

# Yarra Trams Accessibility Action Plan

2019 to 2022








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IMAGE  
A young boy and his grandfather sit at a tram stop.  
The boy points to an approaching tram in the distance.





“We are committed to extending our support beyond the rails to the community we serve.”

IMAGE  
Yarra Trams CEO Nicolas Gindt.

## Message from our CEO

**Melbourne’s trams are not just an icon of our great city – they play an important role in connecting people to the places they want to go. For this reason, improving the accessibility of the world’s largest tram network is a priority for Yarra Trams.**

We have updated our Accessibility Action Plan, with a focus on improving the passenger experience by providing journey information in accessible formats and training our employees accordingly; working with the State to roll out more accessible trams and stops; and continuing to consult with the community, who are best positioned to advise us on how we can improve.

Already, we have made some progress in these areas, with the recent rollout of accessible platform stops on Nicholson Street, Carlisle Street and Park Street, and the installation of automated Vehicle Passenger Information Systems on more than 70 per cent of our fleet. But we recognise that more still needs to be done.

That’s why I am particularly proud of the efforts of our passenger service employees, who have been undergoing enhanced training as part of our acquiring Communication Access Symbol accreditation, to ensure that whoever you are – we are able to help you get to where you need to go.

Our work with the State in delivering more low-floor E-Class trams to the network continues, with more than 70 in service at the time I write this, with another 20 to hit the network by mid-2020.

We are also committed to extending our support beyond the rails to the community we serve and represent. This is seen in our new Yarra Trams Community.

Partnerships Program, which sees us providing support in the form of advertising to not-for-profit organisations that champion diversity and inclusion.

At Yarra Trams, we are committed to working with our partners and the wider community to ensure that we can provide a sustainable, and inclusive travel option – for everyone.



**Nicolas Gindt**

Chief Executive Officer,  
Keolis Downer (Yarra Trams)



## Context

### Operator of Yarra Trams: Keolis Downer

Keolis Downer is the proud operator of the Yarra Trams network. Keolis Downer is a joint venture bringing together two organisations – Keolis and Downer.

Keolis is an internationally-recognised transport provider with a history stretching back more than 135 years. It is the world's largest tram network operator and enables over three billion trips in 16 countries each year.

Downer designs, builds and sustains assets, infrastructure and facilities and is the leading provider of integrated services in Australia and New Zealand. It has 100 years' rail experience and expertise covering all rail sectors and every project phase, from manufacturing to operations to ongoing maintenance.

Since taking over the operation of Melbourne's tram network on 30 November 2009, Keolis Downer has improved safety, delivered record passenger satisfaction and maintained punctuality during a period of unprecedented growth across Melbourne.

Keolis Downer's guiding principle is to 'think like a passenger'. Keolis Downer focuses on delivering safe, reliable, clean, and easy-to-use services and is committed to increasing the environmental, social and economic contribution that Melbourne's tram network makes to the city.

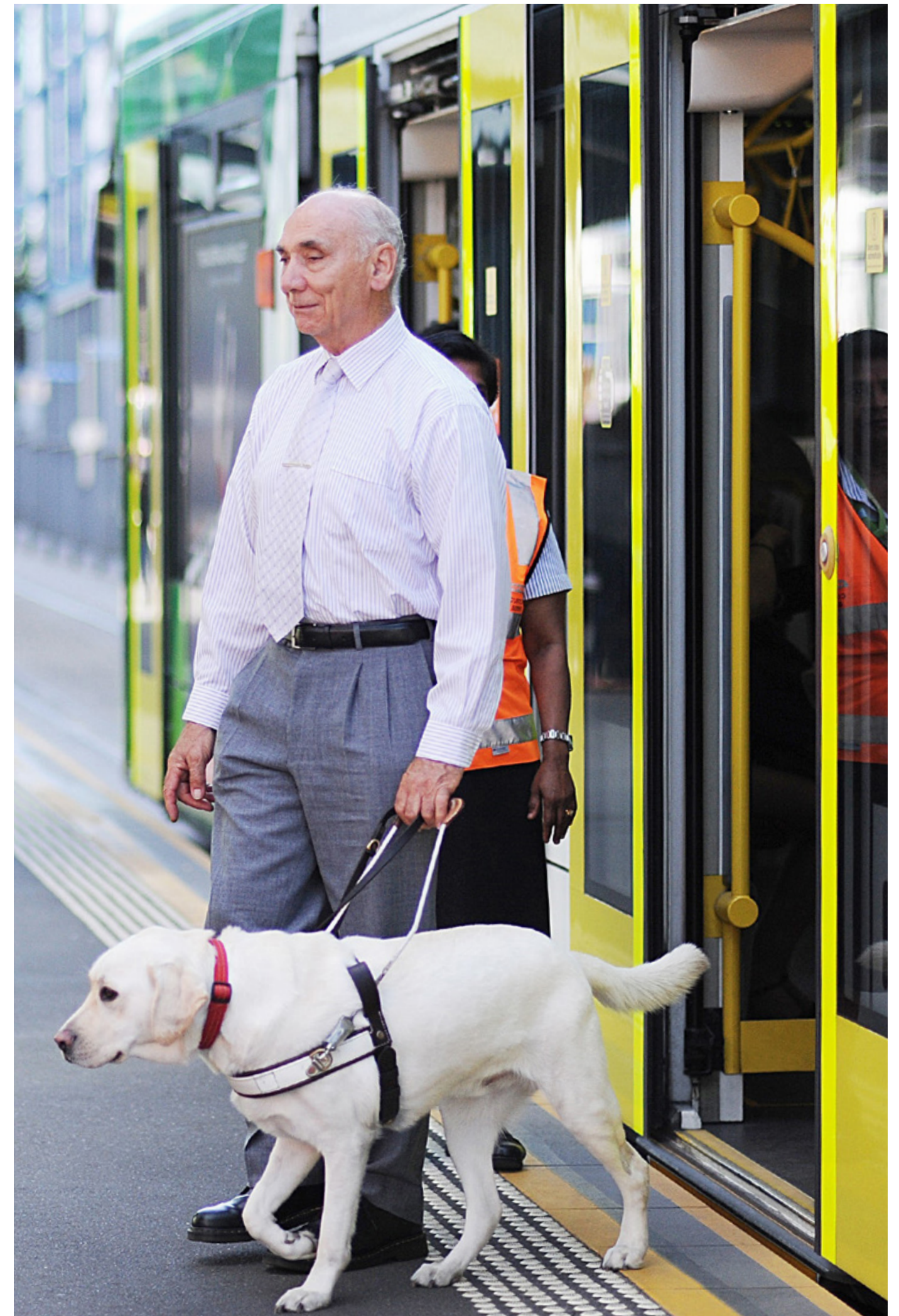
Keolis Downer is committed to making Melbourne's tram network more accessible and supports Public Transport Victoria's Accessible Public Transport in Victoria Action Plan 2018 to 2022.

Keolis Downer is responsible for ensuring Yarra Trams has an Accessibility Action Plan. This is Yarra Trams' third Accessibility Action Plan since Keolis Downer took over as operator.

In this document, "we" means Yarra Trams, a business of Keolis Downer.

#### IMAGE

A passenger with vision impairment and accompanied by a guide dog alights a low floor tram at a level access stop. A customer service employee stands behind them.





## Roles and accountabilities in the Victorian franchisee model

### Yarra Trams' role

We work closely with the State Government, Public Transport Victoria and other transport agencies to provide a fully integrated transport system for the people of Melbourne.

We manage all tram operations including running and maintaining the trams, training staff, and providing the best possible passenger experience. We also provide advice to Public Transport Victoria as to which stops should be prioritised for upgrade and which routes low-floor trams should be deployed to.

We envision a network that is inclusive and accessible for all, and are working hard to achieve this. We understand that some people depend on public transport to get to work, education and social activities and that public transport plays an important part in reducing social isolation and enabling full participation in life. Everyone should be able to travel on Melbourne's trams.

Our commitment to passengers is detailed in the Passenger Service Charter, available on our website, [www.yarratrams.com.au](http://www.yarratrams.com.au)

### The State Government role

The Victorian State Government also produces an Accessibility Action Plan and we support the Government in following this plan.

The five priority areas of PTV's Accessibility Action Plan are:

1. Customer, community and engagement
2. Access to public transport services
3. Accessible processes and systems
4. Access to facilities
5. Workplace accessibility

The State Government is responsible for providing the strategy and funding for upgrading stops and buying new trams.

Public Transport Victoria checks that Yarra Trams provides the transport service it has promised.

### Legal requirements

We have legal obligations around providing infrastructure and services that are accessible to people of all abilities. These are set out in the following documents, which apply throughout Australia:

- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA)*
- *Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002 (DSAPT)*
- Australian Standards as referenced by *DSAPT* and *AS1428 Design for access and mobility*.

## Background to this Accessibility Action Plan

All areas of our business have helped develop this action plan.

We have looked at what we are already doing to improve access and consulted with staff about their experience and views. We have examined a range of typical tram passenger journeys and considered the obstacles and difficulties passengers might face and how they might feel.

This process showed us where we can improve and how we can meet passenger needs, especially at a time when improvements to roads and other infrastructure are causing unavoidable disruptions to the tram network.

We have also asked our passengers how we can improve. We have monitored passenger satisfaction and considered direct feedback.

We have consulted with the following organisations via our Accessibility Reference Group (ARG):

- All Aboard
- Blind Citizens Australia
- Expression Australia (formerly VicDeaf)
- Guide Dogs Victoria
- National Seniors Australia
- Public Transport Ombudsman
- Scope Australia
- Yooralla
- Victorian Council of Social Service.

We continuously work with Public Transport Victoria, Transport for Victoria, Metro Trains and other public transport operators to ensure that our plans and actions align where possible.



## Key achievements on our previous Accessibility Action Plan (2015 to 2018)

### Priority 1: Customer service

People with disability and those with mobility restrictions can expect to receive high quality customer service, information and support from public transport service providers.

#### Enhanced accessibility training

Our training for all employees dealing with passengers has an increased focus on accessibility awareness. In each year of the action plan, all drivers attended two refresher training sessions.

Accessibility information was incorporated into driver sessions, as identified through our ARG, passenger feedback and requests from employees. Topics covered in training sessions included:

- when and how to use emergency ramps on low-floor trams
- raised awareness of disabilities and the challenges faced by people with disability when using public transport.

A new online training module was developed with an accessibility component to ensure all staff participate in accessibility training and benefit from raised awareness, even if they do not deal directly with passengers.

All existing staff completed the training in October 2018 and all new employees will be given this training during their induction to the company.

### Accessibility Week

We celebrate International Day of People with Disability (3 December) each year with various activities to encourage employees to focus on accessibility and how they can make using public transport easier for passengers with disability. Activities during the last Action Plan period included:

- wheelchair basketball competition at Disability Sport and Recreation festival
- guest speaker at the Tram Hub, Paralympian Lindy Hou
- sponsoring and naming a guide dog puppy
- a panel of paralympians at the Victorian Institute of Sport, sharing their stories and answering questions from staff.

### Website refresh

In June 2018 our new website was launched. We reviewed all information on the website, with a focus on accessibility material.

All accessibility information is now stored together and a direct link to that page is included on every other page. Overall, the website complies with guidelines on accessible web content, and is mobile friendly.

### Distribution of information for planned disruptions

All members of the ARG have been added to the distribution list that receives information about planned disruptions. The ARG then further distributes this information to members.



IMAGE  
A trainer with lived experience of disability provides accessibility training.



## Priority 2: Consultation and community engagement

Active engagement with stakeholders, including people with disability or mobility restriction and older people, to ensure passengers are adequately consulted about ways to improve access to the tram network and any changes to public transport infrastructure or services.

### Consultation with advocacy groups

We meet with our Accessibility Reference Group every quarter. We updated the group's terms of reference in 2018 to ensure that the meetings provide valuable information and insights to all attendees.

We are a member of Australian Network on Disability (AND). We are currently trialling AND's Stepping Into Internships program, which helps people with disability gain vital work experience while they study.

### Education campaigns

To encourage positive behaviour change and promote safe travel, we introduced 'Tram Coach' to act as an ambassador and educator.

The Tram Coach campaign follows research about how safe boarding can be improved, and delivers serious safety messages in an engaging and fun way.

Tram Coach was released in two phases. The first phase promoted safe behaviour on a moving vehicle with the catch phrase 'Get on, sit right, grip tight'. The second phase targeted seniors and passengers who use priority seating.

### Education programs

We continued to offer the Get Back on Board program to clients of rehabilitation centres and hospitals who want to return to using public transport or use trams for the first time, after injury, illness or altered mobility.

We hold at least ten sessions each year, with locations alternating between Kew, Glenhuntly and New Preston depots. People in wheelchairs can access New Preston Depot as it has a level access stop enabling step-free access to and from low-floor trams.

We participated in the Try Before You Ride event at Box Hill tram terminus and train station annually. The event includes a stationary tram, train, bus, V/Line coach and a taxi for people to come and try public transport without the pressures of a 'live environment'.

A talk on tram and safe travelling tips is given on board the tram. Some of our employees, including drivers, customer service employees and accessibility advisors, are available to talk to attendees and answer questions.



IMAGE  
Education poster demonstrating a young man offering a priority seat to an older passenger.

This stop is  
outside the Free  
Tram Zone



IMAGE  
Two passengers sit in a tram shelter, one is holding a brochure.





### Priority 3: Access to public transport services (on trams)

Travelling on trains, trams, buses and coaches is to be made progressively more accessible to people with disability or mobility restriction and older people, identifying barriers to access and making improvements to public transport services.

### Provide designated priority areas for passengers who use wheelchairs

In 2015, all low-floor trams had their floors marked to highlight the allocated space for wheelchair users and passengers using other mobility aids. A notice was also placed up high to let passengers know that people who use wheelchairs or other mobility aids have priority in that area.

### Separation of priority and accessible areas across the low-floor fleet

We have reviewed the positioning and increased the numbers of priority seats on board most trams. As a result, priority seats will be located near doors and along the aisle if the window seat is difficult to access.

We aim to have a combination of front and rear-facing priority seats that are parallel with the tram tracks and have room underneath for an assistance animal or guide dog. Some priority seats will be located near the driver's cabins, particularly on older trams that do not have automatic announcements.

We are separating priority seats from allocated accessible spaces for people using wheelchairs and scooters so they can be used at the same time. As a result, all priority seats will be fixed in position and there will be no more folding seats.

Signs for priority seats have been made consistent across all our trams and are now located above head height so they are more visible.

### PRIORITY SEATS

On request orange priority seats must be given up for use by passengers who require extra support when travelling.



Pregnant



Illness or injury



Elderly



Disability



If you do not give up a priority seat, you can be fined.

Transport (Compliance and Misc) (Conduct on Public Transport) Regulations 2015.

ABOVE IMAGE  
An on board priority seat sign.

LEFT IMAGE  
A priority seat sign above an orange priority seat on board a tram.



### **Accessible entry decals on doors across the low-floor fleet**

To make it easier for passengers to identify which tram doors lead directly to the allocated spaces for people using wheelchairs and scooters, there are now two signs on the outside of each accessible door. One is located at eye level for passengers who use wheelchairs and scooters, and the other is higher up the door to ensure passengers can see the symbol from a distance as well as up close.

We have also created a consistent approach with internal doors, which now have the same accessible sign to highlight the exit door. The sign is higher up than previously so that it is not obstructed by passengers standing near the door. All signs include the international symbol for accessibility.

### **Vehicle Passenger Information System (VPIS)**

The Vehicle Passenger Information System (VPIS) provides automated audio and visual next stop information. In 2015, only D-Class trams had been fitted with this system. Now all A, B, C and D-Class trams have been fitted with the system. All E-Class trams have this technology, which means 74 per cent of all our trams offer these automated announcements.

### **Provide accessible service during special events**

Additional high capacity, low-floor trams are used during major special events including the Australian Open and Australian Grand Prix, ensuring all patrons are able to get to these events.

### **Ensure accessible vehicles are available during disruptions and major special events**

Tram replacement bus services are run by low-floor buses where possible. For major planned disruptions, an accessible minivan service is also available. Outside of minivan operation times, accessible taxis are available on demand.



TOP IMAGE  
A tram approaches a tram stop in front of Luna Park.

BOTTOM IMAGE  
A passenger using a hearing aid looks up at a visual next stop information display.



E-Class trams

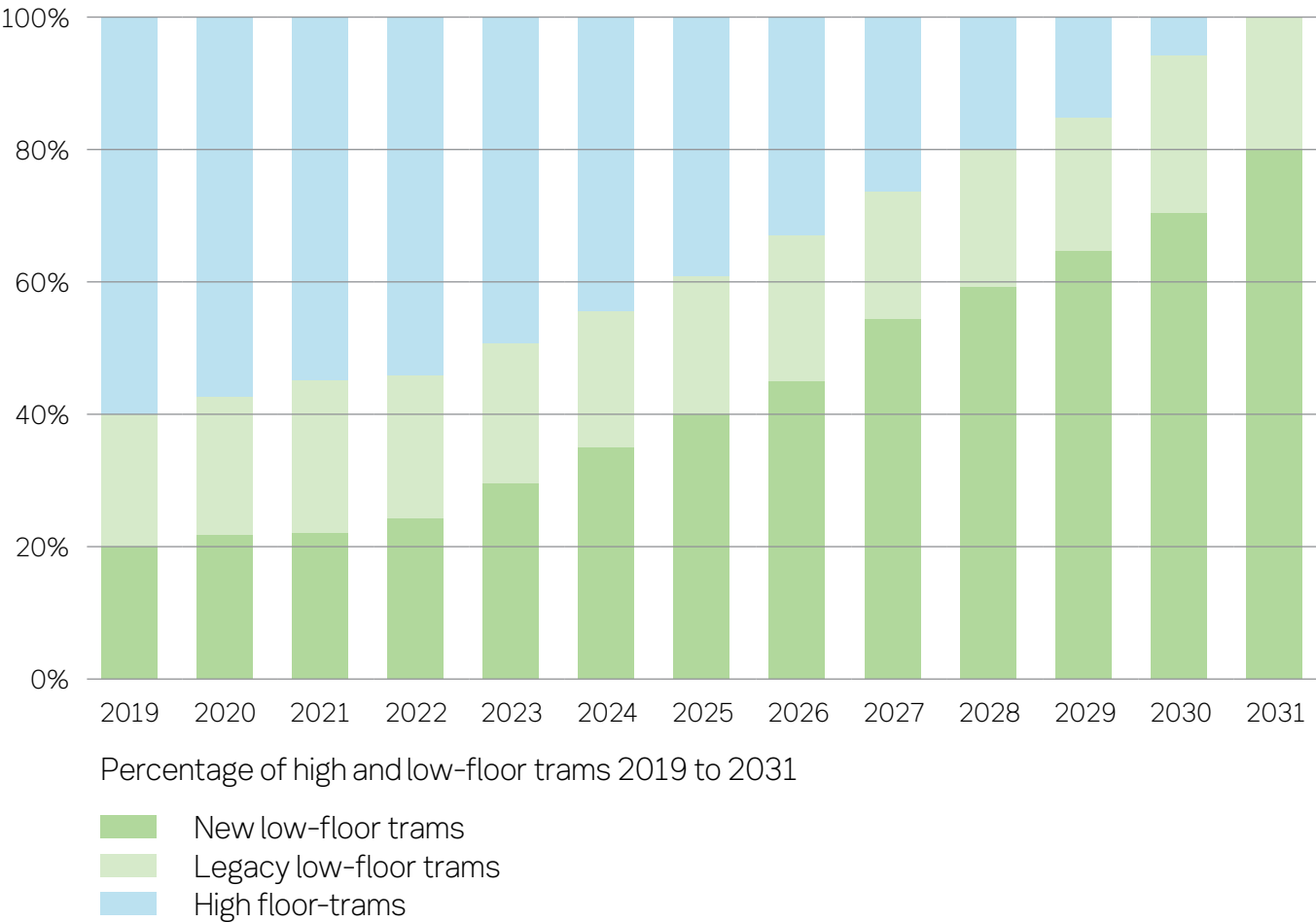
The first high capacity, low-floor, E-Class tram began operating on the tram network in 2013. Since then, an additional E-Class tram has begun operation nearly every month.

As of December 2018, more than 70 E-Class trams (of the total 90 on order) were in service. As more E-Class trams are introduced, older

trams are being redeployed around the tram network, increasing network accessibility and capacity.

In response to passenger feedback additional hanging straps have been fitted in E-Class trams to improve safety.

Change in composition of the State tram fleet



Adapted from the Victorian Rolling Stock Strategy



IMAGE  
A passenger holding a myki and their companion at a tram stop.





#### Priority 4: Access to facilities (at stops)

Access to buildings and public transport infrastructure will be based on universal design principles, particularly where the network is expanded or upgraded.

#### Upgrade stops to level access stops

The following tram stops were upgraded to level access stops between October 2015 and December 2018:

- Jolimont Station / Wellington Parade
- Toorak Terminus / Glenferrie Road
- Gardiner Station / Burke Road
- Clarendon Street Junction / Normanby Road
- Moonee Ponds Junction
- North Richmond Station / Victoria Street
- Lennox Street and Victoria Street
- Acland Street Terminus
- Balaclava Station / Carlisle Street
- Wells Street and Park Street
- Toorak Road and St Kilda Road
- Park Street and St Kilda Road (part of the Metro Rail Tunnel)

- Fawkner Park / Toorak Road
- Brunswick Road and Royal Parade
- Johnston Street and Nicholson Street
- Moor Street and Nicholson Street
- Melbourne Museum / Nicholson Street
- Southbank Boulevard and Sturt Street.

Other tram stops that were already level access stops were modified to accommodate E-Class trams in the future, including:

- Southbank Tram Depot
- City Road.

#### IMAGE

A passenger using a motorised wheelchair sits in the allocated space on board a tram.



## Key Priority Areas for 2019 to 2022 in our new Accessibility Action Plan

We have updated our key priority areas since our last Accessibility Action Plan. The revised four key priority areas are:

### Priority 1: Improve passenger support along the journey

This means we will provide information in a number of ways to suit individual needs. It also means we will train all our employees to communicate confidently with all passengers and provide appropriate assistance when required. We aim to support passengers:

- during the planning stage
- when they travel
- if they want to give feedback.

### Priority 2: Strongly engage with stakeholders and the community

This level of engagement will ensure we find the right solutions to propose to the State for improving tram services. Promoting inclusiveness engages the broader community and accessibility partners, and contributes to improved tram accessibility for everyone.

### Priority 3: Deliver increased access to stops and trams

This requires introducing and operating more low-floor trams, creating more level access stops and ensuring maintenance programs maximise network accessibility. Yarra Trams identifies which assets should be upgraded to improve accessibility and advises the State what investment is needed.

### Priority 4: Advise and report to the state

We report on the progress of accessibility programs and highlight risk linked to accessibility. We also provide efficient and timely advice to the State on accessibility matters.

IMAGE

A passenger with vision impairment and accompanied by a guide dog activates the auditory information button at a tram stop.





# 1 Priority one: Improve passenger support along the journey

We aim to improve the support provided to all our passengers during their journeys.

## Objective 1: Improve the management of services during planned and unplanned disruptions

Initiative	Measurement of success	Timeline
Trial drone technology to get a bird's-eye view of events and disruptions to enable informed responses	Trial is concluded	2020
Trial service diversions during special events and disruptions <sup>1</sup>	Trial is concluded	2019
Enhance the pivot point program so that alternative transport options are automatically listed for each stop <sup>2</sup>	Pivot points program is automated	2019

## Objective 2: Accessibility assistance provided by Customer Service Employees and Authorised Officers

Initiative	Measurement of success	Timeline
Communication Access Symbol	We are accredited with the Communication Access Symbol	2019

<sup>1</sup>Divert low-floor trams along routes that have level access stops, where possible.

<sup>2</sup>Pivot points are predetermined, accessible interchange locations for use during disruptions.

## Objective 3: Improve passenger information

Initiative	Measurement of success	Timeline
Make improvements to tramTRACKER including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– add predictions for City Circle trams</li> <li>– improve the reliability for stops near the terminus</li> </ul>	Updates and improvements are made to tramTRACKER Increase in passenger satisfaction with tramTRACKER	2019
Investigate other options for passenger information display screens at stops	Other options are investigated	2019

## Objective 4: Plan and deliver an extensive accessibility training program

Initiative	Measurement of success	Timeline
Review staff training including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– crowd management skills</li> <li>– information announcements to guide passengers</li> <li>– helping passengers with special needs</li> </ul>	All Customer Service Staff and Authorised Officers	2020



# 2 Priority two: Strongly engage with stakeholders and the community

Yarra Trams aims to strengthen consultation with its reference groups and make sure the needs of the wider community are heard and understood.

Objective 1: Build passenger confidence in using the tram network specifically and navigating on public transport more generally		
Initiative	Measurement of success	Timeline
Continue familiarisation programs including Get Back on Board and Try Before You Ride	Minimum of 10 Get Back on Board sessions held annually Minimum of one Try Before you Ride session held annually	2019 ongoing
Partner with Traveller's Aid (TA) to provide staff training, promote their services and provide additional support to passengers (to compliment CSE and AO activities)	Deliver TA Partnership Program to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– support accessibility outcomes for passengers</li><li>– raise awareness of TA services to passengers and staff</li></ul>	2019 to 2020
Objective 2: Enhance consultation with Accessibility Reference Group and the community		
Initiative	Measurement of success	Timeline
Continue Accessibility Reference Group	Four meetings held annually	2019 ongoing
Develop an online community forum	Community forum is developed	2019
Objective 3: Include accessibility measures when we review passenger experience		
Initiative	Measurement of success	Timeline
Passenger Effort Score	Two Passenger Effort Score surveys conducted annually	2019 ongoing
Objective 4: Strengthen the culture of inclusiveness among communities		
Initiative	Measurement of success	Timeline
Engage with stakeholders and local government agencies to identify opportunities for network improvements	Quarterly meetings held with priority stakeholders	2019 ongoing



TOP IMAGE  
A passenger who is pregnant receives information from a customer service employee at a tram stop.

BOTTOM IMAGE  
A passenger holding a mobility cane sits in the priority seating on board a tram.



# 3 Priority three: Deliver increased access to stops and trams

In collaboration with the State, Yarra Trams is committed to providing more accessible services for passengers.

## Objective 1: Increase the number of E-Class trams

Initiative	Measurement of success	Timeline
Continue adding E-Class trams to the network	One E-Class per month until all 90 trams have been delivered	2019

## Objective 2: Improve vehicle design to deliver a safer, consistent and more comfortable journey across all tram types

Initiative	Measurement of success	Timeline
Improve accessibility of older trams through improved priority seating	A, B and Z-Class trams upgraded	2019 to 2022 via ongoing rolling stock works program
Upgrade emergency exits and improve door reliability on A and B-Class trams	A and B-Class trams upgraded	2019 to 2022 via Tram Uplift Program



IMAGE  
A low floor tram runs in the city.



# 4 Priority four: Advise and report to the State

As the operator of the tram network we provide an advisory and reporting role to the State.

**Objective 1:** Determine the new Yarra Trams accessibility governance arrangements

Initiative	Measurement of success	Timeline
Organise an annual Accessibility leadership meeting	One per year	2019 ongoing

**Objective 2:** Proactively collaborate and advise the State on all accessibility matters

Initiative	Measurement of success	Timeline
Contribute and learn from meetings involving other forms of transport	100% of meetings attended	2019 ongoing
Provide advice to the State	100% of requests for information and advice responded to	

**Objective 3:** Develop reporting tools to track progress of the delivery of the AIP

Initiative	Measurement of success	Timeline
Implement Accessibility Initiatives Tracker to monitor the progress of each initiative	Maintain the Accessibility Initiatives Tracker monthly	2019 ongoing

## Acknowledgements

- All Aboard
- Blind Citizens Australia
- Expression Australia (formerly VicDeaf)
- Guide Dogs Victoria
- National Seniors Australia
- Scope Australia
- Public Transport Ombudsman
- Public Transport Victoria
- Yooralla
- Travellers Aid
- Victorian Council of Social Service





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