

Queensland Government's Response to the New Generation Rollingstock Train Commission of Inquiry Report

The procurement of New Generation Rollingstock trains that failed to comply with disability legislation is clearly unacceptable.

This situation falls short of the Government's aim to provide an accessible public transport network for all members of our community.

As the report makes clear, decisions taken as early as 2012 have led to the development of trains which do not meet legislative standards and which require rectification to improve accessibility.

This Government believes that customers have a right to expect a safe, reliable and efficient public transport system.

This Government has accepted all 24 recommendations in Commissioner Forde's report.

The Government recognised the need for a thorough and comprehensive inquiry into the procurement of the New Generation Rollingstock trains and why the trains did not meet disability legislation and standards.

The New Generation Rollingstock Train Commission of Inquiry, commenced in August this year, with former District Court Judge Mr Michael Forde appointed as the Commissioner.

The terms of reference required the Commission to analyse the procurement process, the contractual obligations and the design approval process that resulted in trains that did not comply with the legal standards. Of particular importance was whether the views and needs of the disability sector were properly considered.

The Commission sought information from relevant public authorities, the organisation awarded the contract and its contractors, consultants engaged during the procurement and design processes, and individuals. Public submissions were also received from disability organisations and individuals.

The report handed down by the Commission makes 24 recommendations and outlines a range of reforms aimed at ensuring that consultation with the disability sector and compliance with disability legislation and standards is made a fundamental and integral part of all government procurement projects and major rail projects into the future.

The Government supports the steps Commissioner Forde has detailed to improve future procurement processes and thanks him and his team for their tremendous work. The Government also wishes to thank the disability organisations and their members for their patience and ongoing cooperation and input during the work of the Commission.

The Government will act immediately to respond to the report and ensure that all the recommendations are adopted in full.

This is in addition to the steps already undertaken by the Government including:

- a requirement for all procurement contracts to include an explicit obligation to comply with the Commonwealth *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*
- the appointment of disability advocates to the industry advisory groups under the Government's Buy Queensland Procurement Policy
- the creation of new Accessible Transport Networks team within the Department of Transport and Main Roads.

In conjunction with implementing the recommendations of the report, the Government will continue to progress the rectification work to resolve non-compliance and improve functionality. This work will be undertaken in Queensland at Maryborough, with trains being progressively modified.

The Government's response to the report presents an opportunity to put accessibility at the heart of how Queensland Government agencies deliver goods and services and in doing so, make Queensland more inclusive.