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Australian Human Rights Commission, Sydney. NSW.

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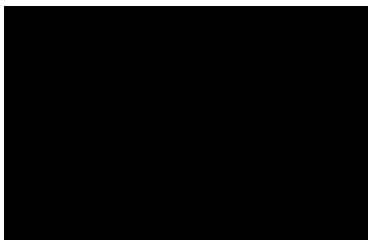
Dear Madam/Sir,

Re Spinal Life Australia Submission post AHRC preliminary decision

Spinal Life Australia represents people with spinal cord damage and other physical disabilities.

We tender the following submission to the Australian Human Rights Commission following the Commission's preliminary decision relating to the Application for Temporary Exemption for the NGR trains by the State of Queensland and Queensland Rail.

With kind regards,



Michael Powell
Chief Executive Officer

Submission from Spinal Life Australia

A submission in response to the Australian Human Rights Commission Preliminary decision on an Application for temporary exemptions for the New Generation Rollingstock trains (NGR) by the State of Queensland and Queensland Rail.

Spinal Life Australia, headquartered in Brisbane, represents people with spinal cord damage and other physical disabilities. We comment as follows:

We are pleased the Commission has not accepted the Application for temporary exemptions for Queensland's New Generation Rollingstock trains (NGR). The Commission's Preliminary decision impacts favourably on several populations: people with disability, the aged, people with a medical condition, people with a temporary injury and parents with prams. We also note the hope the decision brings, given the many years of advocacy by people and organisations about the NGR project.

Spinal Life Australia launched a petition late January that urges the "State government to put measures in place to ensure full accessibility remains a compulsory part of the planning and procurement process for any future major infrastructure". The petition has received over 16,000 signatures in seven weeks in support of introducing new measures to make accessibility a mandatory part of future State Government infrastructure so that every Queenslanders and visitor can participate and be a customer in our community.

We have also written to all 94 members of Queensland's Legislative Assembly asking them to ensure non-inclusive designs like the NGR introduction never happen again – and to back the government to put procurement processes in place to ensure full accessibility in all future State infrastructure projects.

The immediate issue is the refurbishment process to make the NGR fleet accessible. Whilst the State government has agreed to fund the refurbishment, there is no project modelling or design drawings publicly available. Only when the Dept. Transport & Main Roads and Queensland Rail engineers and management begin to work consultatively with customer representatives to a dedicated timetable with public updates will faith begin to be restored.