

- ✓ I am very grateful that such a scheme exists but it is not conducive to promoting real community access for people with significant and lifelong disabilities, I would therefore like to see a dramatic overhaul of the entire Transport Access Scheme (TAS). This includes wheelchair accessible taxis and parking permits.
- ✓ Unfortunately Tasmania's population makes it impossible to have the kind of public transport available in many other states. If you do not drive your capacity to be an active member of the community dramatically decreases. Not being able to drive increases the feelings of isolation and dependence felt by many older and or disabled Tasmanians.
- ✓ Tasmania has the oldest population of any State or Territory. While age does not cause disease, prevalence of disease increases as the population ages. If anyone hands in their licence voluntarily because they no longer feel they have the capacity to drive safely on our roads they should, with the appropriate medical clearance, using guidelines not hard and fast rules be able to get access to taxi subsidy's. Saving lives and being responsible about ones own abilities shouldn't automatically take away a persons ability to travel around the State.
- ✓ Although not directly linked to WAT, the number of parking spaces available for members of the TAS needs to be increased dramatically. Disabled parking spots are becoming harder and harder to find and free ones are almost obsolete. The DIER should stipulate how many free parking spots there needs to be on the basis of the number of rate payers a council has. I can only speak for myself but there are a lot of hidden costs that wheelchair dependent consumers have which are unique to their disability. Free parking is a way of acknowledging this.
- ✓ The maximum rebate of \$25 or \$30 for the Transport Access Scheme has not increased for over ten years. It needs to be increased dramatically so people who need assistance with transport can afford to take more than essential trips. The rebate should be large enough to allow people to visit friends who don't live in the same city as them. I have friends in Hobart and Longford and don't go and visit them because the cost is prohibitive. I would like to attend more community events but choose not to because of the cost of transport as I would need to take my power chair. This in itself is isolating. Once increased the maximum rebate needs to be linked to reflect increases in taxi charges. It also should be noted that a person does not necessarily have to be wheelchair reliant to be considered permanently and significantly disabled and unable to drive a car safely. By the same token some individuals who are wheelchair reliant are able to not only drive a car but can afford to buy and maintain such a vehicle.
- ✓ Each person is an individual and their case for membership to the Transport Access Scheme should be accessed individually. I agree there should be

guidelines but there also needs to be some flexibility as I know of people who would greatly benefit from the scheme who are not eligible and at the same time I have been told countless stories of people taking advantage of the system 'just because they can'.

- ✓ It should be much harder to qualify for the Transport Access Scheme (TAS). Too many people are taking advantage the system. Ask taxi drivers. They will tell you and if they have proof, they should be able to alert the DIER of such cases without fear of reprisals. I myself have seen people park in parking spaces reserved for members of the TAS, jump out of the car and run over to have a smoke. These same people have a TAS parking permit in their car. If I or anyone else I know who is a member of the TAS could move like that they would happily hand in their parking permits and, if applicable, taxi vouchers.
- ✓ Swipe cards should work in all taxi's so that people who use WAT and regular taxis do not need to carry both a card and a taxi book. This would also eliminate the frustration drivers' face having to complete so much paper work. Eventually it would be beneficial to both drivers and non -wheelchair reliant customers to have a swipe card instead of a book.
- ✓ Drivers of regular taxis also need to realise that sometimes people who have a TAS taxi book need help with their frames and putting the groceries in the car. While most experienced drivers are fantastic I have struck a couple who make my 91 year old neighbour feel quite uncomfortable as they 'shove her out of the car as fast as possible and do not offer to help with her groceries even though she is reliant on a rollator.
- ✓ Older Tasmanians want to stay in their homes as long as possible. Falls resulting in broken hips are one of the reasons they end up in our hospital system. Often they do not recover as quickly or as well as they would like and are therefore put on the wait list for a nursing home thus taking up much needed space in our acute care hospitals. A bit of extra care taken by taxi drivers by carrying groceries just inside the door for my next door neighbour could potentially save the State a lot of money and add so much to the overall quality an elderly or disabled persons life.
- ✓ Just as Taxi drivers should be able to alert the DIER if they have proof a member of the TAS is using it under false pretences. I think the DIER should acknowledge taxi drivers, including those who drive WAT who make the effort to ensure that their customers' needs are met. Perhaps they could ask members of the TAS to nominate drivers who go that little bit further.
- ✓ The taxi vouchers and parking permits need to have some form of ID on them. A photo is fine for the swipe card but I don't fancy having to put up a picture of myself on the dash for all to see if I am travelling in a family members car. While the new parking permits are easier to spot in a car they don't travel well. Perhaps the swipe card could double as a parking permit for people who do not have a car of their own. It doesn't easily fit in my wallet

so I can't count the number of times I have been travelling with a family member or friend and I have forgotten my permit. My family member or friend then has to walk further pushing me in my manual chair. I am however pleased that the current parking permits have an expiry date. This is annoying for those of us who follow the rules but is preferable to the number of permits that were being inappropriately used before this came into effect. Perhaps anyone with a parking permit only should carry a photo id card verifying that they are a member of the TAS. People who already have a swipe card just need to have their photo added when new cards are rolled out. To make things easier it would be handy if the photo id and swipe cards could be made at Service Tas much like a drivers licence. Obviously to get to this step they would at first need to have their application approved. To save money, a drivers licence could just have their membership of the TAS added to their existing card. This wouldn't happen straight away but could occur as drivers' licences are renewed.

- ✓ Although it would take some collaboration between the DEIR and the Department of Premier and Cabinet. I can't see why members who are members of the TAS couldn't have their taxi swipe card double as their companion card. After all to qualify for a companion card you need active support to attend social and sporting events and these are the same people who would most likely be non-driving members of the TAS. Many of these would also use WAT.
- ✓ There needs to be a lot of work done with taxi drivers Australia wide about the yellow books for travel outside of your home State. I travel to Melbourne for medical care not available in Tasmania and have lost count of the number of drivers who complain about my Interstate Travel Book even though I always fill it out correctly and have gone to the trouble of tracking down a driver who drove off without removing the completed permit from my book.
- ✓ I have read the Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources and although option 3 would benefit me the most I am favour lifting the maximum rebate for all members of the TAS. In an ideal world there should be no cap but governments need to be able to predict spending in order to budget. If this means having a cap for each trip that is ok with me. While I myself am a WAT user I do not believe I should be entitled to more than someone who is physically able to walk but unable to drive due to an intellectual disability or an elderly person who has given up their licence for their own safety and that of other road users.
- ✓ I find it much easier to communicate with people face to face as writing and typing are reliant on my less than efficient motor skills. If you would like me to meet with anyone on this issue please let me know. Thank you again for providing a Transport Access Scheme. While I believe the scheme could be greatly improved I still value and appreciate the scheme as it is now. Thank you to all the drivers and administrators who now or have in the past assisted to make the scheme what it is today.