Yes	80%	100%

(*) as at 31/08/2013 - 58 of 93 contract vehicles (or 62%) were wheelchair accessible, DDA compliant