

**Submission  
No 23**

**ACCESS TO TRANSPORT FOR SENIORS AND  
DISADVANTAGED PEOPLE IN RURAL AND  
REGIONAL NSW**

**Organisation:**

**Name:** Mr Steven Yates

**Position:**

**Date Received:** 18 July 2016

### **Submission: 23: Mr Steven Yates**

I am making this submission on behalf of my Grandmother, Ms Teresa Walker of [REDACTED]. Ms Walker is 89 years of age and regularly uses the northern rivers bus services between Ballina and Lismore.

Ms Walker uses a walker for stability and therefore requires assistance onto the bus and to have access to the seating allocated at the front of the bus for elderly passengers. Ms Walker often faces access difficulty to this seating area at certain times of the day which I will outline.

The 8.00am bus service is often full with passengers travelling to work leaving no room for her and her walker therefore she walks back home and returns to see if there is room on the 10.00 service which often has the area filled with mothers and prams. She has informed me that the bus drivers are very helpful and courteous and help her when necessary but she regularly has to ask if there is room for her on the bus service and has missed a service because there is no room for her because prams which could be folded are filling all allocated spaces. I have informed her that she has preference for a space but does not want to 'cause trouble'.

It is unacceptable for Ms Walker to have to ask if there is room for her on a bus service. Having to return to see if there is room on other services can make Ms Walker tired due to health issues with her legs. As there are few services to and from Lismore and Ballina it is imperative she has access to the service she needs in order to get what she needs done and return before the peak hour worker services at 5.00pm where there is usually no room for her and her walker also. She has also noted that not all buses have signage indicating seating for the elderly, disabled and pregnant women. This needs to be investigated and corrected.

A recommendation that could be investigated as to its feasibility is the creation or expansion of a community bus service for the Northern Rivers area that services the needs of the valued elderly and disabled residents where they could have access to Ballina, Lismore and surrounds to complete errands and tasks travelling in comfort and safety where they know they will always have access.