August 2023

To Waka Kotahi

Please find below DPA’s submission on discussion document – On-demand public transport services.

For any further inquiries, please contact:

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# Introducing Disabled Persons Assembly NZ

**We work on systemic change for the equity of disabled people**

Disabled Persons Assembly NZ (DPA) is a not-for-profit pan-impairment Disabled People’s Organisation run by and for disabled people.

**We recognise:**

* Māori as Tangata Whenua and [Te Tiriti o Waitangi](https://www.archives.govt.nz/discover-our-stories/the-treaty-of-waitangi) as the founding document of Aotearoa New Zealand;
* disabled people as experts on their own lives;
* the [Social Model of Disability](https://www.odi.govt.nz/guidance-and-resources/guidance-for-policy-makes/) as the guiding principle for interpreting disability and impairment;
* the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html) as the basis for disabled people’s relationship with the State;
* the [New Zealand Disability Strategy](https://www.odi.govt.nz/nz-disability-strategy/) as Government agencies’ guide on disability issues; and
* the [Enabling Good Lives Principles](https://www.enablinggoodlives.co.nz/about-egl/egl-approach/principles/), [Whāia Te Ao Mārama: Māori Disability Action Plan](https://www.health.govt.nz/publication/whaia-te-ao-marama-2018-2022-maori-disability-action-plan), and [Faiva Ora: National Pasifika Disability Plan](https://www.moh.govt.nz/notebook/nbbooks.nsf/0/5E544A3A23BEAECDCC2580FE007F7518/%24file/faiva-ora-2016-2021-national-pasifika-disability-plan-feb17.pdf) as avenues to disabled people gaining greater choice and control over their lives and supports.

**We drive systemic change through:**

* **Leadership:** reflecting the collective voice of disabled people, locally, nationally and internationally.
* **Information and advice:** informing and advising on policies impacting on the lives of disabled people.
* **Advocacy:** supporting disabled people to have a voice, including a collective voice, in society.
* **Monitoring:** monitoring and giving feedback on existing laws, policies and practices about and relevant to disabled people.

## United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

DPA was influential in creating the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD),[[1]](#footnote-2) a foundational document for disabled people which New Zealand has signed and ratified, confirming that disabled people must have the same human rights as everyone else. All state bodies in New Zealand, including local and regional government, have a responsibility to uphold the principles and articles of this convention. There are a number of UNCRPD articles particularly relevant to this submission, including:

* **Article 4.3: Actively engaging with disabled people and our representative organisations**
* **Article 9: Accessibility**
* **Article 19: Living independently and being included in the community**
* **Article 20: Personal mobility**
* **Article 30: Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport**

## New Zealand Disability Strategy 2016-2026

Since ratifying the UNCRPD, the New Zealand Government has established a Disability Strategy[[2]](#footnote-3) to guide the work of government agencies on disability issues. The vision is that New Zealand be a non-disabling society, where disabled people have equal opportunity to achieve their goals and aspirations, and that all of New Zealand works together to make this happen. It identifies eight outcome areas contributing to achieving this vision. There are a number of Strategy outcomes particularly relevant to this submission, including:

* **Outcome 5 – Accessibility**
* **Outcome 4 – Health and wellbeing**

# The Submission

Access to transport and being able to get around is crucial to the inclusion of disabled people in all areas of life.

On-demand transport services have an extremely important role to play in enabling disabled people to get around their neighbourhoods, access other services and supporting building community connections.

## Ensuring Accessibility

1. All vehicles used for on-demand transport services must be accessible to disabled people. It is essential that we learn from previous mistakes and do not waste public money on developing a new mode of transport that entrenches inaccessibility.
2. All booking services and channels must be accessible to disabled people. There also needs to be multiple channels for disabled people to find out about services and book them: simply relying on, for example, an app, will not allow all disabled people to book on-demand services in part due to the digital divide. Allowing bookings by telephone, text, app and via a website will help ensure that disabled people are able to make a booking through at least one channel.
3. All new infrastructure for on-demand services must be built to universal design standards to ensure that disabled people do not face accessibility barriers in using such services.
4. All drivers must be trained in providing a mana-enhancing service to disabled people using on-demand transport services, including understanding their responsibilities around providing support and allowing disability assist dogs to board.
1. United Nations. (2006). *United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities.* Retrieved from: <https://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/convention/convoptprot-e.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Office for Disability Issues. (2016). *New Zealand Disability Strategy.* Retrieved from: <https://www.odi.govt.nz/nz-disability-strategy/> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)