

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

**BARRIER-FREE TOURISM  
FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES  
IN THE ASIAN AND PACIFIC REGION**



UNITED NATIONS

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# **1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

## **1.1 Overview**

Often referred to as the world's largest growth industry, tourism is being undertaken by increasing numbers of people travelling to more countries and regions of the world. Its impacts are multi-faceted, with social, cultural, political and environmental implications as well as economic.

The tourism industry has focused increasingly on segmentation as a way to provide better service to specific tourist groups who are differentiated by demographic and psychographic characteristics. New market segments are continually being sought by the industry as other segments mature. As western populations age, "grey tourism" (also called the seniors market) has emerged as a major new market segment. This was brought about through the ageing of the generation who has historically led market shifts during the latter part of the twentieth century.

Closely linked to the needs of the seniors market are people with disabilities. The travel needs of this group have been categorized as barrier-free tourism (BFT). BFT offers a new opportunity for segmentation that merges the access requirements of the seniors and disability markets. In particular, providing information as well as presenting, promoting and marketing easy access tourism facilities can provide destinations with a greater competitive advantage for attracting these growing niche markets.

## **1.2 Tourism development in the region with a focus on barrier-free tourism**

While most countries collect tourism data, there is a lack of statistical data that relates to BFT. Many of the countries that provided information had undertaken a national approach to research about the economic potential of BFT. Some regional research has been carried out by two Australian states, but there was no research at the national level.

Disability-based research has tended to focus on human rights issues, but it is also important to demonstrate that developing the market segment for BFT has an underlying economic logic.

This section develops the argument that links the economic imperative with BFT, but also demonstrates that good tourism practices in the future involves providing product and experiences available to all of the potential travelling public.

According to data from the World Tourism Organization (WTO), nearly all regions and subregions of the world had experienced positive growth in terms of numbers of international arrivals and tourism receipts. East Asia and the Pacific registered the highest growth rate from 1999 to 2000, both in terms of receipts (9.6 per cent) and international tourist arrivals (12.7 per cent) (WTO 2002).

This growth was tempered by the impact of September 11, 2001 on international tourism. However, as the WTO Secretary-General commented, “On the one hand, it was surprising to see a decrease in an industry that is used to constant growth. On the other hand, it is encouraging how stable this economic sector is. Its decrease was temporary and somewhat less painful than we had expected.” (WTO 2002)

During this turbulent period in world history, East Asia and the Pacific showed positive growth with tourism receipts increasing by 8 per cent and arrivals by 5.5 per cent (WTO 2002). The tourism satellite accounts of the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) for 2002 support the WTO assessment. WTTC indicates that despite the setback travel and tourism will continue to have an economically significant impact on Asia and the Pacific.

Based on recent trends, WTTC Tourism Satellite Accounts (2002) provide forecasts covering 2001-2012 for key economic indicators related to travel and tourism. One indicator considers the contribution of the travel and tourism economy in particular regions. Table 1 reflects the forecast of WTTC that the contribution should generally rise marginally by 2012.

The challenge for countries and regions is to attain the projected forecasts. Many factors have an impact on the success of attaining forecasted statistics, and the most critical is the number of tourist arrivals and the amount they spend. Table 2 reveals that East Asia, Oceania and South Asia had a combined market share of 18.7 per cent of world tourism receipts and 17.5 per cent of the world’s international tourist arrivals.

**Table 1. Forecasts for value and contribution of travel and tourism by subregion**

	2002 (Value in \$US billion)	% of total GDP	2012 (Value in \$US billion)	% of total GDP
South-east Asia	92.7	8.2	224	8.9
North-east Asia	503.1	8.3	949	8.9
South Asia	30.9	4.8	85	5.5
Oceania	59.5	13.0	119	13.7
World	3 282.5	10.0	6 351	10.8

Source: WTTC 2002.

**Table 2. International tourism receipts and arrivals, 2001**

	Value of receipts (\$US billion)	% market share of receipts	Number of tourist arrivals (millions of people)	% market share of arrivals
South-east Asia	25.6	5.5	40.1	5.8
North-east Asia	43.1	9.3	65.6	9.5
South Asia	4.7	1.0	5.7	0.8
Oceania	13.3	2.9	9.4	0.8
World	462.2	100.0	692.7	100.0

Source: WTO 2002.

Historically, the dominant markets in terms of tourism earnings and spending have been Europe and the Americas. China and Hong Kong, China are notable exceptions along with Japan, the Republic of Korea and Taiwan, Province of China, because they are included among the top 15 tourism spenders. Although Asian and Pacific destinations do not figure among the top in terms of earnings and arrivals, they are expected to dominate global economic growth in the travel and tourism industry over the next few years.

Data on main tourism indicators prepared by APEC, based on WTO data of June 2002, shows the greatest number of visitors came from countries within the East Asian and Pacific region, but with a significant number of visitors from the Americas and Europe as shown in table 3.

**Table 3. Arrivals in selected APEC economies  
from various regions, 2001**  
(Percentage)

	% from East Asia and Pacific	% from South Asia	% from the Americas	% from Europe	Total overnight visitors (thousands)
Australia	58.0	1.2	1.0	24.0	4,817
New Zealand	61.0	0.3	12.6	20.0	1,910
China	60.0	0.3	11.4	24.0	11,226
Hong Kong, China	80.0	0.2	9.2	7.8	13,725
Indonesia	78.0	0.7	4.2	15.0	5,154
Japan	66.0	0.1	18.1	13.0	4,772
Republic of Korea	73.0	0.2	9.9	8.8	5,147
Malaysia	84.0	0.8	2.5	5.5	12,775
Philippines	54.0	0.9	25.1	11.0	1,797
Singapore	70.0	1.0	5.8	14.0	6,726
Thailand					10,133
Viet Nam					2,330

Source: APEC 2002.

Strategies to attract more tourists from the main tourist generating and spending countries, areas and regions are being continuously planned or implemented. At the same time, other strategies need to be considered seriously that involve targeting destinations that have had few tourists, identifying areas with growth potential or identifying niche markets as a potential new source of tourist arrivals. People who seek barrier-free tourism comprise one such market.

### **1.3 Prospects and trends for tourism in Asia and the Pacific**

The Asian and Pacific region has the opportunity to benefit significantly from future expansion of global tourism, as shown in table 4. Developing a barrier-free tourism segment would be one way for the Asian and Pacific region to achieve the numbers being forecasted.

A number of strategies are being used throughout the region, including initiatives to stabilize seasonal fluctuations (Thailand); to benefit from identified growth markets (Japan) and to best utilize local relative advantages (South Pacific). In Thailand, for example, the strategy is to attract more

**Table 4. Forecasts for travel and tourism by value and contribution to GDP**

	Earnings in \$US billion, 2002	% of GDP	Earnings in \$US billion, 2012	% of GDP, 2012
Australia	46.6	11.9	98.2	12.8
Fiji	0.49	26.7	1.2	36.8
New Zealand	7.4	15.6	10.3	15.3
Solomon Islands	0.02	5.9	0.04	7.0
Tonga	0.02	11.7	0.03	13.0
Vanuatu	0.11	41.6	0.29	66.6
Other Oceania	4.9	30.9	9.5	33.3
<b>Subtotal Oceania</b>	<i>59.5</i>	<i>13.0</i>	<i>119.6</i>	<i>13.7</i>
China	121.6	9.7	322.9	10.5
Hong Kong, China	17.7	10.9	46.7	12.9
Japan	316.7	8.1	464.2	8.4
Republic of Korea	32.2	7.1	81.2	7.1
<b>Subtotal North-east Asia</b>	<i>503.1</i>	<i>8.3</i>	<i>949.5</i>	<i>8.9</i>
Cambodia	0.33	9.3	0.78	11.5
Indonesia	15.3	9.1	40.0	9.5
Lao PDR	0.18	9.4	0.49	12.7
Malaysia	10.7	11.5	31.0	13.6
Philippines	5.7	7.6	15.0	7.9
Singapore	9.2	10.6	21.7	11.8
Thailand	15.3	12.0	40.4	12.0
Viet Nam	2.2	6.5	5.2	7.4
<b>Subtotal South-east Asia</b>	<i>92.7</i>	<i>8.2</i>	<i>224.7</i>	<i>8.9</i>
India	24.4	4.8	72.0	5.5
Nepal	0.34	6.0	0.75	6.9
Sri Lanka	1.4	8.2	2.9	9.2
<b>Subtotal South Asia</b>	<i>30.9</i>	<i>4.8</i>	<i>85.6</i>	<i>5.5</i>
<b>World</b>	<b>3,282.5</b>	<b>10.0</b>	<b>6,351.9</b>	<b>10.6</b>

Source: WTTC 2002.

tourists from China, India, the Middle East and South Africa to smooth out fluctuations in tourism revenue. The regional tourism strategy for South and Central Pacific (SPTO 2002) observed that although the subregion received less than 1 per cent of the world's tourists, tourism still had great potential to help overcome poverty. Tourism was considered as one of the few economic opportunities for using the people's talents, skills and aspirations to benefit the domestic economy and human development.

Australia has focused on the United States of America as a target market and would shift to the age group of 25 to 64 years old. This would include the aging “baby boomers” who would be reaching retirement age. Another target segment was people over 55 years old, because they have the time and ability to travel year-round and often sought group travel experiences or fully arranged long-stay programmes. Australia was also adjusting to the changing demographics of its main market, New Zealand. The population structure was tending towards more people who were retirees over 64 years old and families with grown children, giving the parents over 44 years old more time for leisure and travel.

While it appeared that an aging population is the main target, it is important to keep in mind the direct link between aging and disability. These features of the tourist would have a strong influence on travel choices.

Apart from the possible effects of aging, the number of people with reduced abilities is considered to be significant. One estimate is that there are about 500 million people with disabilities in the world today. However, very few countries have made a census or survey study of this group. (Charlton 1998; Darcy 2003).

There are some estimates that can be cited to gain a picture of the population size for people with disabilities. A collection of information focused on Asian and Pacific countries and areas and some of the major tourist markets is presented in table 5.

It is interesting to note that countries with the highest rates of disability are also countries that have already recognized barrier-free tourism as an important market segment. This includes North America, parts of Europe, Australia and New Zealand. One related issue that must also be considered is the extent to which domestic tourism is barrier-free for people with disabilities in their home country. If barrier-free domestic tourism is at an advanced level of development, this would provide a source for learning from experiences and best practices.

It was found that no country or area in Asia and the Pacific had ever undertaken any research into travel patterns or the scope of the travel market for barrier-free tourism that made experiences accessible to people with disabilities. The only research done so far was in two Australian states. One report in 1998 focused on New South Wales (Darcy 1998) and compiled

**Table 5. Estimates of disability rates for selected countries, various years**

	Year of survey	Population (million)	People with disabilities (million)	% of population with disabilities
Australia	1998	18.6	3.6	19.6
New Zealand	1996	3.6	0.7	19.1
China	1987	1,266.0	62.0	4.9
India	1991	983.3	47.2	4.8
Pakistan	1984/85	135.1	6.6	4.9
Sri Lanka	Unknown	18.9	0.1	0.4
Thailand	Unknown	60.0	0.5	0.8
Canada	1991	30.6	4.7	15.5
United States of America	2000	270.3	41.7	19.5
<b>World</b>			<b>232.6</b>	

*Source:* Darcy 2003.

information based on a questionnaire survey. People with disabilities were asked about their domestic and overseas tourism patterns. A second study was made in 2001 in the Australian state of Queensland (Market & Communications Research 2001). This research made use of focus groups in order to get a detailed picture of tourism experiences for senior people who also had some disabilities.

In general, accessibility was the major issue for letting senior or disabled people feel confident that they could spend leisure time as tourists and that they would not face too many barriers. As national and local governments begin to recognize the importance of barrier free and easily accessible tourist sites. The countries and areas of Asia and the Pacific are generally at the very early stages of developing barrier free facilities and adjusting relevant infrastructure. It is possible that sharing experiences could help increase recognition and encourage policies and actions.

## **2. ISSUES AND PROBLEMS OF INACCESSIBLE TOURISM**

### **2.1 Concepts about barriers**

People with disabilities have the same motivations to travel as the rest of the population (Woodside and Etzel 1980; Smith 1987; Darcy and Daruwalla 1999, Foggin 2001). However, while many tourists might experience barriers to tourism participation, it has been found that these barriers disproportionately affect people with disabilities (Smith 1987; Kennedy, Smith, and Austin 1991, Foggin 2001). Barriers can be defined as those impediments encountered while participating or attempting to participate in a tourism experience (McGuire 1984). This contrasts with the definition of constraints, which are factors that affect an individual's propensity to travel (pre trip) (McGuire 1984).

Smith (1987) and Kennedy, Smith and Austin (1991) developed a framework for understanding and categorising the barriers facing people with disabilities undertaking leisure-related travel. These barriers were conceptualized barriers as intrinsic, environmental, and communication. Intrinsic barriers result from an individual's own levels of physical, cognitive or psychological functioning. These barriers may be directly related to an individual's specific disability, but they may also be due to a lack of knowledge about tourism opportunities, ineffective social skills, physical and psychological dependency upon caregivers, and skill/challenge incongruities (Kennedy, Smith and Austin 1991). Environmental barriers are external to the individual with a disability and include attitudes towards people with disabilities, architecture, ecological features, transportation, economic elements, rules and regulations, and barriers of omission (Kennedy, Smith and Austin 1991). Communication barriers result from the interactions of individuals and their social environments (Kennedy, Smith and Austin 1991). Little empirical research had been done to investigate these constraints and barriers in a tourism context until the 1990s.

In response to a call for more empirical research, a number of research papers identified specific constraints and barriers to tourism faced by people with disabilities (Cavinato and Cuckovich 1992; Darcy 1998; Turco, Stumbo, and Garncarz 1998; Foggin 2000; Darcy 2002a; Market and Communication

Research 2002). The constraints and barriers can be identified by conceptualising the tourism journey undertaken by travellers with disabilities through the following stages:

- Underlying social and cultural constraints;
- Travel planning information;
- Transportation barriers;
- Accessible accommodation; and
- The destination experience. (Darcy 2002a)

This typology is used here as the framework for addressing the constraints and barriers that a traveller with a disability may experience.

## **2.2 Underlying social and cultural constraints**

In contrast to the more conventional medical view of disability, there has been growing recognition that disability is a product of social relations rather than the fault of an individual's physical characteristics. (Oliver 1996; Barnes, Mercer, and Shakespeare 1999). The social approach to disability recognises that it is the disabling environment and hostile social attitudes that creates disability rather than any underlying physical impairment. Tourism is part of the wider social relations in each country, but also has its own set of sectoral responses to disability that must be understood in the country context, because only then can a strategy to provide barrier-free tourism be developed.

Miles (1982; 1996; 2000) has suggested that there are underlying differences between the way most Western and Eastern cultures conceptualize disability. This involves differences in factors that are psychosocial, religious, prestige and visibility, empire and ego building, political inequalities, and inappropriate training. These differences have implications for the likely social participation and predisposition to travel of people with disabilities in the tourism generating regions. Such conceptualizations may affect the acceptance of travellers with disabilities in the destination regions.

The economic circumstances facing people with disabilities vary for each country and area of Asia and the Pacific. Unfortunately, comparative social and economic data relating to disability are not collected across the countries of the Asia-Pacific region. However, data collected by some

countries in Asia and the Pacific and Europe strongly show the economic disadvantages of people with disabilities due to low employment rates (Gleeson 1998; Takamine 2001; van Lin, Prins, and Zwinkels 2001). Low employment rates affect income, and the level of disposable income directly affects the likelihood of travel. These constraints must be considered in targeting tourism generating regions where there are people with disabilities who have disposable income.

There are a range of well-documented additional costs associated with having a disability. These costs include: mobility equipment (wheelchairs, crutches; orthopaedic shoes, etc.); personal care equipment (shower chairs, commode, hoist, slings, etc.); personal care supplies; attendant care; and extra transport costs because of inaccessible public transport.

Tourism-related expenditures could be constrained for people with disabilities by the need to satisfy the essential costs of living. The costs and participation are further compounded for people with higher support needs. The higher the person's support needs, the more complicated their travel arrangements and the more costly to travel than for non-disabled people. Burnett and Baker (2001) suggest that the level of support needs for people with mobility disabilities is a useful tool for market segmentation based on environmental, access and activity criteria.

While some studies have shown that economic resources are not necessarily a barrier to leisure participation (Caldwell and Adolph 1989), economic circumstances are a major constraint in tourism for people with disabilities. It has been estimated that holidays for people with disabilities can cost between 30 and 200 per cent more than for the able-bodied tourists (Flavigny and Pascal 1995). This situation is compounded through the lack of accessible budget accommodation available in many destinations regions. People with disabilities become travellers with disabilities once these underlying constraints to travel have been addressed.

### **2.3 Travel planning information**

People with disabilities need to make a substantially greater amount of pre-planning to undertake travel than the non-disabled. As noted by the English Tourism Council (2000b), information providing about barrier-free tourism would lead to increased travel. However, poor information dissemination has been identified as a major weakness of tourism for people with disabilities.

Research has found that information from disability organizations are the most important source, in addition to family and friends with significantly lower levels of reliance on mass media usage (Burnett 1996). The use of travel agents by people with disabilities has generally had unsatisfactory results. However, in developed nations the Internet is becoming a primary means to collect travel information for the general public and people with disabilities.

The major issues about travel planning and information for people with disabilities can be summarised.

One issue is the need for shared understanding of what constitutes access and disability by the stakeholders (people with impairments; operators; tourism sectors; intermediaries). This includes:

- Recognize the different dimensions of access (physical; vision; hearing and cognitive);
- Understand the complexity of operationalizing these dimensions of access;
- Provide accurate access information;
- Provide the right level of detail about the access information;
- Ensure the availability of information;
- Have a proper format for the information;
- Have appropriate presentation of the information;
- Identify distribution channels (mainstream and disability specific);
- Communicate the information to staff at all levels of the organization; and
- Communicate the information to intermediaries.

Tourism has an additional level of communication barriers for many tourists with disabilities. While all tourists face the common barrier of language differences between host and guest, this can be compounded for people with disabilities who may have expressive difficulties. These difficulties may require a greater level of concentration to understand the person. The non-disabled listener may also have attitudinal problems towards people with disabilities and this will further aggravate the communication problem.

Government tourism authorities play an important coordination role for the local tourism industry. Hall (1998) suggested that this can be due to the fragmentation of local tourism, competition between organizations and regional destinations, and the need to cooperatively market in tourism-generating markets. This role should extend to the collection, marketing and dissemination of barrier-free travel information. The collation of information on barrier-free tourism products is one of the easiest ways for national tourism organizations to begin establishing a new market segment campaign. Issues that the government tourism authorities need to address include the systematic collection, presentation and dissemination of barrier-free travel information. The Internet provides an opportunity for domestic and inbound marketing and promotion of barrier-free tourism. However, government tourism authorities need to be aware of the implication of *W3C Guidelines* for the accessibility of the Internet for people with vision and print impairments (Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission 2001).

## **2.4 Transport barriers**

Transport has been a major facilitator of social participation and leisure experience. Within an individual's community, day-to-day transport relies largely on pedestrian access, bus, train, light rail, ferry and paratransit taxi options. In many instances, these public transport options are not available for easy use by people with disabilities. Developed countries also face the accessibility of public transport as a major issue. For example, the lack of accessible public transport has been identified as an inherent weakness of tourism for people with disabilities in Australia (Downie 1994; Australian Tourist Commission 1995). This may cover physical access, as well as cognitive or communication dimensions of access. Universal designs and technological solutions<sup>1</sup> to barrier-free public transport have grown over the last decade in response to the well-documented public transport issues for people with disabilities (Preiser and Ostroff 2001). Barrier-free public transport has become standard in many developed countries with anti-discrimination legislation. However, both developed and developing countries in Asia and the Pacific have lagged behind with these public transport solutions.

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<sup>1</sup> Including barrier-free coaches that provide hoists and wheelchair lockdowns for people with mobility disabilities, rail systems that have audible announcements for people who are blind or have vision disabilities and visual cues for people with hearing disabilities.

Transport issues become accentuated for tourism where an individual has to negotiate the transport system to get to a destination region. This includes prolonged travel time, unknown territories and unfamiliar transport options (train, coach or aeroplane). A number of papers have highlighted the impact of international and national air regulations on travel by people with disabilities (Driedger 1987; Abeyratne 1995; European Civil Aviation Conference and European Conference of Ministers of Transport 1995; Canadian Transport Agency 1997). The major air transport issues identified are:

- Ground services to and from airports;
- Convenient drop-off points near main entrances;
- Adequate auxiliary services within airports (accessible toilets/change rooms, phones, autobanks, etc.);
- Airline flight information dissemination to the hearing and vision impaired;
- Airline information management of the needs of people with mobility disabilities;
- Distance from check-in to departure terminal;
- Extra cost of travelling with an attendant;
- Loss of travel independence;
- Method of boarding and disembarking from aircraft;
- Ground staff training in the physical handling of people with mobility disabilities;
- Seating location;
- Availability of seats with retractable arms;
- Health-related issues during flights and impairment differences;
- Lack of accessible toilets;
- Access to special toilets where provided;
- Rules and regulations for carrying equipment (electric batteries for wheelchairs and oxygen);
- Equipment loss and damage;
- Retrieval and identification of luggage;
- Disability awareness training for ground staff towards people with disabilities.

Once the destination is reached, the day-to-day transport options must then be established. In many instances, if these linkages are unavailable then the individual's tourism experience will be restricted. For example, many cities in Asia and the Pacific do not have accessible public transport or an accessible transport system that parallels the public transport system. Even if these paratransit systems are present, these are generally at a higher cost and provide a further barrier to travelling. A person must decide whether to attempt going to such a destination and work around these problems. In most cases, they will avoid these destinations if they believe the transport problems are insurmountable.

The lack of barrier-free public transport as well as packaged tours and day tours that are barrier-free, affects the inclusiveness of the local tourism industry in providing quality services for people with disabilities. Unless a subsidized paratransit scheme operates, people with disabilities must pay the extra cost of these systems<sup>2</sup>. However, this option also excludes them from the social experience of tourism that is a major incentive in the first place. The tourism experience becomes devoid of social interaction with the local tour operators, other tourists and local people.

The overall experience of people with disabilities demonstrates that the accessibility and reliability of transport is the facilitating link among tourism industry sectors (transport – accommodation – attractions – hospitality – intermediaries). The availability and variety of transport options affects the ease of movement for people with disabilities. The availability of these factors directly affects ability to participate in tourism due to the extra costs associated with using paratransit systems and exclusion from packaged tours. The overall satisfaction of disabled people with the tourism experience can be considered correspondingly less than for the non-disabled. For many, this contributes towards their propensity to travel more frequently. As one experienced traveller explained, all forms of public transportation are so problematic that they restrict their travel to areas in which they can drive in their private vehicle.

Transport solutions require a level of independent access that provides an equality of service provision to which the non-disabled already have access. Paratransit systems should only be considered a starting point and

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<sup>2</sup> Subsidized paratransit systems exist in Australia, Japan and New Zealand but are only available to people with residency in those countries.

more cost effective mainstream barrier-free transport needs to be the solution in destination regions planning to cater for this group.

## **2.5 Accessible accommodation**

For many people with disabilities affecting mobility, accommodation availability is critical to staying at a destination. Quite simply, if they cannot find barrier-free accommodation then they will not travel to the destination. One travel planning information issue is obtaining information about barrier-free accommodation. Many accommodation operators do not understand what accessible or barrier-free accommodation entails. They are often unable to provide accurate or detailed information about the features of their rooms. In many cases, this involves accommodation operators representing their rooms as accessible or barrier-free, but people with disabilities find that the rooms are not suitable. When this occurs in one's own country it is serious enough but when it occurs at an overseas destination, it is devastating to the traveller with a disability.

Barriers to accommodation occur in relation to the surrounding environment of the accommodation (location, proximity to services, public transport, parking and drop-offs), the reception, other facilities and services, and the rooms. The accommodation needs of people with disabilities on the individual, their disability and the level of their support needs. The most important access features information requirement about accommodations involve the following:

- Lack of continuous pathways (from parking or drop off throughout all hotel facilities and to the room);
- Reception counters are too high;
- Rooms are inappropriately located;
- No steps into rooms;
- Door widths;
- Door stops weight;
- D type door handles;
- Circulation space in corridor;
- Circulation space in rooms;
- Uncluttered furniture layout;

- Cupboard height and reach;
- Access to balconies;
- Location of cupboards, fridge, TV, clock radio, telephone, ironing equipment, etc.;
- Availability of telephone typewriters and visual signals for deaf people;
- Provision of orientation for people with vision impairments, including blindness;
- Table heights;
- Bed heights;
- Clearance under beds;
- Switch and handle locations;
- Hobless roll in showers;
- Hand held shower hose;
- Lever taps;
- Mirror location;
- Hand basin positioning;
- Space under the hand basin;
- Need for adequate shower chair or bench;
- Location of handrails;
- Toilet height; and
- Positioning of the toilet (distance from the walls and front clearance).

Apart from specific elements of room design, other critical issues where equality of service provision is needed includes:

- Location and distribution of rooms within accommodations;
- Number of barrier-free rooms available at a destination;
- Availability of rooms across classes of accommodation within destination regions;
- Prices charged for barrier-free accommodation are often higher; and
- Lack of budget accommodation.

In addition to barrier-free accommodations, some travellers with mobility disabilities may require additional equipment such as shower seats, a commode and hoists. However, few accommodations provide this equipment, so people have to either take their own or hire equipment at their destination. This complicates the tourism experience in terms of additional costs and/or travel planning.

Issues related to accommodation can be considered in the good practice solutions identified later in the report.

## **2.6 The destination experience**

The tourism experience involves a multitude of interactions and social relations at the destination. Public transport, the environment, the streetscape, accommodation, attractions, day-trip availability and customer service attitudes all play important roles in the tourism experiences of people with disabilities. People with disabilities have usually been devalued and treated poorly in many areas of service provision. Tourism has been no exception in this discrimination against people with disabilities (Darcy and Daruwalla, 1999).

Two important components for creating a barrier-free destination are the country/region's disability discrimination legislation and the regulation of the built environment. These two components interact to produce the physical and attitudinal environments that travellers experience at a destination. Unless the regulation of the built environment incorporates barrier-free considerations, the physical environment for transport, the built environment, streetscape and attractions will not be inclusive of travellers with disabilities' physical and sensory requirements. Secondly, disability discrimination legislation provides an environment where the attitudes and behaviour of service providers incorporates the needs of travellers with disabilities throughout their service provision. Receiving tourists with disability cannot be seen as an optional extra but as part of mainstream service provision.

The research, while predominantly coming from Western developed nations, offers an understanding of the major barriers likely to be encountered at destination regions. These include access to accommodation, restaurants, clubs, attractions, places of interest and anywhere else a tourist may desire to visit in a destination region. Apart from the specific barriers already

**Table 6. Access requirements for people with disabilities**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pathways – provision, gradient and camber</li> <li>• Kerbs – provision, gradient and camber</li> <li>• Ramps – provision, gradient, camber and Landings</li> <li>• Handrails – provision and positioning</li> <li>• Circulation space</li> <li>• Street crossing provisions and time delays for pedestrian crossings</li> <li>• Doorways, doors and circulation space</li> <li>• Stairs/lack of lifts</li> <li>• Toilets numbers and unisex provision</li> <li>• Location and types of controls – switches, door handles, water taps etc.</li> <li>• Reach and viewing ranges</li> <li>• Furniture and fittings – height and location</li> <li>• Ground surfaces – type and non-slip</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Car parking facilities and location</li> <li>• Need for integrated rather than segregated Seating</li> <li>• Street/outdoor furniture – design and location</li> <li>• Directional and locational signage</li> <li>• Audible and visual signals/warning signals</li> <li>• Tactile indicators</li> <li>• Showers and change rooms roll-in showers</li> <li>• Public utilities – gateways, check outs, Telephones, post boxes, automated teller Machines etc.</li> <li>• Hearing augmentation systems</li> <li>• Sound levels</li> <li>• Telephone typewriters (TTY)</li> <li>• Lighting levels</li> <li>• Recreational facilities – swimming pools, spas etc.</li> </ul>
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identified in the transport and accommodation sections, the following table lists the detailed inclusions for access requirements identified by people with disabilities:

Barriers create physical, sensory and communication exclusions to an inclusive tourism environment. A starting point to improving barrier-free tourism is to understand the nature of destination regions and the requirements for a truly enabling environment. Many countries of the Asia-Pacific do not have national building codes or standards for access. The Australian and New Zealand systems of building codes and standards for access offer a framework for improving access to the built environment and developing barrier-free tourism product (Standards Australia 1992a; 1992c; 1992b; 1995; 2001). These will be discussed in the subsequent Chapter 3.

Barrier-free tourism extends beyond the built environment to customer service provision. People with disabilities have been discriminated against in tourism service provision (Darcy 2002b). As a service industry the attitude

that the tourism industry has towards people with disabilities has a major impact upon their experiences. Research has shown that destination marketers and face-to-face tourism service providers' attitudes reflect the wider social stereotypes about disability (Ross 1994; Daruwalla 1999). These attitudes need to be challenged through systemic disability awareness training to the tourism industry.

Interpretive tourism services provide an insight into the culture of the destination. When thought does not extend to offering inclusive barrier-free interpretive tourism services then travellers with disabilities do not have access to the same tourism experiences as the non-disabled. For example, in 1994 the World Assembly for *Disabled Peoples' International* was held at Darling Harbour in Sydney. The general environment of Darling Harbour was barrier-free but many delegates' experience of the Assembly, and Sydney generally, was less than ideal. The location of barrier-free accommodation meant that some people had to stay great distances from the Assembly venue (between 5 and 35 kilometres away). This required long trips to the venue each day through Sydney peak hour traffic (from 1 to 3 hours). For some people who were blind or had vision impairments the lack of thought to the after hours social calendar meant that their experience of Sydney did not extend beyond their Hotel rooms. This was because there were no volunteers to assist people with way-finding away from the Assembly venue (Darcy 1995). In other situations this involves specialist tour operators providing the same service for people with mobility, hearing or vision disabilities. For example, a guided tour experience for deaf people would require the tour operator to provide a sign language interpreter or a printed copy of the commentary. By not providing these inclusions the tour operator is offering deaf people a lesser experience than the non-disabled (Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission 2001).

## **2.7 Summary**

To summarize, there are many myths about people with disabilities and tourism (Darcy 1998). These include that the market is inconsequential, that people with disabilities travel in 'packs', and that they are best catered for through activities organized by institutions and governments familiar with their needs. Other myths include that accessible facilities are too expensive to build, such facilities are never used, and people with disabilities cannot afford to use them. Yet, people with disabilities have the same

motivations to travel as the rest of the community. However, as this chapter has identified they have faced a range of constraints and barriers that impede their tourism desires. Destination marketers and those responsible for planning destination regions can be proactive in removing the disabling barriers faced by travellers with disabilities. By doing so, they will create a competitive advantage for their destination through developing a barrier-free approach to this emerging market segment.

### **3. CURRENT POLICIES AND MEASURES TO IMPROVE ACCESS**

#### **3.1 Overview**

This chapter highlights significant initiatives, including case studies, to demonstrate positive responses to the issues and problems. Several countries successfully provide barrier-free tourism products: Australia; Hong Kong, China; Japan; and New Zealand. However, they can improve significantly in certain key areas; information provision and transport. The examples listed reflect the barrier free product obtained from internet searching and by accessing well known warehouses of accessible travel information. Elements of good practices are identified and case studies may represent a region, an individual operator, a government or agency or even a state.

Government responses to the access requirements of people with disabilities vary widely. Particular government responses to the broader issue of rehabilitation, housing and general welfare of people with disabilities tend to reflect the economic capacity or level of development in a country.

The Internet provides a great deal of information that could be accessed easily and quickly. It is the perfect method for offering people with physical, sight and hearing disabilities information to assist them in making a positive decision to travel. All nations could adopt Internet technologies as an efficient and effective means of providing information. However, research conducted by the World Markets Research Centre, Global E-Government Survey, September 2001, revealed only three countries in the Asia-Pacific region ranked in its survey of government web sites offering a feature of accessibility.

Australia ranked third worldwide and accounted for 23 per cent of web sites. The Republic of Korea ranked seventh and India ranked thirteenth according to World Market Research in 2001.

Access to information is important for people who have sight and hearing disabilities. Tourism sites which fail to offer access to people with sight or hearing impairments will miss the potential business from those

people and their friends and family who travel with them. Three forms of accessibility are available:

1. Offering TTY (TeleTypewriter) Contact number on a web site;
2. Ensuring a site is Bobby Compliant ([www.cast.org/bobby](http://www.cast.org/bobby)) which is a method of coding a site compliant for screen readers and having the site verified by an independent organization; and/or
3. Building a web site with accessibility features that are mandated by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), ([www.W3C.org](http://www.W3C.org)).

Only eight national or country representative tourism web sites offered any of the above accessibility features. Those that were W3C compliant suggests the feature exists not from a pro-active initiative to make the site accessible to people with a sight impairment, but as a consequence of following the W3 Consortium conventions. None of the sites offered Bobby site verification.

Table 7 reflects the findings of the research into web accessibility offered by the Asia-Pacific nations covered by this study.

Before offering examples of good tourism practice or suggesting strategies that governments or industry could adopt, governments should be prepared to substantially commit to the industry. For example country covered by this research had made a national commitment to travel for people with disabilities as evidenced by any national research on barrier-free-travel for people with disabilities. Two states in Australia had undertaken some research: Tourism New South Wales, *From Anxiety to Access, The Travel Patterns of People with a Physical Disability in New South Wales*, (Darcy 1998), and *People with Disabilities A Market Research Report, Market & Communications Research for Tourism Queensland*, December 2001.

All research completed to date focussed on the domestic tourism market. One research report included a section on outbound tourism, but none focussed on inbound tourism.

**Table 7. National tourism web sites**

Country or area	Internet address	Form of accessibility		Search-able	Data accessed
		Bobby	WSC		
1. Australia	www.australia.com/	N	Y	Y	100 initial
2. Cambodia	www.mekongcenter.com	N	N	N	
3. China	www.cnta.com/	N	N	Y	
	www.cnto.org	N	N	Y	
4. Cook Islands	www.cook-islands.com/	N	N	Y	
5. Fiji	www.bulafiji.com/	N	N	Y	
6. French Polynesia	www.tahiti-tourisme.com/	N	N	N	
7. Guam	www.ns.gov.gu/	N	N	N	
8. Hong Kong, China	Webserve1.discoverhongkong.com/eng/	N	Y	Y	1 entry
9. India	www.tourismofindia.com/	N	N	Y	
	www.tourisminindia.com	N	N	N	
10. Indonesia	www.searchindonesia.com/	N	N	N	
11. Japan	www.jnto.go.jp/eng/	N	N	Y	124 entries
12. Lao PDR	www.mekongcenter.com	N	N	N	.
13. Malaysia	http://tourism.gov.my/	N	N	Y	1 entry
14. Myanmar	www.myanmar.com/	N	N	Y	
15. Nepal	www.welcomenepal.com/	N	Y	Y	1 entry
16. New Caledonia	www.newcaledoniatourism-south.com	N	N	Y	
17. New Zealand	www.purenz.com	N	Y	Y	46 entries
18. Philippines	www.wowphilippines.com.ph	N	Y	Y	
19. Republic of Korea	English.tour2korea.com/	N	N	Y	
20. Singapore	www.stb.com.sg/	N	Y	N	
21. Solomon Islands	www.solomons.com/ttourism	N	N	N	
22. Sri Lanka	www.slmts.slt.lk/	N	N	N	
	www.lanka.net/ctb/	N	N	N	
23. Thailand	www.tat.or.th/	N	N	N	
24. Tonga	www.vacations.tvb.gov.to/	N	N	N	
25. Vanuatu	www.vanuatutourism.com/	N	Y	Y	1 entry
26. Viet Nam	www.vietnamtourism.com/	N	Y	Y	

Source: Easy Access Australia 2002.

### **3.2 Examples of tourism practice with information**

Good Tourism Information practice on the Internet is signified by the following key elements:

- Display Accessibility features (Bobby, W3C, TTY)
- Searchable databases for “Disability” or “Disabled” (possibly Handicap)
- Detailed information, sufficient to enable the user to make a positive decision to travel, under the following (main) categories:
  - Transport
  - Accommodation
  - Attractions, and
  - Assistance (equipment hire, care, etc.)

No national tourism internet site for the countries studied had all of the elements listed above. The examples and case studies listed demonstrate existing practice. The good practices are highlighted with the elements of good practice identified. These good practices form the basis for the subsequent Chapter 4. As the basis for this chapter is derived from Internet research, the examples identified are expanded upon with excerpts from the relevant Internet web page.

#### **3.2.1 National tourism body**

##### **Australia**

The Australian Tourist Commission (ATC) is entrusted with the responsibility of marketing and promoting Australia to the world. ATC’s web site ([www.australia.com](http://www.australia.com)) offers a good example of a National body offering an informative web site but it is not an example of good access information provision. While it offers a searchable site, it is not accessible to screen readers. A search under “Disability or Disabled” results in 100 responses. However, those responses should contain accessible tourism product or refer the visitor to web site with detailed access information.

## **Japan**

The National Tourist Organization web site ([www.jnto.go.jp/eng/](http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/)) offers a search facility which reveals 124 entries under “Disabled”. The entries are presented in a standard format and contain the following broad pieces of information:

“Concession pricing for Disabled”

“Facility for Disabled Person”, and

“Disabled Restrooms”

The difficulties faced by the traveller include expectations and definitions, for example, “Facility” and “Restroom” both can vary in meaning from culture to culture.

## **New Zealand**

Pure New Zealand ([www.purenz.com](http://www.purenz.com)) offers a searchable site which reveals 46 entries. Those entries lead to articles and some operators and tourism product providers.

### **3.2.2 Government sponsored information**

#### **Australia**

The National Information Communication Awareness Network (NICAN) ([www.nican.com.au](http://www.nican.com.au)) provides a free information service to people with disabilities, families, service providers and the community throughout Australia on recreation, tourism, sport and the arts, advocacy services, community groups, equipment hire and transport services, Government services, health and educational bodies for people with disabilities.

Information on Disability Equipment Access Services (IDEAS) ([www.ideas.org.au](http://www.ideas.org.au)) funded by the New South Wales State Government provides information on physical and intellectual disabilities, visual and hearing impairment, speech/language difficulties, psychiatric, genetic, as well as issues around ageing and acquired brain injury and other conditions.

It is worth noting that neither offers tourism information flowing from independent inspections, rather accommodation information is gathered

by operators completing data sheets or questionnaires and by recommendation from users.

### **Tourism Queensland**

<http://www.tq.webcentral.com.au/accessqld/>

Tourism Queensland has developed a separate section to its Internet site which is searchable and W3C compliant. There is good use of generic icons not to provide access information but to direct the user to service provider/operator for more detailed information.

### **New Zealand**

The NZ Visitors Bureau offers the following information ([www.nzvisitorsbureau.com/visitorinfo/](http://www.nzvisitorsbureau.com/visitorinfo/)) provides the following text:

#### **“Disabled Facilities**

New Zealand is a great destination for the disabled traveller. Apart from the sights being so accessible, the law requires that every new building and major reconstruction provide reasonable and adequate access for people with disabilities. Every motel and hotel must have units with accessible facilities.”

No detailed information is offered to support any of these claims.

### **3.2.3 Access guides**

Good Information should enable the user to make a pro-active decision to travel by supplying sufficiently detailed information. This section comprises Travel and Access Guides. Their content can be alphabetical listing, directory or a travel guide in style. Each style must provide detailed information on the key areas:

- Transport
- Accommodation
- Attractions, and
- Assistance (equipment hire, care etc.)

These guides should also include Access or Mobility Maps.

### **3.2.3.1 Australia**

Many directories and guides have been published providing information about barrier-free travel options in a variety of forms, contents and layouts.

**Easy Access Australia – A Travel Guide to Australia** ([www.easyaccesaustralia.com.au](http://www.easyaccesaustralia.com.au)). This guide was first published in 1995 and updated in 2000. It is a travel guide with information on transport, accommodation, attractions, equipment hire and other assistance. EAA is the most comprehensive information source available and the only one that provides accommodation information about the floorplan, which allows the reader to determine whether the facility would be appropriate for them.

**Access Sydney** is the most recent guide, published in 2002 by the Australian Quadriplegic Association ([www.aqa.com.au](http://www.aqa.com.au)). It is a directory of accessible tourism products and experiences throughout greater Sydney.

**Accessing Melbourne**, published in 1999, is similar in style and content to EAA and can be downloaded from [www.accessmelbourne.vic.gov.au](http://www.accessmelbourne.vic.gov.au). Features include accommodation floor-plans and access maps of city parks.

**Access Brisbane** is a web site (<http://brisbane-stories.powerup.com.au/access/>), and a guide to access and facilities, plus stories, art and feedback. The site offers a search section of a database of Brisbane places with accessibility ratings.

**Access the Best Toowoomba and Access the Best Blue Mountains** ([www.accessthebest.com.au](http://www.accessthebest.com.au)) are examples of regional guides.

**Access Guide to the Snowy Mountain Region of New South Wales** ([www.snowyaccess.com](http://www.snowyaccess.com)) could be downloaded as a pdf.

### **3.2.3.2 Hong Kong**

#### **Hong Kong Access Guide for Disabled Visitors**

The Joint Council for the Physically and Mentally Disabled (Rehabilitation Division, Hong Kong Council of Social Service) published the guide, download from (<http://www.hkcss.org.hk/rh/accessguide/default.htm>) which provides information about access to venues in

Hong Kong including hotels, shopping arcades, museums, sightseeing spots and restaurants and public transport facilities.

It is a research document presenting information against well defined criteria.

### **3.2.3.3 Japan**

#### **Accessible Japan – Travel Guide for Wheelchair Users**

The following quotation is taken from one of the Internet based information warehouses, American based Emerging Horizons to indicate the universal need to clearly define or describe what is meant by accessible:

“Published on the Internet by Wakakoma Independent Living Information Center ([www.wakakoma.org](http://www.wakakoma.org)). The guide features access information about transportation, accommodations and tourist attractions throughout Japan. The listings are grouped by city and each listing contains access information about the property’s entrance, toilet facilities and guest rooms (if applicable). The access criteria are not clearly defined, but this guide is a good starting point to narrow down accommodation choices. The transportation section includes a list of “trains with accessible toilets and space for wheelchairs” and a list of “ships with elevators and accessible toilets”. The “useful information” section gives a good overview of access conditions in Japan”. (Source Emerging Horizons).

#### **Tokyo and Kyoto On-Line Access Guides**

The Japanese Red Cross and IBM originally created two access guides covering Tokyo and Kyoto. Both on-line guides include information about hotels, transportation, attractions, parks and shopping and links to a number of access maps.

Accessible Toyko – <http://accessible.jp.org/tokyo/en/index.html>

Accessible Kyoto – <http://accessible.jp.org/kyoto/en/index-e.html>

### **3.2.3.4 New Zealand**

**Accessible Options** ([www.travelaxess.co.nz](http://www.travelaxess.co.nz)) is a 300 page guide offering access information in New Zealand covering transport, activities,

accommodation, shopping and toilets. The features are independently inspected and employ the use of icons to convey specific information, for example parking, lifts, male and female toilets.

### **3.2.3.5 Singapore**

#### **Access Singapore**

Downloadable as a pdf, ([www.ncss.gov.sg](http://www.ncss.gov.sg)). The guide is in its fifth edition, current as at 1998. It employs the use of icons in tabular format to describe the accessibility of various attractions, accommodation and services, for example government buildings, libraries, concert halls and shopping venues. A feature of the information is a Mobility Map of Orchard Road which can be downloaded from ([www.dpa.org.sg/DPA/access/db/pix/Access4.jpg](http://www.dpa.org.sg/DPA/access/db/pix/Access4.jpg)).

The problem with this format is that users need clear definitions of what each icon means and vague language like “narrow door” should not be employed.

### **3.2.4 Access or mobility maps**

Access Maps should offer critical information to a traveller on accessibility, that includes pathways, parking, toilets and accessible entry points.

#### **3.2.4.1 Australia**

Mobility Maps are very popular devices in Australia for conveying the information mentioned. There is no national standard format (or content) so there is significant variation between maps. One guide to make mobility maps has been developed by the Local Government and Shires Association New South Wales, *A Guide for making a Mobility Map*, Ettinger House Inc. 1996.

The following maps show different ways in which information can be presented:

**Sydney** (<http://citymap.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/>) is an Internet based series of maps which allows a user to zoom in and out. Maps feature:

- On street parking
- Accessible toilets
- Audible traffic signals
- ATM's
- TTY Phones

**Melbourne** ([www.accessmelbourne.vic.gov.au](http://www.accessmelbourne.vic.gov.au)) is available on the Internet where the user can zoom in and out. The map contains the following details:

- Off street and On street accessible parking
- Accessible Toilets
- Continuous Accessible Pathway (accessible street crossings)
- Gradients (colour coded)
- Railway Entrances
- Major Taxi Rank
- Public Seating
- Accessible Telephone and TTY

This map is available in a hardcopy and can be printed from the internet.

#### **3.2.4.2 Japan**

**Accessible Tokyo** and **Accessible Kyoto** (<http://accessible.jp.org/tokyo/en/index.html> and <http://accessible.jp.org/kyoto/en/index-e.html>) contain maps offering some access information about:

- Toilets
- Steps
- Elevators

#### **3.2.4.3 Singapore**

Singapore's Mobility Map ([www.dpa.org.sg/DPA/access/db/pix/Access4.jpg](http://www.dpa.org.sg/DPA/access/db/pix/Access4.jpg)) is downloaded from the internet and contains access details:

- Steep ramps and gradients
- Accessible and Inaccessible entries
- Accessible and Inaccessible wheelchair routes

### 3.3 Examples of tourism practice with transport

Countries with a high degree of transport infrastructure such as Australia, New Zealand, Singapore and Japan have an established barrier-free tourism industry. Accessible transport embraces all elements in the transport equation from arrival to long and short haul transport. While people with disabilities could find ways to travel to inaccessible destinations, countries hoping to provide for this growing market must ensure transport options are widely available.

#### 3.3.1 Air travel, planes and airports

**Table 8. Accessible air travel**

Airline	Air Bridges	Sky Chairs	Facilities at Airports
Qantas	Y	Y	Y
Air New Zealand www.airnz.co.nz/	Y	Y	Y
Japan Airlines www.jal.co.jp/en/	Y	Y	Y some
Cathay Pacific	Y	Y	Y
Malaysia Airlines Info@emalaysiatravel.com	No response	No response	No response
Air India			
Korea Koreanair.com	Y, when available	Y, when available	Depends upon airport
Thai Airways Int'l www.thaiair.com/	No response	No response	No response
Garuda Indonesia Airlines www.garuda-indonesia.com/	No response	No response	No response

Source: via <http://www.wideweb.com/airlines.htm> and Carrier web sites.

### 3.3.2 Rail

The Internet research provided Barrier Free Rail options in Australia and Japan. However, those options could only be said to be limited.

#### **Australia**

Barrier Free Rail travel in Australia offers limited options for the traveller.

**The Great Southern Railway** ([www.gsr.com.au/](http://www.gsr.com.au/)) operates three rail lines across the nation:

- The Indian Pacific from Sydney to Perth via Adelaide.
- The Ghan from Adelaide to Alice Springs.
- The Overland from Adelaide.

The Indian Pacific provides one cabin with small accessible bathroom and is not accessible to many people requiring good access.

**CountryLink** ([www.countrylink.nsw.gov.au/](http://www.countrylink.nsw.gov.au/)) is the New South Wales Government country rail service. It operates two styles of train; XPT and Explorer. Each train has at least one carriage which offers access features of:

- Customer service to assist passengers.
- Portable ramp.
- Seating area.
- Accessible toilet.
- Hearing Induction Loop.
- Internet site is W3C.

XPT, Explorer Trains travel from Melbourne, Canberra, Brisbane, Sydney and main regional centres in NSW.

**Vline** ([www.vline.vic.gov.au/](http://www.vline.vic.gov.au/)) is the Victorian country rail network providing a service to key regional centres. Barrier free coaches (hoist equipped) link other regional towns.

**Qrail** ([www.qr.com.au/](http://www.qr.com.au/)) operates the rail network in Queensland. The TiltTrain operates from Brisbane to Cairns (approximately 1,800 kilometres) but offers accessible transport to the Sunshine Coast, Maryborough, Bundaberg and Rockhampton. The TiltTrain offers:

- Portable ramp and customer service.
- Three Wheelchair access spaces.
- Accessible unisex toilet.
- Hearing Loop.

**Japan** (Source: Accessible Japan, <http://www.jreast.co.jp/e/>)

The following extract reveals the quality of information sourced from Accessible Japan:

#### **JR Narita Express (NEX)**

“Taking the JR Narita Express (NEX) is the easiest way to get to downtown Tokyo. It travels between Narita Airport and four major JR Stations (Tokyo, Shinjuku, Ikebukuro, and Yokohama). Each train has space for wheelchairs and is equipped with rest rooms with wheelchair access.”

The guides Accessible Tokyo and Accessible Kyoto each have sections describing public rail access. One feature is Braille (Japanese) signage at Tokyo Station.

#### **Shinkansen or Bullet Train**

“The Shinkansen is well equipped for people with disabilities, including wheelchair users. There are several special seats for disabled travelers.”

Little access information is offered on the Bullet Train Internet page. (Source: Accessible Tokyo).

#### **Republic of Korea**

**Seoul Subway** ([http://www.seoulsubway.co.kr/english\\_subway/e\\_subway05.htm](http://www.seoulsubway.co.kr/english_subway/e_subway05.htm)) offers an excellent example of how a railway system can plan for its future accessibility.

## **Hong Kong, China**

“A Guide to Public Transport for People with Disabilities” published by the Transport Department, can be accessed at [http://www.info.gov.hk/td/eng/services/disable\\_index.html](http://www.info.gov.hk/td/eng/services/disable_index.html). There are three rail companies:

- The **Kowloon Canton Railway** (KCR) East Rail operates along North East New Territories.
- The **KCR Light Rail** (LR), operated in the North West New Territories,
- The **Mass Transit Railway** (MTR) system not only runs through the most densely populated residential and commercial areas of Hong Kong Island and Kowloon, it also Lantau Island and Hong Kong International Airport at Chek Lap Kok.

### **3.3.3 Buses and coaches**

Barrier-free long haul bus transport is the least available resource for travellers with mobility impairment. Based on the research, none exist in Australia, Japan (source: Accessible Japan guides) or New Zealand. Transport Standards in Australia do require phasing-in of accessible vehicles but this is to occur over thirty years. A number of regional and community bus services are starting to offer barrier-free bus travel:

- **Vline** offers hoist equipped coach travel in regional Victoria.
- **Access Queensland** lists accessible coaches. Two examples are:
  - Dunkley’s Coaches in Toowoomba which runs an accessible service from Toowoomba (120 kms south west from Brisbane) to Hervey Bay (300 kms north), and
  - Whitsundays Buses which operate from Proserpine where there is an airport to Airlie Beach and Schutte Harbour, the two towns of the Whitsundays Passage and jumping off point to the Whitsunday Islands.

### **3.3.4 Boats and ferries**

Boat and ferry operations are offering barrier-free access, but it lags behind other forms of transport and good information is difficult to find.

Japan probably leads the way as an island nation with a developed series of ports and operators. Australian cities Sydney and Brisbane each straddle bodies of water and require a mass transit ferry service. These services generally offer roll on/off access from floating pontoon wharves to level decked vessels equipped with an accessible toilet.

### **Australia**

TTLLine ([www.tt-line.com.au/](http://www.tt-line.com.au/)) operates an overnight ferry service across Bass Strait between Victoria and Tasmania, southern Australia. The vessel *Spirit of Australia* offers good barrier-free access with gangway boarding, staff load vehicle (special circumstances), lifts between decks, accessible cabins with accessible bathrooms.

### **Japan**

Ship and Ferry transportation is well developed in Japan, an island nation. However facilities at ship terminals are not as well developed as those at main airports. Boarding ships is generally via a boarding bridge. Moving around boats is difficult, as elevators and toilets for wheelchair users are rare. Accessing Japan lists accessible Shipping Companies but their web sites are in Japanese. (Source: Accessible Japan).

### **Hong Kong, China**

“Ferries are relatively accessible for disabled passengers. Except for hoverferries and ferries berthing alongside pontoons and public landing steps, disabled passengers and wheelchair users can gain access from the pier to the vessel without much difficulty. The lower deck of vessels is more accessible than the upper deck. For details, call the **Star Ferry** hotline at 2366 2576 or fax 2311 5086; and the **Hongkong & Yaumati Ferry (HYF)** at 2542 3081 or 24-hour hotline at 2525 1108 (Tel & Fax)”. (Source: Hong Kong Access Guide for Disabled Visitors).

#### **3.3.5 Taxis**

Taxis meet most of the short distance travel needs of people requiring accessible transport. In Singapore, Japan, New Zealand and Australia accessible taxis are available by booking ahead and in Australia are almost plentiful enough to “hail”. Taxis are not an appropriate longer distance

means of transport (or touring) due to their cost. Some taxis however do offer a touring rate for longer journey or full day hire, but these are rare.

### **Singapore**

There are two taxi companies providing accessible vehicles in Singapore; TransIsland Taxis Pte Ltd. and CityCab Pte Ltd.

### **Japan**

There are about 400 companies operating taxis with lifts all over the country. It is advisable to reserve one in advance since companies only have a few taxis with lifts and the predominant language is Japanese. The guides Accessible Japan, Accessible Tokyo and Accessible Kyoto include lists of taxi companies which offer an accessible taxi service.

### **Australia**

Taxis are available in every major city, most regional cities and towns and some regions. Accessible vehicles are either vans with lift access or modified station wagons with roll-in access. The occupants are securely fastened to the vehicle and seat belts provided.

### **New Zealand**

Taxis with roll in access and lock down points are available in most New Zealand locations, the Internet site [www.taxinet.org.nz/Links/WebLinks.asp](http://www.taxinet.org.nz/Links/WebLinks.asp) lists the various companies and identifies wheelchair accessibility.

### **3.3.6 Hire cars and vans**

The research revealed that accessible vans can be hired in Australia, Japan, New Zealand and Singapore. However, there were no accessible Motor Homes available.

### **Japan**

Toyota Rent-a-Lease, Nissan Rent-a-Car and Nippon Rent-a-Car offer rental vans with wheelchair access and varying configurations (wheelchair/passenger capacity) from their locations around Japan. However, their Internet sites are in Japanese.

### **Australia**

Hertz and Avis offer hire cars (mainly sedans) from main city locations and will fit hand controls for right hand operation. Accessible Van Hire operations exist in each state.

### **Singapore**

Singapore Handicaps Welfare Association (HWA) hires vans.

### **New Zealand**

Galaxy Autos ([www.galaxyautos.co.nz/rentals.html](http://www.galaxyautos.co.nz/rentals.html)) operates as a tour operator and hirer of accessible vans and vehicles with hand controls.

### **Hong Kong, China**

A hireable bus service (Rehabus) is provided by the Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation and accessed at: [www.rehabsociety.org.hk/rehabus/english/news.htm](http://www.rehabsociety.org.hk/rehabus/english/news.htm).

## **3.4 Examples of tourism practice with accommodation**

The research revealed little by way of good tourism accommodation practice (particularly when it comes to detailed information). Many information sources seem to believe information like “Accessible Facilities” or “Disabled Friendly” and “Handicapped Rooms” is sufficient for a user to determine whether the facilities are appropriate. This is not the case. The following examples reflect examples of good practice:

### **3.4.1 Australia**

Three “Resorts” deserve specific mention for different reasons and examples from their web pages.

#### **The Rainforest Retreat, Byron Bay NSW** ([www.rainforestresort.com.au](http://www.rainforestresort.com.au))

Established in 1987 by two wheelchair users, it offers nine fully accessible cabins set amongst the rainforest. Features are the gentle gradients, pathway to beach, accessible swimming pool (via sloping ramp), undercover

barbecue and equipment/care can be arranged. Accommodation includes plenty of circulation space, accessible kitchenette and accessible bathroom.

**Clark Bay Cottages**, Narooma (<http://users.mcmmedia.com.au/~jsimpson/clarkbay.htm>)

It opened in 1995 with three large cottages. Main features are as follows: no gradient steeper than (1:20) or 5 per cent, automatic opening cabin doors, accessible kitchen, two bedrooms, each with circulation space, accessible bathroom (one includes a hoist fixed to a ceiling to assist carers move high support needs clients) from the bed to the bathroom.

**O'Carrollyn's**, One Mile Beach (<http://geocities.com/ocarrollyn/andwww.ocarrollyns.com.au>)

O'Carrollyn's features seven cottages set in Melaleuca Forest around a central lake. A level pathway leads to a bridge, lookout, barbecue and conference area. Cottages feature level access, accessible kitchen, bedroom and bathroom downstairs and upstairs to a mezzanine sleeping area.

#### **Budget accommodation:**

Budget accommodation is usually described as a communal sleeping area (bunk rooms) and communal bathing. Such features are not attractive to many people with disabilities and are not part of the travel equation. Under this category, examples are noted with their relevant element of good practice identified.

- YAL Tropicana at Cairns, ([www.auscyber.net/yal/tropicana.html](http://www.auscyber.net/yal/tropicana.html)) seven accessible rooms each with an accessible bathroom.
- Some Hostels around Australia starting to provide better access, for example: Sydney City Central YHA ([www.yha.org.au](http://www.yha.org.au)) offers seven accessible rooms, each with accessible bathrooms, and good access throughout the property. The YHA Internet site contains limited information: "rooms and limited twin rooms with disabled access (must be booked in advance) are available".
- Hotel Y (YMCA), Sydney, one accessible room with accessible bathroom.

- J's Bay Hostel YHA, Byron Bay, one accessible room with an accessible bathroom.
- Brisbane City YHA offers two accessible rooms (share accessible bathroom).
- Colonial Backpackers YHA, Hervey Bay, Qld, one room with accessible bathroom. Access to bar, dining area with an accessible bathroom.
- Wandara Lodge YHA, one room with accessible bathroom, access to the communal areas including kitchen.

### **Caravan parks and camping:**

Caravan Parks offer sites for self drive vans and motor homes and for travellers to pitch their tent. Showering and toileting facilities are usually available in a central Amenities Block. Men and women are provided with separate facilities. Many Caravan Parks provided accessible amenities (toilet/shower) with their facilities. However, these facilities are often contained within the male and female facilities (ie single sex). Unisex facilities provide for a mixed gender person/attendant where single sex facilities do not. Examples of good unisex facilities provided to campers are those made available in Kakadu National Park, Northern Territory, Australia.

Many Caravan Parks have started providing accessible on-site accommodation by way of cabins, good examples of council run sites are:

- Wollongong City Council ([www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au)) at Windang Beach and Bulli Beach Tourist Parks,
- Gold Coast City Council seven cabins ([www.gctp.com.au](http://www.gctp.com.au)/ – things todo, Accommodation). The Internet site is not helpful displaying one wheelchair icon.

### **Hotels:**

There are many hotels across Australia and a very large number (AAA Tourism, the National Accreditation agency indicated it had 5,000 accessible properties in its database) offer accessible accommodation (of varying standard). The following hotels offer a high number of accessible

rooms and generally good access throughout the premises (most reflect Sydney's need for accessible accommodation for the 2000 Olympics/ Paralympics):

- The Hilton Hotel, Adelaide, approximately 20 rooms.
- The Novotel & Ibis Hotels, Homebush Bay, Sydney, 17 rooms, ([www.accorhotel.com.au](http://www.accorhotel.com.au)).
- Le Meridian, Sydney, 15 rooms ([www.lemeridian-sydney.com](http://www.lemeridian-sydney.com)).
- Merchant Court Hotel, Sydney, 21 rooms ([www.merchantcourt.com.au](http://www.merchantcourt.com.au)).
- There are many other good examples around Australia and listed in the guides mentioned earlier.

#### **Motels:**

Motels exist across Australia and in most regional centres and towns, and have branches in New Zealand. Many Motels market collectively and brands include:

- Flag ([www.flagchoice.com.au](http://www.flagchoice.com.au)).
- Best Western ([www.bestwestern.com.au](http://www.bestwestern.com.au)).
- Budget ([www.budgetmotelchain.com.au](http://www.budgetmotelchain.com.au)).
- Country Comfort ([www.countrycomfort.com.au](http://www.countrycomfort.com.au)).

Each brand publishes its own hard copy directory and indicates with the International Wheelchair symbol, which properties offer accessible accommodation. However, this is often the extent of the type of information available and the degree of accuracy of such information is questionable.

#### **Bed and breakfast**

The bed and breakfast (B&B) industry is a small but growing and yet to waken to the potential of Barrier-free tourism. Easy Access Australia mentions several excellent B&B's:

- Kurandah Qld., Homestay ([http://kurandahomestay.com/access\\_facilities.html](http://kurandahomestay.com/access_facilities.html)).

- Alleyn Court, NSW.
- Heronswood House Southern Highlands, NSW.
- Croft Haven ([www.nelsonbay.com.au](http://www.nelsonbay.com.au)).
- Ventnor B&B (<http://home.waterfront.net.au/~ventnor>) Phillip Island Vic.
- The Rocks Guest House ([www.ultra.net.au/~therocks](http://www.ultra.net.au/~therocks)).
- Merindah Holiday Cottages (<http://merindah.com.au>).

### **House Boats**

Several operators run houseboats on inland waterways and have provided an accessible experience by making the vessel roll on/off access, wider doorways and accessible bathroom. The following are examples of such floating accommodations:

- **River Cruise.** Murray Princess ([www.captaincook.com.au](http://www.captaincook.com.au)) operates along the Murray River in North Eastern South Australia. Barrier-free access has been provided by roll on/off access, lift in the vessel between decks, four accessible cabins with bathrooms. (The Internet site is a poor one for information).
- **Paradise Afloat.** Operates on the Hawkesbury River ([www.paradisefloat.com](http://www.paradisefloat.com)), north of Sydney NSW, wheelchair accessible bathroom and one can drive the vessel from a wheelchair.

### **3.4.2 Hong Kong, China**

In Hong Kong, a Guide for Disabled Visitors lists in tabular form barrier-free features for each hotel. So long as the assessment system is credible, the information can be useful.

### **3.4.3 Philippines**

St Bernard Beach Resort, Bantayan Island ([www2.mozcom.com/~fhl](http://www2.mozcom.com/~fhl)) was built by a Danish national, Flemming H. Laursen. A wheelchair user himself Mr. Laursen has lived in the Philippines since 1996. The resort has been designed for a certain level of access which will not suit all disability requirements. Features included are as follows:

- Multilingual web site.
- Eight cabins.
- Door widths 65 cm, one cabin 80 cm.
- Concrete Ramps.
- Level access into cabins.

#### **3.4.4 Thailand**

A search of TravelThailand.com under “disabled” reveals the following hotels as providing accessible facilities:

- Amari Airport Hotel, [http://travel.thailand.com/hotel/H00001/index\\_p.htm](http://travel.thailand.com/hotel/H00001/index_p.htm).
- Hôtel Plaza Athénée, [http://travel.thailand.com/hotel/H00372/index\\_p.htm](http://travel.thailand.com/hotel/H00372/index_p.htm).
- Amity Green Hills Hotel, [http://travel.thailand.com/hotel/H00219/index\\_p.htm](http://travel.thailand.com/hotel/H00219/index_p.htm).
- Hôtel Plaza Athénée, <http://travel.thailand.com/hotel/H00372>.

A search of www.disabilityworld.com revealed two additional hotels:

- Bangkok, Grand Pacific Hotel.
- Patong Phuket, Thara Patong Beach Resort.

The following quote is from the Thara Patong Internet site (www.tharapatong.com):

“Our hotel has had a number of people with moderate disabilities stay with us. We have ramps to all areas on the ground floor, including rooms, restaurants and swimming pool. We have one room that has had the bath tub removed and handholds/bars installed on the walls. We have our own wheel chair that will fit through the bathroom door if the guest has a wheel chair that is too wide. Our staff are very good at working with disabled people and making them feel comfortable. Below is my information about our new wing. This wing will have a lift so all of the floors will be accessible by wheel chair. The lobby is on the second floor and is reached by a ramp or by the lift.”

This information does not offer a great deal of detail. The main positive point is that management is aware of access and with encouragement, would further develop good accessible facilities and provide related information:

### **Chiang Mai**

A Danish national (now Thai resident), a wheelchair user himself, is running a B&B styles' accommodation offering accessible facilities near the city of Chiang Mai.

“**Baan Khun Daeng**” offer people with a physical disability, an accessible place to stay. On top of that “Khun Daeng” has extensive experience and knowledge about the organizing of nice/interesting trips/activities doable by wheelchair users because “Khun Daeng” (The Thai nick-name of Karsten Blokker (40)) is a wheelchair user himself, who lives in Thailand since 1995 and speaks the Thai language almost fluent.

### **3.4.5 Others**

Various searches of Internet sites in countries including China, Vanuatu, Indonesia, Thailand and New Caledonia offer limited information in respect to hotel accommodation, generally “Facilities for Disabled” which vague and not defined.

## **3.5 Examples of tourism practice with activities**

Included in this section are activities and experiences to demonstrate examples of good practices in terms of barrier-free tourism activities and highlight the specific elements which make them worth referring to. Very few attractions were revealed during the Internet research phase. This is not to suggest good tourism practice does not exist, rather it underscores the challenge to make the information widely available.

### **3.5.1 Australia**

**Whale Watching** – Whale Song ([www.whalesong.com.au/vessel.htm](http://www.whalesong.com.au/vessel.htm)) at Hervey Bay. Whale Song won the Prime Ministers Gold Medal Access Award, 2000 for its provision of barrier-free access:

- Roll on/off access from floating pontoon wharf.
- Ramped access into the vessel.
- Accessible toilet.
- Good viewing availability.

**Great Barrier Reef** – Quicksilver, Port Douglas ([www.quicksilver-cruises.com/](http://www.quicksilver-cruises.com/)). Good access features:

- Ramped access from a floating pontoon wharf to the vessel.
- Toilet which is accessible.
- Lock down points to stabilize a wheelchair in rough weather.
- Ramped access to outer reef pontoon.
- Water pressure operated lift to convey visitors into the water for snorkelling.
- Personal assistance by a dive crew member.

The negative features are lack of accessible toilet and change room on the pontoon.

**Theme Parks** – MovieWorld ([www.movieworld.com.au](http://www.movieworld.com.au)) and Sea World ([www.seaworld.com.au](http://www.seaworld.com.au)) operate on the Gold Coast, Qld. Both offer:

- Access maps showing accessible toilets.
- Strollers and wheelchairs for hire/borrowing.
- Good access to the majority of each site and its features.
- Pricing policy to encourage people with disabilities/carers/attendants.
- Movieworld publishes a *Special Services Guide for people with Disabilities*, information to assist people determine whether a ride or attraction is appropriate.

**Territory Wildlife Park** ([www.territorywildlifepark.com.au/about/about.htm](http://www.territorywildlifepark.com.au/about/about.htm))

Located in the Northern Territory, it offers excellent barrier-free tourism experience with accessible toilets, information, eating and it offers

accessible transport around its site on a small transporter which has a lift operated platform.

**Uluru – Kata Juta Cultural Centre** is the visitors centre inside the park adjacent to Uluru (otherwise known as Ayers Rock). At the entry is a Pampulpai Wall (Touch Wall), which includes a braille section explaining the “creation” story and encouraging visitors to feel the ancestors and weapons affixed to the wall.

**Alice Springs Desert Park** (<http://www.alicespringsdesertpark.com.au/>) was designed to be a barrier-free experience of desert environments, with the following features:

- Accessible car parking, picnic area and toilet.
- Pathways with firm surfaces and accessible gradients.
- Hire of a scooter and a manual wheelchair.
- Level access into all buildings (Café, Exhibition Centre and Theatre, Nocturnal House).
- Tactile exhibits are available in the Exhibition Centre.

**The Tree Tops Walk** ([www.calm.wa.gov.au/access4all.html](http://www.calm.wa.gov.au/access4all.html)) was designed as a barrier-free experience by CALM. Two excellent examples of good practice are:

- Its Internet search function is designed to work with screen readers.
- The walkways in the tree tops are wheelchair accessible.

**Ocean Park** ([www.oceanpark.com.hk/eng/main/index.html](http://www.oceanpark.com.hk/eng/main/index.html)), provides barrier-free access by specially designed facilities. For example:

- Most exhibition halls and mechanical rides are available.
- Toilets, ramps, stairlift.
- Cable-car, Ferris wheel, Balloons-up-up-and-away.
- Contour models, tactile maps and braille guides available for the visually impaired.

### **3.6 Examples of tourism practice with tour operators**

The research revealed several tour operators in the region offering barrier-free tours and advice to travellers with disabilities. They function by organizing trips, supplying an accessible vehicle and providing the attendant care required. This ranges from basic needs such as showering and dressing to lifting people into vehicles and up/down flights of stairs.

#### **3.6.1 Australia**

Australia has several tour operators based in each state. They are listed in the guides already mentioned. A couple of good examples are:

- Leisure Options ([www.leisureoptions.com.au](http://www.leisureoptions.com.au)).
- Neverland Tours ([www.neverland-adventures.com](http://www.neverland-adventures.com)).

Two operators worth highlighting are:

- SeeMore Scenic Tours ([www.geocities.com/seemoretours](http://www.geocities.com/seemoretours)) which offers guided tours (amongst other services) in an accessible van in and around south-east Queensland.
- Able Tours ([www.abletours.com.au/charter.htm](http://www.abletours.com.au/charter.htm)) which offers tours around Western Australia, using a large 4WD vehicle with is hoist equipped and tows an accessible bathroom.

#### **3.6.2 China**

China Yunnan Exploration Travel Service ([www.toptrip.cc/tour\\_disabled.htm](http://www.toptrip.cc/tour_disabled.htm)) Personalized tour operator offering tours of China. This company commenced operating in 1995 offering guided tours in and within China. It offers barrier-free guides tours in China by providing staff to lift wheelchair clients. The Internet site is well created seeking information from the visitor and offering information about itineraries.

#### **3.6.3 India**

**Accessible Journeys Inc.** ([www.disabilitytravel.com/aj\\_details/travel\\_agent.htm](http://www.disabilitytravel.com/aj_details/travel_agent.htm)).

A USA based company, wholesaler offering world accessible travel-itinerary design and booking service. It plans itineraries exclusively for people with disabilities and families. The following is an extract from its web site:

**“FIT planning for your client:**

Our independent holidays are structured itineraries featuring reserved accommodations offering a high level of accessibility. It is not possible for us to design unstructured “accessible routes” without pre-reserving facilities. Specialized itinerary planning can, at times, require weeks or months of work with numerous communications to many parts of the globe.” Accessible Journeys offers tours in China as well.

**Timeless Excursions** ([www.timelessexcursions.com](http://www.timelessexcursions.com))

A tour operator offering “Tours to India for the elderly citizens and physically challenged”. Good features include:

- A Picture Gallery, showing the various special facilities given to disabled tourists ([www.timelessexcursions.com/pics.htm](http://www.timelessexcursions.com/pics.htm)).
- Wheelchair accessible transport, doorways, bathrooms, toilets and accommodation.
- There are descriptions of situation where access is an issue and how the issue is resolved.
- Itineraries of various trips identifying destinations and access.

### **3.6.4 Nepal**

Navyonepal ([www.navyonepal.com](http://www.navyonepal.com)) offers a travel and information service. It conducts tours in the Himalaya’s and has attempted to resolve a number of access issues for people with disabilities. The Internet site is multilingual.

### **3.6.5 New Zealand**

**Accessible Kiwi Tours New Zealand Ltd.**

Accessible Kiwi Tours ([www.tours-nz.com/](http://www.tours-nz.com/)) provides a full service for seniors and people with disabilities. Facilities and services offered include:

- Tailored trips, late check outs (many people cannot meet the early rising requirements of most general tour companies).
- Accessible coaches.
- Can arrange and provide care.
- Specializes in arranging accommodation, rentals, etc., for people with disabilities wanting to go alone.

**Easy Rider Tours** ([www.easyrider.co.nz/](http://www.easyrider.co.nz/)) offers tours by providing a coach service for those people with mobility restrictions and/or to those people looking for a fun time in New Zealand, whether looking for extreme adventures or a need to get to or from some sporting event or simply looking for spectacular sightseeing.

### **3.6.6 Philippines**

Sampaguita Journey ([www2.mozcom.com/~fhl/engelsk/engelskuk.htm](http://www2.mozcom.com/~fhl/engelsk/engelskuk.htm)) was established by people behind St Bernard Resort, and offers advice but little by way of encouraging detailed information. Interested visitors should make contact and seek advice and assistance.

### **3.6.7 Thailand**

Adventure Holidays ([www.adventure-holidays-thailand.com](http://www.adventure-holidays-thailand.com)) provides a service offering:

- Accommodation.
- Transportation: “Our Company’s fully equipped mini-buses will also cater to your needs and are on call 24 hour’s. The best way to see and get a feel of the country is by land. Boats will also be in your itinerary if you intend to go island hopping. We advise you to let us take care of special transportation – at a fixed price with service men helping you from airport to the Hotel”.
- Adventure Packages.
- Activities.
- Culture Experiences.

## **4. REMEDIAL ACTIONS**

This chapter offers positive strategic actions in response to the issues and problems already identified. If implemented, these initiatives will offer solutions to government, industry, transport operators, accommodation providers, attraction managers, planners and travellers with special needs.

A number of barriers to tourism have been identified and many examples of positive, barrier-free tourism practice were surveyed. However, taking a user perspective, no initiatives so far implemented have provided the perfect solution for the traveller. The remedial initiatives contained in this chapter will offer a solution to a nation considering assisting its tourism industry develop or expand to take advantage of a growing barrier-free tourism market. To achieve this an industry must go a long way to alleviating the anxiety which attaches to all phases of the travel planning and decision process.

### **4.1 Remedial initiatives**

#### **4.1.1 Infrastructure**

The travel planning and decision making process embrace a number of steps and elements: transport to destination, destination, accommodation, travel experience, additional services and information. Each step brings with it a problem which must be solved in order to satisfactorily appease the anxiety which attaches to this decision making process. (Some travellers don't bother even starting the process such is the level of anxiety that they experience).

Infrastructure is the physical environment which faces the traveller. It includes air transport (airports and aeroplanes) and the transport system available to convey visitors to their destination and within the destination itself. The destination could be a nearby city hotel or a coastal resort hundreds of kilometres away.

Regulation over this infrastructure includes the built environment, incorporating streetscape, access to buildings and services and must be inclusive of travellers with physical and sensory requirements. Disability discrimination legislation must be available to ensure good barrier-free access

**Table 9. Responses about legislation**

Country	Disability rights legislation	Legislation for built environment
1. Australia	Disability Discrimination Act 1992.	Australian Standards for Access.
2. Cambodia		
3. China*	Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Disabled Persons.	
4. Cook Islands		
5. Fiji	Bill of Rights, general application. <i>Fiji National Council for Disabled Persons Act 1994.</i>	In Draft form.
6. French Polynesia	The deliberation n°82-36 of April 30, 1982 and the decree n°397 CM of April 21, 1988.	Yes, based on French Law, 25 June 1980, but not fully implemented.
7. Guam	The Americans with Disabilities Act 1990.	Yes, ADA.
8. Hong Kong, China	The Disability Discrimination Ordinance.	Section 72 of the Building (Planning) Regulations, Cap. 123 "Design Manual: Barrier Free Access".
9. India*	The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Bill (No. 67 of 1995).	
10. Indonesia	Law No. 4/1997 equal rights, prohibits different treatment.	Decree Min. Public Works.
11. Japan*	The Fundamental Law for Disabled Persons (1993).	
12. Lao PDR		
13. Malaysia		
14. Myanmar		
15. Nepal		
16. New Caledonia		
17. New Zealand		
18. Philippines	Republic Act No. 7277 Magna Carta for Disabled Persons.	The Batas Pambansa Bilang 344*.
19. Republic of Korea*	The Welfare Law for Persons with Disabilities (1989).	
20. Singapore	No signatory to the Rights of the Child and to the UNESCAP Decade for the Disabled Persons 1993-2002.	Accessibility in Buildings 1990.
21. Solomon Islands		
22. Sri Lanka	<i>Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, No. 28 of 1996.</i>	
23. Thailand*	Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons Act (1991).	
24. Tonga		
25. Vanuatu		
26. Viet Nam		

Sources: Research Questionnaire and \*ESCAP, Blank means no information.

is mandated. This also provides a positive attitudinal environment where service providers incorporates the needs of travellers with disabilities. Underpinning the legislation would be a set of standards for each component; transport, buildings, accommodation, etc. (for a good example see the Australian experience at [www.hreoc.gov.au](http://www.hreoc.gov.au) and [www.abcb.gov.au](http://www.abcb.gov.au)). Training programmes and technical assistance to enhance the capabilities of both the governments and the tourism industry in improving the infrastructural environment need to be encouraged.

Barrier-free tourism is an opportunity not an option at extra cost. Table 9 reflects each surveyed countries' response to overall disability rights and its commitment to improving the infrastructural environment.

Only six member countries have some form of legislation to cover the built environment. French Polynesia and Fiji have yet to fully implement legislation. The research did not pursue the effectiveness of existing law in the host country.

**Guidelines for Infrastructure:**

- *Adopt and/or strengthen Disability Rights Legislation.*
- *Ensure the legislation embraces the three dimensions of access: physical, sensory and learning.*
- *Legislation must be supported by standards against which old building, accommodations can be measured and new buildings, major renovations, etc. should comply with.*
- *Legislation should be evolutionary – elements of poor practice should be corrected and precedents set for future good practice.*
- *Employ the skills of Access Training and Consultancy industry.*

#### **4.1.2 Transport**

Infrastructural issues include the transport systems existing within a country. The issue of transport commences upon arrival (really upon departure from their home airport) at the destination airport. The transport issue is further accentuated when a traveller has to negotiate the transport system to get to a destination region. Barriers highlighted include prolonged

travel time, unknown territories and unfamiliar transport options (train, coach or aeroplane). All of the separate transport options are listed here for completeness. Several options (taxis, hire cars and vans, buses) can apply to mobility once at the destination (and potentially adversely impact on the experience).

**Guidelines for Airports and Air travel:**

- *Convenient drop-off points near main entrances.*
- *Adequate auxiliary services within airports (accessible toilets/ change rooms, phones, autobanks etc.).*
- *Airline flight information dissemination to the hearing and vision impaired.*
- *Airline information management of the needs of people with mobility disabilities.*
- *Offer pricing to reflect the requirements of a carer/attendant.*
- *Airlines offer a Meet and Greet service (Check-in through to departure).*
- *Convey passengers to their seats in the plane by way of sky chairs (a narrow wheelchair which fits along the aisle) and sky or air bridges (bridge to plane door from terminal).*
- *Offer accessible toilet on the flight (this is a facility rarely available).*
- *Ground staff training in the physical handling of people with mobility disabilities.*
- *Seating location.*
- *Availability of seats with retractable arm rests.*
- *Rules and regulations for the carriage of equipment (electric batteries for wheelchairs and oxygen).*
- *Equipment loss and damage.*
- *Retrieval and identification of luggage.*
- *Airline/airport staff disability awareness training towards people with disabilities.*

**Guidelines for Rail:**

- *Barrier Free access to railway stations including car parks, rampways and unisex accessible toilets, baby change facilities.*
- *Assisted ticketing service.*
- *Tactile directional and warning tiles on railway platforms.*
- *Braille signage, and Universal clear signage.*
- *Hearing Loop assistance at railway stations and on trains.*
- *Trained customer assistance.*
- *Portable ramps to access trains.*
- *Spacious seating areas.*
- *On board – long haul – Accessible unisex toilet (with baby change facility).*
- *Universally accessible information (web pages, alternative format brochures).*
- *Dedicated Assistance station service.*

**Guidelines for Buses and Coaches:**

- *Buses or coaches which “kneel” or lower with a ramp which extends providing “roll on/off” access.*
- *Spaces for at least two wheelchairs.*
- *Audio assistance on board.*
- *Trained customer assistance.*
- *Accessible ticketing.*
- *Universally accessible information about the service.*

**Guidelines for Boats and Ferries:**

- *Universally accessible information about the service.*
- *Barrier Free parking/drop off.*
- *Floating pontoon wharves.*
- *Lift to terminal.*
- *Accessible gang way onto vessel.*
- *Trained Customer assistance – administration staff and crew.*
- *Lift access between decks.*
- *Accessible cabins with accessible bathrooms.*

**Guidelines for Taxis:**

- *Universally accessible centralized booking system.*
- *Either roll-in access or lift equipped van.*
- *Lock down points to secure passenger.*
- *Seat belts.*
- *Ability to hail accessible cab.*
- *Trained staff.*

**Guidelines for Hire Cars and Vans:**

- *Either roll-in access or lift equipped.*
- *Fittment of hand controls (free of charge).*
- *Lock down points to secure passenger.*
- *Seat belts.*
- *Centralized booking system.*
- *Accessible information sources.*
- *Provision of accessible tourism information (add value).*

## 4.2 Cultural views of disability

Such views involve factors such as psychosocial, religious, prestige and visibility, empire and ego building, political inequalities, and inappropriate training. These conceptualizations may affect the acceptance of travellers with disabilities in destination regions.

Addressing cultural differences embraces issues of language, religious, societal expectations, family, economic and the need for support, care and assistance. All of these issues apply to both sides of the travel equation; the target market and destination. This is a difficult area to offer specific guidelines as it involves historically ingrained long term religious and societal beliefs and these are often intangible benefits of the tourism experience. An attempt is however offered:

### **Guidelines for Cultural Constraints:**

- *Language barriers can be overcome by providing information in multilingual formats and clear concise signage.*
- *Provision of systematic disability awareness training can seek to explain different religious and societal beliefs or even preconceptions.*
- *Development of tourism experiences designed to meet the needs and constraints of those travellers, for example, budget accommodation not five star.*
- *Provision of care services and equipment hire.*

## 4.3 Economic circumstances

People with disabilities manage budgets as do the majority of travellers. Low employment rates are a factor in the travel decision but more significant are the additional costs associated when travelling with a disability. Best practice is achieved by developing a range of services across the cost spectrum and will best facilitate barrier-free tourism.

**Guidelines for Economic Constraints:**

- *Budget accommodation in addition to 3, 4 and 5 star.*
- *Locally available personal care equipment (shower chairs, commode, hoist, slings, etc.) and personal care supplies.*
- *Locally available Attendant Care.*
- *Accessible public transport, (private transport means extra cost).*
- *Make generic travel accessible (i.e. encourage local tour operators to provide access).*
- *Appropriate pricing policies to encourage the traveller and carer (many people cannot travel without the assistance of an attendant).*

**4.4 Information**

Provision about barrier-free tourism will lead to increased travel. Poor information dissemination is a major weakness of tourism for people with disabilities. It is the most important element in the decision-making process as it is the first step in the process.

In developed nations the Internet is becoming a primary means to collect and disseminate travel information for the general public and people with disabilities. However, the Asia-Pacific region fares poorly when it comes to adopting accessible Internet technologies.

Information provision exists across three key areas: government (national and regional/local), disability and seniors related organizations and Individual operators. All must provide good information to encourage barrier-free travel. One technique available to the three key areas is the Mobility (or Access) Map.

Government tourism authorities play an important role in coordination for the local tourism industry by reducing fragmentation of local tourism, competition between organizations and regional destinations, and assist cooperatively marketing to tourism generating regions. This role of coordinating marketing and promotion should extend to the collection, marketing and dissemination of barrier-free travel information (even to superseding independent travel guides). The collation of information on

barrier-free tourism product is one of the easiest ways for national tourism organizations to begin the process of establishing a new market segment campaign.

**Guidelines for government information:**

- *In playing its role of coordinating the tourism industry, government should develop a strategy to document available barrier-free tourism product.*
- *That information should be made available on an internet site.*
- *National coverage.*
- *Include accessibility features (Bobby, W3C, TTY).*
- *The site should include a multilingual option (targetted to originating source e.g. National language and English).*
- *Include Searchable databases for “Disability” or “Disabled” (not Handicap).*
- *Independent research.*
- *Convey detailed information (graphics and measurements present detail), sufficient to enable the user to make a positive decision to travel, under the following (main) categories:*
  - *Transport.*
  - *Accommodation.*
  - *Attractions, and*
  - *Assistance (equipment hire, care etc.).*
- *Include Mobility Maps.*
- *If printed the format should be a spiral bound books which are easy for people with limited dexterity.*
- *Larger print, readable by people with sight impairment.*
- *Downloadable information as pdf.*

## 4.5 Disability and seniors

Organizations provide information (amongst other services) to their constituents and members. Information is often organizationally specific, for example organizations whose members use wheelchairs won't provide much information about sight impairment.

### **Guidelines for Organization Information:**

- *Dedicated information sources with national coverage or specific coverage (regional).*
- *Site should be multilingual.*
- *Searchable sites offering direct links to providers.*
- *Offers articles and information.*
- *W3C/Bobby compliant.*
- *Searchable resulting in some detailed information but definitions must be precise.*

## 4.6 Individual operators

Operators are simply seeking to market and promote a product, accommodation or service, the more information they provide and the greater the detail the better.

### **Guidelines for Individual Operators:**

- *Accessible pathways.*
- *Accessible parking.*
- *Accessible toilets.*
- *Accessible entry points.*
- *Use of graphics and pictures demonstrating good access provision.*
- *Mobility maps.*
- *Pricing policy.*
- *Availability and provision of assistance.*

## 4.7 Mobility maps

These maps can convey a great deal of information in a very compact form (hardcopy) or be downloadable or offer detail when “zoomable”. Good mobility maps contain key pieces of information to the user. They can describe access in a city streetscape, botanic garden, park, zoo or other attraction like a theme park.

### **Guidelines for Mobility Maps:**

- *Specific area coverage.*
- *Accessible pathways.*
- *Identification of key features; crossovers (kerb ramps/cuts), audio traffic signals.*
- *Icons locating accessible toilets, on-street accessible car parking, off-street accessible car parking.*
- *Identification of gradients.*
- *Buildings and features of interest.*
- *Entrances to railway stations, buildings, features of interest.*
- *Major taxi rank, tram and bus stops.*
- *Public seating, accessible drinking fountains, etc.*
- *Location of Police or assistance.*
- *Accessible telephone and TTY.*

## 4.8 Accessible accommodation

If a traveller cannot find barrier-free accommodation then he/she will not travel to the destination region. Many accommodation operators do not understand what *accessible or barrier-free* accommodation entails. In addition there are varying definitions (country to country) about what constitutes accessible accommodation. A good example is the Japanese experience where baths are the norm but in Australia wheel-in showers are preferred.

**Guidelines for Accommodation:**

- *Web site should be multilingual with Information describing access.*
- *Car parking, transport access.*
- *Accommodation should include level entry, lift or ramped access.*
- *Access to reception, room, restaurant, other facilities.*
- *Circulation space.*
- *Accessible kitchen details are required.*
- *Accessible bathroom details are required.*
- *Detailed Information employing measurements diagrams (floorplans) and photographs.*
- *Facilities, for example swimming pool grade or hoist equipped.*
- *Mobility map.*
- *Additional services like equipment, hoists shower chairs, etc.*
- *Availability of attendant care.*

**4.9 Activities**

Tourism activities such as theme park, eating at a local café, visiting a museum or gallery or seeing a cultural dance are many and varied. Each has a unique set of barrier-free tourism issues and some issues are common to all: information, physical access and accessible toilet.

**Guidelines for Activities:**

- *Web site should offer multilingual information.*
- *Information describing access should include alternative formats TTY/Bobby/W3C.*
- *Boats – floating pontoon, roll on/off access, toilet accessible.*
- *Personal assistance.*
- *Access maps showing barrier-free pathways, accessible toilets, etc.*
- *Strollers and wheelchairs for hire/borrowing.*
- *Pricing policy to encourage people with disabilities/carers/ attendants.*
- *Brochures or services guides for people with disabilities, containing information to assist people determining whether an element of the attraction is appropriate.*
- *Accessible transport.*
- *Tactile exhibits, braille and sensory information.*
- *Braille or sensory trails.*
- *Appropriate viewing areas (see through barriers at zoo enclosures, barrier height).*
- *Accessible café's, theatres, souvenir shops (profit centres).*

**4.10 Tour operators**

Assisting tour operators develop the barrier-free tourism industry can provide a bridge between existing attractions and a developing transport infrastructure by providing a range of services to people with varying needs (physical, sensory, intellectual/learning).

**Guidelines for Tour Operators:**

- *Information Internet formats/multilingual.*
- *Licensed travel agent.*
- *Complete advisory/booking service.*
- *Offer tourism experience in line with access requirements.*
- *Design and conducting guided tours across a range of activities and experiences.*
- *Convenient scheduling (departure and arrival hours).*
- *Employ accessible vehicles.*
- *Engage supply attendants.*
- *Supply or arrange hire appropriate equipment.*

## 5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The discussion has moved forward from the issues of human rights for people with disabilities to recognize that they now represent a specific market segment for barrier-free tourism. Like all market segments, this one has its own set of needs, wants and desires. The overriding need is for good information, followed by its wanting good barrier-free access and its desire for an exhilarating stimulating experience just like all other travellers.

This market has been emerging in various parts of the world for at least a decade now, but the tourism industry has not yet focussed on this group as a market. Yet it has targetted “Seniors Tourism”. The link between Senior Tourism and Barrier-Free Tourism has been demonstrated. Due consideration should be made of the relationship between ageing and disability. Keroul and others have identified the existence of “a Market of Millions” of people who experience reduced functioning, and yet they could still and want to travel even more than they already are if the products, services, destinations were adequately adapted to their needs.

There is a definite lack of statistical data as it relates to Barrier-Free Tourism. However global research does tell us that East Asia and the Pacific Region registered the highest growth rate from 1999 to 2000 both in terms of receipts (9.6 per cent) and of international tourist arrivals (12.7 per cent). In addition many of the countries subjected in this study receive a significant number of tourists from the countries identified as top tourism spenders such as (United States of America, Germany, United Kingdom, Japan, France, Italy, China, the Netherlands and Canada). Oceania is tipped to grow ahead of the world average over the next decade. How does it achieve this when a large proportion of its arrivals from the west, is exhibiting an ageing population with an increasing number of people with disabilities?

The potential for barrier-free tourism in the Asia-Pacific region comes from two sources. First, it generates from countries of origin where there are millions of people with disabilities, like United States of America with a disabled population of 52.7 million; Canada with 4.7 million; United Kingdom with 10.8 million; Germany with 14.2 million; and France with 9 million. This makes total of 91.4 million of additional travellers to the region. Second, from countries in the Asia-Pacific region where numbers of people with disabilities have become significant. These are Australia with

3.6 million of disabled people; New Zealand with 700,000; China with 6.2 million; India with 47.2 million; Thailand with 500,000; and Sri Lanka with 100,000. This represents a total of 114.3 million potential travellers available within the region. Japan is not included as relevant statistical data was not available.

Travel by senior citizens is a well-established market. It should be recognized, however, that the demand for barrier-free travel is being recognized and driven by the more economically developed nations of the world: United States of America; Canada; United Kingdom; Germany; Japan; Hong Kong, China; Singapore; Australia and New Zealand. Yet the industry is grappling with the issues and myths that surround tourism for people with disabilities.

This study started to debunk those myths, and identified people with disabilities as having the same motivations to travel as the rest of the community but facing a range of constraints and barriers that impede their tourism desires.

In Chapter 3, good examples of barrier-free tourism practice were identified based on internet searching. There may well be other examples of good barrier-free practice available but which did not reveal themselves during the research phase. This underscores the importance of information in the barrier free travel decision making process. If the information is not easily available, the potential traveller cannot make a positive decision to travel.

A series of guidelines of good tourism barrier-free practice was presented. These offer governments, destination marketers, accommodation providers, transport operators and those responsible for planning destination regions to be positive and proactive in:

- a) removing the disabling barriers faced by travellers with disabilities, and
- b) ensuring new product, buildings, transport and destinations/attractions are available to 100 per cent of the potential travelling public.

In doing so, they will create a competitive advantage for their destination through developing a barrier-free approach to this emerging market segment.

In the document entitled *Barrier-Free Tourism For People With Disabilities In The ESCAP Region* (prepared by the ESCAP secretariat and presented at the Asia-Pacific Conference on Tourism for People with Disability held in Bali, Indonesia in 2000) and attachments a perceptive comment was made before offering several recommendations (See Annexes 1 and 2) “...majority of tourism service providers in the ESCAP region do not, as yet, understand the economic and social significance of early action to create barrier-free tourism”. The majority of the recommendations from that document and requests made by Bali Declaration are relevant and should serve as a first step to any governments looking to encourage or facilitate barrier-free tourism.

In this context, both governments and the tourism authorities should focus their attention to the following broad strategic areas:

1. Disability Rights Legislation.
2. The Built Environment (building standards, enforcement).
3. Existing barrier-free tourism product:
  - transportation
  - accommodation
  - tourism sites and services, and
  - tour programmes
4. Information.
5. Training.

**Annex I**

**ASIA-PACIFIC CONFERENCE  
ON TOURISM FOR  
PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY**

**24-28 September 2000  
Grand Bali Beach Hotel  
Bali – Indonesia**

**BARRIER-FREE TOURISM FOR  
PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES  
IN THE ESCAP REGION**

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Jointly prepared and presented by the Social Development Division and the Transport, Communications, Tourism and Infrastructure Development Division of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission of Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). This paper has been issued without formal editing.

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Tourism is a rapidly growing industry in the Asian and Pacific region and people with disabilities and older persons are becoming a growing group of consumers of travel, sports, and other leisure-oriented products and services. Thus large numbers of people require tourism to be made barrier-free. Indeed, good access will benefit not only people with disabilities, but also many other members of the community, especially senior citizens. Although the number of tourists who would benefit from accessible facilities and services are on the increase, most tourism providers have still not yet recognized the importance of taking action on this issue.

People with disability have a right to, and do want to enjoy travel leisure experiences. However, their travel experiences are still characterized by transportation constraints, inaccessible accommodation and tourism sites, and inadequate customer services. If professionals of tourism industry are to succeed in accessing these potential new markets, they must understand the needs involved and learn how to respond to these challenges for the benefit of both the tourism industry and people with disabilities. One crucial element in meeting this goal is the existence of a legal framework, which ensures that persons with disabilities have the right to access tourism facilities and services and to encourage tourism professionals to adopt related measures. It is also essential that the tourism industry improve its service to people with disabilities

Notwithstanding the number of initiatives already pursued by countries in the Asian and Pacific region to make tourism barrier-free for people with disabilities, there are three key issues that require immediate attention.

- (a) The formulation and implementation of related legislation in order to protect the right of persons with disabilities to accessible facilities and environment;
- (b) Education and training on awareness and sensitivity to disability issues; and
- (c) Provision of accessible facilities in the tourism sector.

## INTRODUCTION

1. Tourism is a rapidly growing industry in the Asian and Pacific region. Following the trauma of the recent Asian financial crisis, the region has regained its status as one of the world's fastest growing destinations. As reported by the World Tourism Organization (WTO), the Asian and Pacific region, after two years of decreasing tourist arrivals, registered in 1999 a growth rate of 7.5 per cent reaching a new record of more than 94 million international tourists. It is also expected that such a positive trend will continue into the early years of the new millennium.

2. Tourists, today are not content with staying within the confines of a resort hotel compound, being bussed to individual sites and entertained in places that mainly cater to tourists. Instead, tourists are increasingly interested in experiencing diversity of holiday environment in all aspects, including its people, culture, nature, architecture and way of life.<sup>3</sup> This trend will be even more marked as consumers become better informed about options and entitlements, as well as more sophisticated and less willing to accept poor quality facilities and services that entail discomfort and stress. Tourists want access to everything that a city or a country has to offer. In view of the changing consumer demand, tourism for all is an increasingly important sales argument in a competitive market. At the same time, it can serve as an effective tool in furthering the human rights of people with disabilities in the destination communities.

3. People with disabilities and older persons are becoming a growing group of consumers of travel, sports, and other leisure-oriented products and services. Furthermore, with regard to physical access, families with young children, who are also becoming part of this increasing tourist market, have similar needs to persons with disabilities and older persons. Thus large numbers of people require tourism to be made barrier-free.

4. Although the number of tourists who would benefit from accessible facilities and services is on the increase, most tourism services providers in the ESCAP region have still not yet recognized the importance of taking action on this issue. Most hotels, transportation facilities and tourist sites

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<sup>3</sup> *Source:* personal communication with Adolf Ratzka, Director, Institute on Independent Living, Stockholm, August 2000.

are not physically accessible for many people with disabilities and older persons. Their staff members have not been trained to provide disabled person-friendly services. This is associated with an absence of explicit government policies and strategies for promotion of accessible tourism, lack of training for tourism service personnel on means of meeting the access needs of tourists with disabilities, and shortage of tourism programmes that address such needs.

5. The above-mentioned situation occurs in a unique regional context. The ESCAP region is the only region in the world whose governments have made a collective commitment to improving the lives of persons with disabilities by addressing their marginalization issues. To do so, the governments of the Asian and Pacific region declared the period 1993-2002 as the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons. This regional initiative focuses on promoting the inclusion of persons with disabilities in mainstream society and in all mainstream development programmes.

6. The urgent need to promote universal access to transport and tourism is a twenty-first century issue. In recognizing its emergence, the Commission, on its fifty-six session (June 2000), requested the secretariat to support such activities that would benefit persons with disabilities and older persons. In this regard, there is a need for the secretariat to extend technical assistance in the promotion of the concept of universal design in tourism so that ESCAP region may lead in tourism infrastructure, facilities and services that, from their very inception, aim to accommodate all consumers. This preemptive approach of promoting “tourism for all” is critical if the tourism industry of the ESCAP region is to maintain its competitive edge in a changing and increasingly sophisticated world tourism market.

## **I. DISABILITY AND ACCESS**

7. Present policies and programmes suffer from a dearth of disability data and inadequacy of existing data. In the majority of the countries and areas of the ESCAP region, it is difficult to estimate the number of people with disabilities. There is a wide variation in the estimated disability rates reported by the developed and developing countries. The variation depends, to a large extent, on the definitions of disability used. The types of disability range from hearing, vision, and mobility impairment to intellectual impairment and psychiatric disorders. For example, Australia’s 1993 survey indicated that persons with a disability comprise 18 per cent of its population.

New Zealand's first national household survey (1996) yielded a disability rate of 19.1. In 1994, the United States Census Bureau estimated that some 54 million Americans were covered under the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) of 1990, constituting nearly 21 per cent of the United States population. In contrast, China's (1987) and Pakistan's (1984-85) sample surveys both indicated a 4.9 per cent disability rate. The 1991 National Sample Survey of India, covering four disabilities – visual, hearing, speech and locomotor – yielded a prevalence rate of 1.9 per cent.<sup>4</sup>

8. The share of the older people in the populations of developed countries is already rising dramatically. The same phenomenon is occurring in developing countries. According to United Nations projections, by the year 2025, about 14 per cent of the ESCAP region's total population will be 60 years or older, and the region will be home to 56 per cent of the world's older persons. Among older persons, a significant percentage presents some type of disability. For example, in Western Australia over 50 per cent of people over 60 years of age have a disability.<sup>5</sup>

9. It is now widely recognized from many quarters that people with disabilities, together with carers, friends and relatives, and older persons constitute a large potential consumer market segment for the tourism and hospitality industry. However, to take advantage of this potential niche market will depend on how the tourism sector as a whole and the tourism industry in particular will address the issue of tourism accessibility for people with disabilities. Indeed good access will benefit not only people with disabilities, but also many other members of the community, especially senior citizens.

10. Access varies depending on disability and goes well beyond the physical type alone. Darcy (1998)<sup>6</sup> has characterized access from three main dimensions:

- (a) **Physical access** which involves people with physical disabilities requiring the use of wheelchairs or walking aids and requires

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<sup>4</sup> ESCAP, *Asia and the Pacific into the Twenty-first Century: Prospects for Social Development* (ST/ESCAP/1887) Part II, Chapter VI: Prospects for persons with disabilities – page 241.

<sup>5</sup> Disability Service Commission (1998) *accessing new markets: customers with disabilities*. West Perth. Western Australia.

<sup>6</sup> S. Darcy (1998). *Anxiety to access: tourism patterns and experiences of NSW people with physical disability*. Tourism NSW, Sydney, NSW.

the provision of, for example, handrails, ramps, lifts and lowered counters.

- (b) **Sensory access** which involves people with hearing or sight impairments requiring the provision of, for example, tactile markings, signs, labels, hearing augmentation-listening systems and audio cues for lifts and lights.
- (c) **Communication access**, which involves those people who have difficulty with the written word, vision, speech, and hearing impairment of persons from other culture.

11. In one way or another, all travellers who move out of their familiar surroundings are handicapped by new environments, the exciting aspects notwithstanding. Thus, the degree of sensitivity, clarity, safety and convenience required in designing tourism facilities from the perspective of disabled travellers will benefit everyone else. It is more important to understand that except for an exceptional few Olympic champion-types in the general population, most tourists have gradations of physical or sensory or communication access difficulties or combinations of these. For example, parents and grandparents who have to push baby prams and toddler strollers need to have ramp access. Suitcases and cabin bags on wheels are almost standard travel gear for most people. Tourists with babies have the same toilet space requirements for changing nappies, as do wheelchair users. It makes good business sense to create ramp access to facilitate the use of shopping carts and trolleys. The less stressed tourist would be more willing to spend on pleasurable activities and to return on subsequent visits.

## **II. MAIN CONSTRAINTS OF DISABLED TRAVELLERS**

12. People with disabilities have a right to, and do want to enjoy travel and leisure experiences. Tourism is a means of broadening horizons and developing friendships for a social group, which increasingly is less willing to remain segregated from mainstream society. Furthermore, as more people acquire disabilities or survive with disabilities, they too wish to enjoy travel, just like everyone else. However, their travel experiences are still characterized by transportation constraints, inaccessible accommodation and tourism sites, and inadequate customer services.

## **A. Transportation**

13. While air travel in general has become easier and airlines increasingly provide friendly services to the average travellers, still some problems arise from time to time, such as misplaced luggage or delays in flight schedules. However, these mishaps might seriously inconvenience travellers with disability. For example, an issue among some travellers with disabilities is the damage to and loss of wheelchairs on airplanes. Indeed, being without one's wheelchair is much more distressing than having the misfortune of lost or delayed luggage for the average travellers. Other constraints facing wheelchair-travellers include the difficulty of boarding and disembarking the aircraft, changing flights and the inaccessibility of airplane restrooms. For blind people, identifying and retrieving luggage becomes another additional obstacle in the course of their already difficult journey. The pain of long-haul travel in air economy class seat for someone with stiff limbs or arthritis, the sheer size of modern airports for those with mobility problems and endless forward planning for all are some of the challenges still facing travellers with disabilities.

14. Despite such frustrations, improvements have been, and continue to be, made to airports designs through the introduction of greater areas of level access, help phones, induction loops for the hearing impaired, easy access toilets and other infrastructures adjustments. While legislative pressure can help enforce accessibility in airports, airlines on the other hand operate their own policies regarding the provision of services to travellers with disabilities. However, many airlines have adopted measures catering to the special needs of travellers with disabilities. For example, some aircraft are specially equipped with on-board aislechairs – skychairs – narrow enough to move down the aisles and into the lavatory. Assistance is available free of charge at both departure and arrival to help these disabled passengers on and off the plane as well as to and from the airport terminals. This is standard procedure in most countries. Passengers receive a code when booking the flight or checking in. The Code informs the staff about the passenger's needs in reaching the aircraft seat. "WCHC" for example means passenger cannot walk, uses own wheelchair and needs to be carried on board to the aircraft seat. Moreover, some airlines are computerizing such information to spare frequent disabled travellers the trouble of repeating at each stage of the journey their special needs. As the market for disabled travellers expands, all airlines should adapt their policies and practices to efficiently anticipate and meet the requirements of people with disabilities.

15. Most travellers negotiate structural constraints associated with air travel by using other modes of transportation – car, bus or train. Private automobiles equipped with customized features have the advantage of providing schedule flexibility if used for pleasure travel. However, only a small group of affluent people with disability can afford such cars. Modern technology greatly facilitates bus travel by people with disabilities. People with physical disabilities can now journey in buses equipped with hydraulic lifts, which help them to board easily. So-called low-floor buses are gradually becoming the standard for intra-urban public transportation in a growing number of countries. These buses have the floor some 50 cm above street level. They feature a hydraulic “kneeling” function, which reduces the step to some 25 cm. The European Union (EU) is currently working on a directive that, among others, would prescribe ramps and lifting platforms, in addition to the low-floor and kneeling features, in all new purchased buses throughout the EU. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 already prescribes lifting platforms for all intra-city buses. However, in most developing countries the availability of such specially designed buses remains limited. While trains could better accommodate disabled persons travel needs, often the gap between car doors and the platform are too wide. The major constraints, especially for people with physical disability and wheelchair users, lie with the difficult access to toilets and compartments.

16. As new designs for trains, planes and buses are created and produced, there is every reason to ensure that toilets are larger and easier to use than it is the case today. Usually those travelling alone bring with them their essential luggage when they use toilet facilities. Even for this reason it would be essential to expand toilet space. The transportation sector of the tourism industry needs to take the necessary action to remove these physical barriers. Even better, facilities should be designed from the very beginning with the aim of accommodating all users without the need of “special” solution.

## **B. Accommodations**

17. Reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities constitute still another set of challenges. For example, very few hotels offer accessible disabled person-friendly rooms with wider entrances; low-level switches, hand dryers, towels racks and beds; chair lifts and room information written in simple and concise language for people with cognitive disabilities. Interestingly, the standard design used for many hotel rooms in the ESCAP

region does not reflect the anthropomorphic measurements of shorter travellers in Asia but those of six-foot tall persons who are perhaps not in the majority of people within the region who travel. Of the rooms available, few have ground floor access. Access throughout hotels is also problematic. Few hotels have lifts to all floors on slow timers, access to reception, pool and bar areas, clear signage, visual alarms and clear access through the entire building. While the majority of hotels provide special parking areas, often these are uncovered and quite distant from the main hotel entrances, requiring that steps be negotiated in order to access the buildings.

18. Another issue in the field of accommodation facilities and amenities concerns the different types of disability to be provided for. Indeed the needs for people with vision or hearing impairment or intellectual disability are quite different from those with physical disability. Most of the hotels provide facilities and amenities responding more to the special needs of people with physical disabilities and specifically those in wheelchairs. For example, among hotels that offer wheelchair access, few provide information available in Braille or in audiovisual format.

19. Many travellers with disabilities find facilities at eating and drinking establishments within tourist destination areas to be difficult to access. Some others encounter problems when making hotel reservations. It was observed that in some hotels, specific accessible rooms even when available, could not be reserved by an individual. In some other instances, some room accommodations, which were promoted as accessible rooms, actually appeared to be inaccessible to people with disabilities. For example, showers with handrails may well accommodate some people, but for many wheelchair users, bathtubs present a major barrier.

20. Accommodation providers need to increase their awareness of accessibility standards as well as examine their own policies governing general accessibility measures to room design and reservation procedures. Most staff at hotels and other related establishments would benefit from additional training in sensitivity and awareness regarding travellers with disabilities.

### **C. Tourism sites**

21. Attractions are the elements of a tourism destination that stimulate the purpose of a journey and visit. They may be of a leisure-type, such as visiting theme parks or participating in sport events; nature-based, such as sea-side tourism or mountain trekking; historical, such as visiting museums or antique shopping; or socio-cultural, such as festivals or visiting friends or relatives. Most of the constraints encountered by tourists with disabilities in the course of these activities focus on site inaccessibility. For example, beaches are often not equipped to accommodate wheelchair users. Similarly, poor access to museums, historical monuments or shopping areas restricts people with disabilities from enjoying the opportunity of participating in these activities as much as their counterparts without disabilities can.

22. Tourism site providers need to look closer into this particular issue and efforts should be made to enhance accessibility to tourism sites. On the other hand, people with disabilities should also ask for as much information as possible about the site accessibility of their intended travel destinations.

### **D. Travel planning**

23. For people with disabilities, planning a vacation can be somewhat more complicated. Depending on the type of disability, the would-be travellers need to ensure that during the envisaged vacation due attention will be made to their special needs such as special lifts for coaches and adapted hotel rooms. Such arrangements cannot be made without the assistance of travel agencies that cater to those special needs.

24. As over the past several years, accessible tourism shows promising sign of expansion, tour operators have started to appreciate the potential of a market that has traditionally been poorly served. However, tailoring packages to people with various disabilities requires labour-intensive work, making therefore a low-margin business. Yet specialized agents, especially in Europe, are joining forces through transnational association to exchange information, set up data banks, launch joint marketing campaigns and lobby for better services. At the same time, specialized European travel agents and non-profit organizations have been cooperating by pooling what they have learned about the availability of special facilities in various countries. For example, Mobility International, a non-profit organization supporting independent living for people with disabilities, opened a division devoted to

tourism in the early 1990s. That effort generated the establishment of a series of nationally-based organizations that serve as clearing houses providing basic information, such as detailed maps of accessible city tours or lists of hotels with accessible rooms. The European Commission published in 1997 a guide offering advice to mainstream tour operators interested in tapping the accessible tourism market. There are a number of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), which are dedicated to promoting tourism for all. For example, one such NGOs proposes a programme of “Accessible Vacation Home Exchange”, offering home-swap in such destinations as France, Egypt, United Kingdom or Canada. Over 100 participants have joined this home-swap programme, listing the accessible features of their homes and dates they wish to travel. Out of them, there are entries from Australia, India, New Zealand and Thailand.<sup>7</sup>

### **III. CONDITIONS TOWARDS BARRIER-FREE TOURISM FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

25. People with disabilities are being acknowledged as a consumer group of travel, sports, and other leisure-oriented products and services. If professionals of the tourism industry are to succeed in accessing this potential new market, they must understand the needs involved and learn how to respond to these challenges for the benefit of both parties.

#### **A. Legislation framework**

26. One crucial element in meeting this goal is the existence of a legal framework, which ensures that people with disabilities have the right to access to tourism facilities and services and to encourage tourism professionals to adopt related measures. Several governments in the region have passed comprehensive legislation to protect the rights of persons with disabilities. Others are in various stages of adoption, formulation and planning such legislation. Those countries, which have already adopted such legislation, enacted additional laws and regulations or amended existing one to further protect the rights of persons with disabilities in specific areas crucial to the equalization of opportunities. Among these are numerous regulations revised to include mandatory requirements for the implementation

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<sup>7</sup> For detailed information see the newsletter published by the Institute of Independent Living at [www.independentliving.org](http://www.independentliving.org)

of specific measures covering areas such as access to the built-environment and public transport, positive mass media portrayal of persons with disabilities, and closed captioning (for deaf persons).

27. For example, in Australia the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA) and the Disability Service Act 1993, plus various other State legislation, require departments, public authorities and the tourism industry to ensure that people with disabilities have the same fundamental rights as the rest of the community. Furthermore, the Disability Service Act 1993 specifically relates to access to appropriate accommodation and services and allows people with disabilities the opportunity to make decisions, which affect their life. Tourism providers are subject to all requirements of both acts, which means that all premises, goods and services used by the public must be accessible to people with disabilities. Failure to provide equal access is illegal; unless otherwise proven it causes unjustifiable difficulties such as excessive cost.

28. Legislation on access should also apply to a variety of public areas and services – including information services – such as travel agents, cafes, restaurants, libraries, transport, shops, theatres and other places of entertainment. Accordingly, related information needs to be provided to people with disabilities. Lack of proper physical access to transport, buildings and sites will not only exclude people with disabilities from participating in community life but also affect tourism and leisure providers. In this connection, an appropriate legislation would indeed help to design an air travel transportation system able to remove barriers to travel for people with disabilities. In Australia, the Air Carrier Access Act (1986) ensures that no air carrier might discriminate against disabled persons in the provision of air transportation. This Act represents a major advance towards a comprehensive adaptive air travel system for people with disabilities.

29. One great challenge regarding legislation implementation is the provision of information to tourism professionals, such as for instance hospitality providers, of the key relevant legislation relating to people with disabilities and their obligations under the legislation. According to the findings of a survey<sup>8</sup> recently conducted, the majority of the hospitality

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<sup>8</sup> Martin O'Neil, Edith Cowan University (W.A. Perth) and Jane Ali Knight, Curtin University (W.A. Perth), "Accessing the Disability Tourism Dollar – An Evaluation of Current Awareness and Provision by Hotel Enterprises in Western Australia", paper presented at the Sixth Asia Pacific Tourism Association Annual Conference, Phuket, Thailand, 28 June – 1 July 2000.

providers interviewed in Western Australia stated that they were not aware of any specific legislation regarding issues of access for people with disabilities. This was further supported by representatives from disability agencies that there is a general lack of awareness on these issues. There is also evidence that most of the laws enacted lack of any credible legislative power, due to low enforcement.

## **B. Tourism services providers**

30. To fully harness the potential of barrier-free tourism, it is essential that the tourism industry improve its services to people with disabilities. This includes access improvement of hotel facilities within all areas of the property to the entire disabled community including those with physical, sensory and communication disabilities. For example, particular attention should be made to provide people with physical disabilities with a clear accessible route to the main entrance of an establishment and then to the reception desk. Similarly, persons with sight or hearing impairments need to be provided for with adequate facilities to facilitate their free mobility within the premises. Accessible rooms should also be made available and designed with features, which can accommodate wheelchair users as well as people with sight and hearing impairments.

31. In the area of transportation, efforts need to be pursued in upgrading and improving the level of facilities for people with disabilities. Accessible transportation features, such as toilets in airplanes, are fundamental requirements for barrier-free travel. Airport authorities should ensure that basic accessible infrastructure adjustments for people with disabilities be included in the design of new and/or renovated airports, such as the introduction of greater areas of level access as well as the provision of easy access to toilets.

32. Travel operators that specialize in services for, and provide tailoring packages to, people with disabilities are instrumental in assisting them with their vacation planning. They are able to provide with the information regarding the availability of accessible facilities suited to their needs. People with disabilities are more likely to rely on tourism professionals, such as specific travel agents and hotels that best serve their needs. It is therefore imperative that specific barrier-free tourism promotional activities be undertaken by travel agents in close cooperation with other professionals of the tourism industry such as hospitality providers. Disability organizations

may also contribute to these promotional efforts by drawing the attention of the tourism industry to the needs and desires of the people with disabilities, especially with regard to flexibility in travel options.

### **C. Training and education**

33. Training and education is one of the major challenges facing the tourism industry in relation to meeting the needs of people with disabilities. Sensitive and willing staff with the right attitude and strong interpersonal skills can overcome many of the barriers that persons with disabilities face and turn what may be perceived as an inaccessible property into a accessible one.<sup>9</sup> It is essential that the tourism industry strengthen its customer services training in order to serve those with disabilities. Indeed, regardless of how well an establishment has been designed to accommodate people with disabilities or how well policies have been formulated to cater to the needs of disabled travellers, it will be of little value if the staff employed are uncomfortable and ill-prepared serving guests with disabilities. Comprehensive programmes should include policy setters and managers as well as front-line staff and should be extended at all levels, especially within tertiary level hospitality management programmes.

34. The availability of specialized tour guides is another important factor for people with disabilities, especially those with sight and hearing impairments to enable them to enjoy tourism activities. Efforts should be made to develop and strengthen appropriate specialized tour-guiding courses in training curricula on tourism management and related tourism services.

## **IV. PRIORITY AREAS FOR PROMOTION OF BARRIER-FREE TOURISM**

35. Over the past few years, accessible tourism is gradually taking shape and becoming a recognized necessary feature within tourism development efforts. People with disabilities and older persons are now regarded as a potential growing market for tourism. Despite the increasing global-level attention to disability and accessibility for disabled persons, in developing countries of the Asian and Pacific region travellers with disabilities are still confronted with obstacles and constraints: conditions which constitute

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<sup>9</sup> A.N. Vladimir (1998) "Is there Hospitality for Disabled Travelers?" FIU Hospitality Review, Vol. 16 No. 2: 13-21.

barriers to disabled persons' freedom of movement. Consequently, the tourism industry needs to address a number of related issues, which will help promote barrier-free tourism. These include, among others, better familiarization with accessibility issues and thereby the development of policies that are barrier-free, the strengthening of its training programmes to provide disabled persons with friendly services, and the development of promotional activities.

36. Notwithstanding the number of initiatives already pursued by countries in the region to make tourism barrier-free for people with disabilities, there are three key issues that require immediate attention.

37. One key area is the formulation and implementation of related legislation in order to protect the right of persons with disabilities to accessible facilities and environment. Countries should be encouraged to continue developing such legislation as well as introduce new amendments in keeping with changes in the tourism sector, including travel conditions, and the specific situations of different disability groups. While it is essential that legislation needs to be reviewed in a continuous manner, it is imperative that members of the tourism industry be informed of their obligations and operational implications in order to protect not only their interest, but also the interests of the people with disabilities. Of equal importance is the role of the various disability bodies and organizations, which must begin to work closely with the tourism industry to improve existing practices. The organizations are well acquainted with and knowledgeable about various disability issues. They should assist the tourism industry in introducing the necessary changes required under the legislation and to assist in the organization of related staff training programmes.

38. Education and training on awareness and sensitivity to disability issues is another top priority area in the promotion of accessible tourism. The education sector should be encouraged to include in their training curricula on tourism management and related tourism services courses on "disabled persons' right to access" as well as "customer services to, and relations with, people with disabilities". Here again, the close collaboration between the disability organizations and the tourism industry along with the education sector would facilitate the development of required training programmes. It would also help in the publication of training material, such as facilitative guide, student handbook and audio-visual training support, for wider distribution amongst the tourism industry.

39. Provision of accessible facilities is by far the most important area of concern for achieving a barrier-free tourism for people with disabilities. Taking into consideration that it is highly unrealistic to presume that the situation would change overnight due to cost and time limitations, what is required in the short-term is that the tourism sector strives to achieve a reasonable level of accessibility, which balances disabled users needs, the constraints of existing conditions and the resource available for such adjustments. In many cases, this relates to the issue of physical access such as main hotel entrance access, appropriate access ramp, reception counters, disability friendly rooms, access to and location to all public areas. In the long-term, the approach will be to encourage major restructuring and/or refurbishment of hospitality establishments and tourism sites.

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## **Annex II**

### **ASIA-PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON TOURISM FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY**

**24-28 September 2000**

**Bali, Indonesia**

#### **I. RECOMMENDATIONS**

##### **A. Issues**

People with disabilities and older persons are growing groups and consumers of tourism services. Families with young children are beginning to travel more. These three groups have similar needs for accessible tourism. However, the majority of tourism service providers in the ESCAP region do not, as yet, understand the economic and social significance of early action to create barrier-free tourism.

The built environment (buildings, streets, parks, public transportation and communication infrastructure) has a major impact on the quality of tourism experience, especially concerning its safety, convenience, efficiency and enjoyment aspects. There is insufficient integration of the planning and development of the built environment and tourism development, both within and across countries.

To create tourism that caters to the full range of consumer needs, there is a need to improve the useability of transportation, accommodation, tourism sites and services, and tour programmes.

##### **B. Promotion of tourism for all**

###### **1. Guiding principles**

Persons with disabilities have equal right of access to all tourism infrastructure, products and services, including employment opportunities and benefits that the tourism industry can provide. The tourism industry should provide the same choices for all consumers to ensure the full

participation of persons with disabilities, and protection of the individual's right to travel with dignity.

Tourism master plans, policies and programmes should incorporate the principle of universal access to tourism infrastructure, products and services. Furthermore, access improvement in tourism benefits many other groups, including older persons and families with young children. The inclusion of universal design in tourism development can create environments, products and services that are useable by a wide spectrum of consumers, irrespective of their experience, knowledge, skills, age, gender, as well as their physical, sensory, communication and cognitive abilities. Thus the spirit of barrier-free tourism means the reduction of all physical and non-physical barriers and dangers so that they do not adversely affect tourism experiences and activities.

With regard to tourism access improvement, it is important for all concerned to take into consideration the rights and needs of diverse user groups, including single disability groups, persons with multiple disabilities, and women and girls with disabilities.

## **2. Strategic actions**

### **(a) People with disabilities and disabled persons' organizations should:**

- (1) Develop empowerment programmes focusing on skills for advocacy and negotiation with the tourism industry.
- (2) Acquire skills in appraising tourism facilities, programmes and services, and in recommending action to raise their quality, as appropriate.
- (3) Learn to conduct access surveys.
- (4) Document and share information on the quality of tourism components and user experiences (accommodation, transportation, tourism sites and services, tour programmes, and information and communications systems).
- (5) Create local access guides and maps for in-country and foreign visitors.

- (6) Serve as resource persons or advisors to training institutions and policy-making bodies concerned with tourism services.
- (7) Communicate rights and needs in an effective manner to people encountered in the course of travel, especially those who are unaware and inexperienced concerning disabled persons or discriminatory in their behaviour.
- (8) Strengthen craft production and marketing skills among persons with disabilities as an economically viable interface with the tourism industry.
- (9) Support disabled persons in acquiring training and employment in the tourism industry.

**(b) Government authorities should:**

- (1) Train immigration officers and ministry of foreign affairs staff concerned with visa applications on disabled person-friendly procedures to be observed in a systematic manner.
- (2) Work towards uniform disabled person-friendly immigration procedures at the subregional level.
- (3) Improve the accessibility of immigration offices to facilitate travel document application by all tourists, including tourists with disabilities.
- (4) Exempt from customs duty all assistive devices required by disabled persons for supporting their activities of daily living, including computers required by blind persons.
- (5) Update annually a list of items that should be exempted from customs duty.
- (6) Simplify customs clearance procedures for all assistive devices required by disabled persons for supporting their activities of daily living, including computers required by blind persons.
- (7) Train customs officers on ways of communicating with disabled persons, especially with deaf and hard of hearing persons.

**(c) Tourism service providers should:**

- (1) Develop in-house programmes to raise awareness, sensitivity and skill levels to provide more appropriate services for persons with disabilities.
- (2) Communicate more with disabled persons and their organizations to exchange accurate and reliable information for strengthening tourism services to better meet diverse consumer needs.
- (3) Encourage tourism service providers to make their web sites accessible for disabled persons, especially blind persons.
- (4) Involve disabled persons with the requisite experience and skills in conducting access surveys of premises and to serve as resource persons and advisors in improving tourism services.
- (5) Introduce barrier-free tourism into the agendas of their regular meetings.
- (6) Introduce accessibility as a criterion in the ranking of hotels and restaurants.

**(d) Tourism training institutions should:**

- (1) Include in training curricula (for all levels) the following contents concerning a client focus that respects the rights and needs of diverse consumer groups, including persons with disabilities: attitude, knowledge and skills development, as well as cross-cultural understanding and appreciation.
- (2) Develop and use training modules for sensitizing front-line service staff to relate, in an appropriate manner, with disabled travellers.

**(e) Inter-governmental organizations should:**

- (1) Foster inter-country exchange and networking concerning experiences and practices on endeavours towards barrier-free tourism.
- (2) Identify, inter-regionally and within the ESCAP region, best practices in the promotion of barrier-free tourism for wider reference and possible adaptation in the ESCAP region.

- (3) Facilitate, in cooperation with subregional organizations, inter-country discussion towards the adoption of uniform disabled person-friendly immigration procedures.
- (4) Work towards the lifting of discriminatory and restrictive conditions, such as the requirements of an accompanying person and medical certification, that are imposed on travellers with disabilities.
- (5) Explore possible means of granting accreditation to tourism industry establishments that are accessible by disabled persons.
- (6) Develop an outline of core contents for training tourism personnel.
- (7) Develop training content and capability to strengthen passenger services at transport interchanges (bus, railway, ferry, ship and airplane terminals).
- (8) Promote the application of universal design principles to improve the accessibility of tourism sites, especially cultural, heritage and pilgrimage sites.

## **II. BALI DECLARATION ON BARRIER-FREE TOURISM FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

**We, the participants of the Asia-Pacific Conference on Tourism for People with Disability, held at Bali, Indonesia, from 24 to 27 September 2000:**

*Recognizing* that tourism is a rapidly growing industry in the Asian and Pacific region and that people with disabilities, older persons and families with young children are growing groups of consumers of travel, sports, and other leisure-oriented products and services,

*Appreciating* that the Community Based Rehabilitation Development and Training Centre (CBRDTC), Solo, Indonesia, under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, and the National Social Welfare Board, Government of Indonesia, and with the co-sponsorship of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the Nippon Foundation and the Indonesian Society for the Care of Disabled Children (YPAC), have taken the initiative to organize the above Conference,

the first of its kind in the Asia-Pacific region, to discuss major issues relating to accessible tourism for people with disabilities, with a view to identifying key policy and strategy elements for promoting barrier-free tourism,

*Recalling* that the governments of the Asian and Pacific region have declared the period 1993 to 2002 as the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons,

*Further recalling* that the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), at its fifty-sixth session held in Bangkok in June 2000, recognized the need for universal access to transport and tourism facilities for people with disabilities and older persons, and requested the secretariat to support such activities,

*Noting* that, while barrier-free tourism facilities and services would benefit larger numbers of tourists, including parents with young children and multi-generation family travellers, most tourism service providers in the Asian and Pacific region do not yet recognize the importance of this issue, in the absence of explicit government policies and strategies for promoting barrier-free tourism, as well as a lack of training for tourism personnel on the access rights and needs of tourists with disabilities, and a shortage of tourism programmes that are accessible by people with disabilities,

*Noting further* that barrier-free tourism is becoming an increasingly important feature in a competitive global tourism market and can serve as an effective tool for enhancing the socio-economic benefits of the tourism sector for the overall development of the countries and areas in the ESCAP region,

1. **Affirm** our commitment to promoting barrier-free tourism in the Asian and Pacific region;
2. **Urge** all parties concerned with tourism policy and practice, including the tourism industry, to strengthen Asian and Pacific tourism infrastructure, facilities, services and programmes by enhancing universal access to meet the needs of all tourism consumers, in consonance with changes in social and demographic trends;
3. **Request** disabled persons and their organizations to develop and implement empowerment programmes focusing on advocacy, facilitation and negotiation so that they may work more

effectively with the tourism industry, government authorities and ESCAP to improve existing practices relating to accessibility, as well as to support the tourism industry in introducing universal access principles to ensure tourism for all;

4. **Urge** governments to include in tourism development plans measures for, and to develop action programmes to promote, barrier-free tourism for people with disabilities, older persons and families with young children;
5. **Request** governments of the ESCAP region to cooperate with the tourism industry to adopt and implement measures that respect the rights of persons with disabilities to have equal access to tourism facilities, programmes and services;
6. **Request** governments to strengthen craft production, entrepreneurial and marketing skills among persons with disabilities as an economically viable interface with the tourism industry and as a vehicle for poverty alleviation;
7. **Request** governments to support and strengthen cooperation with ESCAP, International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the World Tourism Organization (WTO), UNESCO, International Air Transport Association (IATA), the Pacific-Asia Travel Association (PATA) and other international tourism organizations, to develop regional and inter-regional initiatives on the promotion of barrier-free tourism;
8. **Urge** ESCAP to extend its technical assistance to governments of the Asian and Pacific region in promoting barrier-free tourism for people with disabilities, older persons and families with young children through, *inter alia*, the following:
  - (a) Organization of forums to facilitate inter-country exchange and cooperation on human resources development concerning initiatives to promote tourism for all;
  - (b) Supporting the development of training materials on disability awareness in tourism education and training for use in government and private sector training programmes.

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### **GENERAL SOURCES OF INTERNET INFORMATION (Chapter 3)**

Air Travel, Planes and Airports	<a href="http://www.wideweb.com/airlines.htm">http://www.wideweb.com/airlines.htm</a>
Asia Tour	<a href="http://www.asiatour.com/">http://www.asiatour.com/</a>
Bakpaka	<a href="http://www.accessibility.bakpaka.com/">http://www.accessibility.bakpaka.com/</a>
Bobby Compliance	<a href="http://www.cast.org/bobby">http://www.cast.org/bobby</a>
CIA World Factbook	<a href="http://www.travel-library.com/asia/cambodia/index.html">http://www.travel-library.com/asia/cambodia/index.html</a>
Disabled Persons International Asia Pacific	<a href="http://home.connexus.net.au/~frankhb/dpiap.htm">http://home.connexus.net.au/~frankhb/dpiap.htm</a>
Disabled Persons International Asia Pacific	<a href="http://www.dpi.org/asia.html">http://www.dpi.org/asia.html</a>
Disabled Persons International Thailand	<a href="http://www.dpi.org/asregion.html">http://www.dpi.org/asregion.html</a>
Disabled Persons International	<a href="http://www.dpi.org/organization.html">http://www.dpi.org/organization.html</a>
Google	<a href="http://www.google.com">www.google.com</a>
Independent Living	<a href="http://www.independentliving.org/index.html">http://www.independentliving.org/index.html</a>

Lonely Planet Travel Guides	<a href="http://www.lonelyplanet.com/destinations/">http://www.lonelyplanet.com/destinations/</a>
Population estimates from	<a href="http://www.census.gov/ipc/www/wp98.html">http://www.census.gov/ipc/www/wp98.html</a>
Rough Guides	<a href="http://www.roughguides.com">http://www.roughguides.com</a>
Tourism Offices Worldwide	<a href="http://www.towd.com">http://www.towd.com</a>
Travel Guides.com	<a href="http://www.travel-guides.com/appendices/disabled.asp">http://www.travel-guides.com/appendices/disabled.asp</a>
Travel Library	<a href="http://www.travel-library.com/">http://www.travel-library.com/</a>
United Nations, ESCAP	<a href="http://www.unescap.org/decade/publications/z15001p1/z1500101.htm#contents">http://www.unescap.org/decade/publications/z15001p1/z1500101.htm#contents</a>
	<a href="http://www.unescap.org/sps/sdinfo/disablinfo.htm">http://www.unescap.org/sps/sdinfo/disablinfo.htm</a>
United Nations, ESCAP	<a href="http://www.unescap.org/decade/links.htm">http://www.unescap.org/decade/links.htm</a>
United Nations, ESCAP	<a href="http://www.unescap.org/stat/statdata/apinfig.htm">http://www.unescap.org/stat/statdata/apinfig.htm</a>
United States, State Department	<a href="http://travel.state.gov">http://travel.state.gov</a>
University of Disability Studies	<a href="http://www.cds.hawaii.edu/">http://www.cds.hawaii.edu/</a>
World Airport Guide	<a href="http://www.worldairportguide.com/">http://www.worldairportguide.com/</a>
World Wide Web Consortium (W3C)	<a href="http://www.W3C.org">http://www.W3C.org</a>
Yahoo	<a href="http://yahoo.com">http://yahoo.com</a>
	<a href="http://codi.buffalo.edu/travelin.htm">http://codi.buffalo.edu/travelin.htm</a>
	<a href="http://www.joniandfriends.org/helps/travel.html">http://www.joniandfriends.org/helps/travel.html</a>
	<a href="http://cirrie.buffalo.edu/centers.html">http://cirrie.buffalo.edu/centers.html</a>

### **BARRIER-FREE TOURISM DATA WAREHOUSES:**

Able Data	<a href="http://www.abledata.com/Site_2/internat.htm">http://www.abledata.com/Site_2/internat.htm</a>
Access-able	<a href="http://www.access-able.com/dBase/">http://www.access-able.com/dBase/</a>
Disability Travel	<a href="http://www.disabilitytravel.com">www.disabilitytravel.com</a>
Disability World	<a href="http://www.disabilityworld.com/accom/">http://www.disabilityworld.com/accom/</a>
Emerging Horizons	<a href="http://www.EmergingHorizons.com">www.EmergingHorizons.com</a>
GeoCities	<a href="http://www.geocities.com/Paris/1502/">http://www.geocities.com/Paris/1502/</a>
Information on Disability Equipment Access Services (IDEAS)	<a href="http://www.ideas.org.au">http://www.ideas.org.au</a>
The National Information Communication Awareness Network (NICAN)	<a href="http://www.nican.com.au">http://www.nican.com.au</a>
Tourism Queensland	<a href="http://www.tq.webcentral.com.au/accessqld/">http://www.tq.webcentral.com.au/accessqld/</a>
Tourism South Pacific	<a href="http://www.spto.com/">http://www.spto.com/</a>
	<a href="http://www.pacificislandtravel.com/about_pit/links.html">http://www.pacificislandtravel.com/about_pit/links.html</a>
	<a href="http://www.routesinternational.com/access.htm">http://www.routesinternational.com/access.htm</a>
	<a href="http://www.unlimitedsolutions.ca/links.htm">http://www.unlimitedsolutions.ca/links.htm</a>

## COUNTRY-OR REGION-SPECIFIC WEB SITES

### Australia

Able Tours	<a href="http://www.abletours.com.au/charter.htm">http://www.abletours.com.au/charter.htm</a>
Access Brisbane	<a href="http://brisbane-stories.powerup.com.au/access/">http://brisbane-stories.powerup.com.au/access/</a>
Access Guide to the Snowy Mountain Region of New South Wales	<a href="http://www.snowyaccess.com">http://www.snowyaccess.com</a>
Access Sydney	<a href="http://www.aqa.com.au">http://www.aqa.com.au</a>
Access the Best Toowoomba and Access the Best Blue Mountains,	<a href="http://www.accessthebest.com.au">http://www.accessthebest.com.au</a>
Accessing Melbourne	<a href="http://www.accessmelbourne.vic.gov.au">http://www.accessmelbourne.vic.gov.au</a>
Alice Springs Desert Park	<a href="http://www.alicespringsdesertpark.com.au/">http://www.alicespringsdesertpark.com.au/</a>
Australian Building Codes Board	<a href="http://www.abcb.gov.au">http://www.abcb.gov.au</a>
Australian Tourism Commission	<a href="http://www.australia.com/">http://www.australia.com/</a>
Best Western	<a href="http://www.bestwestern.com.au/">http://www.bestwestern.com.au/</a>
Budget	<a href="http://www.budgetmotelchain.com.au/">http://www.budgetmotelchain.com.au/</a>
Clark Bay Cottages	<a href="http://users.mcmmedia.com.au/~jsimpson/clarkbay.htm">http://users.mcmmedia.com.au/~jsimpson/clarkbay.htm</a>
Country Comfort	<a href="http://www.countrycomfort.com.au">http://www.countrycomfort.com.au</a>
CountryLink	<a href="http://www.countrylink.nsw.gov.au/">http://www.countrylink.nsw.gov.au/</a>
Croft Haven	<a href="http://www.nelsonbay.com.au">http://www.nelsonbay.com.au</a>
Easy Access Australia – A Travel Guide to Australia	<a href="http://www.easyacceasaustralia.com.au">http://www.easyacceasaustralia.com.au</a>
Flag Choice	<a href="http://www.flagchoice.com.au/">http://www.flagchoice.com.au/</a>
Gold Coast City Council	<a href="http://www.gctp.com.au/">http://www.gctp.com.au/</a>
Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission	<a href="http://www.hreoc.gov.au">http://www.hreoc.gov.au</a>
Kurandah Homestay	<a href="http://kurandahomestay.com/access_facilities.html">http://kurandahomestay.com/access_facilities.html</a>
Le Meridian	<a href="http://www.lemeridian-sydney.com">http://www.lemeridian-sydney.com</a>
Leisure Options	<a href="http://www.leisureoptions.com.au/">http://www.leisureoptions.com.au/</a>
Melbourne	<a href="http://www.accessmelbourne.vic.gov.au">http://www.accessmelbourne.vic.gov.au</a>
Merchant Court Hotel	<a href="http://www.merchantcourt.com.au">http://www.merchantcourt.com.au</a>
Merindah Holiday Cottages	<a href="http://merindah.com.au">http://merindah.com.au</a>
MovieWorld	<a href="http://www.movieworld.com.au">http://www.movieworld.com.au</a>
Murray Princess	<a href="http://www.captaincook.com.au">http://www.captaincook.com.au</a>
O'Carrollyn's	<a href="http://geocities.com/ocarrollyn/andwww.ocarrolyns.com.au">http://geocities.com/ocarrollyn/andwww.ocarrolyns.com.au</a>

Qantas	<a href="http://www.qantas.com.au/info/flying/beforeYouTravel/fitnessForTravel">http://www.qantas.com.au/info/flying/beforeYouTravel/fitnessForTravel</a>
Qrail	<a href="http://www.qr.com.au/">http://www.qr.com.au/</a>
Quicksilver	<a href="http://www.quicksilver-cruises.com/">http://www.quicksilver-cruises.com/</a>
Sea World	<a href="http://www.seaworld.com.au">http://www.seaworld.com.au</a>
SeeMore Scenic Tours	<a href="http://www.geocities.com/seemoretours/">http://www.geocities.com/seemoretours/</a>
Sydney City Central YHA	<a href="http://www.yha.org.au">http://www.yha.org.au</a>
Sydney,	<a href="http://citymap.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/">http://citymap.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/</a>
Territory Wildlife Park	<a href="http://www.territorywildlifepark.com.au/about/about.htm">http://www.territorywildlifepark.com.au/about/about.htm</a>
The Great Southern Railway	<a href="http://www.gsr.com.au/">http://www.gsr.com.au/</a>
The Novotel & Ibis Hotels	<a href="http://www.accorhotel.com.au">http://www.accorhotel.com.au</a>
The Rainforest Retreat,	<a href="http://www.rainforestresort.com.au">http://www.rainforestresort.com.au</a>
The Rocks Guest House	<a href="http://www.ultra.net.au/~therocks">http://www.ultra.net.au/~therocks</a>
The Tree Tops Walk	<a href="http://www.calm.wa.gov.au/access4all.html">http://www.calm.wa.gov.au/access4all.html</a>
TTLline	<a href="http://www.tt-line.com.au/">http://www.tt-line.com.au/</a>
Ventnor B&B	<a href="http://home.waterfront.net.au/~ventnor/">http://home.waterfront.net.au/~ventnor/</a>
Vline	<a href="http://www.vline.vic.gov.au/">http://www.vline.vic.gov.au/</a>
Whale Song	<a href="http://www.whalesong.com.au/vessel.htm">http://www.whalesong.com.au/vessel.htm</a>
Woollongong City Council	<a href="http://www.woollongong.nsw.gov.au">http://www.woollongong.nsw.gov.au</a>
YAL Tropicana at Cairns	<a href="http://www.auscyber.net/yal/tropicana.html">http://www.auscyber.net/yal/tropicana.html</a>

## **Cambodia**

ASEAN Tourism	<a href="http://www.asean-tourism.com/">http://www.asean-tourism.com/</a>
BizAsia,	<a href="http://www.bizasia.com/gen/articles/">http://www.bizasia.com/gen/articles/</a>
Cambodia Hotels	<a href="http://cambodiahotels.net/">http://cambodiahotels.net/</a>
Cambodia Trust	<a href="http://www.cambodiatrust.org">www.cambodiatrust.org</a>
Disability Action Council Cambodia	<a href="http://www.dac.org.kh/">http://www.dac.org.kh/</a>
Disability World	<a href="http://www.disabilityworld.org/09-10_01/news/timorcambodia.shtml">http://www.disabilityworld.org/09-10_01/news/timorcambodia.shtml</a>
Go Cambodia	<a href="http://www.GoCambodia.com">www.GoCambodia.com</a>
Land Mine Monitor 2000	<a href="http://www.bigpond.com.kh/users/ngoforum/Woking_Group_Issues/Landmines/final_report/disability_policy_practic.htm">http://www.bigpond.com.kh/users/ngoforum/Woking_Group_Issues/Landmines/final_report/disability_policy_practic.htm</a>
Marc Bonnet, Programme Director, Handicap International, July 1997 Official Ministry of Tourism	<a href="http://www.visit-mekong.com/cambodia/mot/">http://www.visit-mekong.com/cambodia/mot/</a>

Private Sector Working Group Meetings	<a href="http://www.camnet.com.kh/pswg_tourism/private_mtg_03.htm">http://www.camnet.com.kh/pswg_tourism/private_mtg_03.htm</a>
Special: Empowering the rural disabled in Asia and the Pacific	<a href="http://www.fao.org/sd/PPdirect/PPan0011.htm">http://www.fao.org/sd/PPdirect/PPan0011.htm</a>
Tourism Cambodia	<a href="http://www.tourismcambodia.com/">http://www.tourismcambodia.com/</a>
Travel groups from UK to Cambodia Beverly and Debbie	<a href="http://www.ssbid.co.uk/index.html">http://www.ssbid.co.uk/index.html</a>
US Department of State	<a href="http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2001/eap/8283.htm">http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2001/eap/8283.htm</a>

## **China**

China Disabled Persons' Federation	<a href="http://www.cdpf.org.cn/english/index.htm">http://www.cdpf.org.cn/english/index.htm</a>
China National Tourism Administration	<a href="http://www.cnta.com/lyen/index.asp">http://www.cnta.com/lyen/index.asp</a>
China National Tourist Office USA site	<a href="http://www.cnto.org">www.cnto.org</a>
China Yunnan Exploration Travel Service	<a href="http://www.toptrip.cc/tour_disabled.htm">http://www.toptrip.cc/tour_disabled.htm</a>

## **Cook Islands**

CookIsland Tourism Corp	<a href="http://www.cook-islands.com/">http://www.cook-islands.com/</a>
Tourism South Pacific	<a href="http://www.tesp.com/">http://www.tesp.com/</a>

## **Fiji**

Jean-Michel Costeau Resort	<a href="http://www.fijiresort.com">www.fijiresort.com</a>
Maravu Resort Handicapped Friendly	<a href="http://www.travelmaxia.com/fiji/">http://www.travelmaxia.com/fiji/</a>
Official Guide Fiji Visitors Bureau	<a href="http://www.bulafiji.com/">http://www.bulafiji.com/</a>

## **French Polynesia**

Office du Tourisme de Tahiti et ses Iles	<a href="http://www.tahiti-tourisme.com/">www.tahiti-tourisme.com/</a>
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## **Guam**

Guam Visitors Bureau	<a href="http://www.visitguam.org/">http://www.visitguam.org/</a>
The Official Guam Web site	<a href="http://ns.gov.gu/">http://ns.gov.gu/</a>

## **Hong Kong, China**

“A Guide to Public Transport for People with Disabilities”	<a href="http://www.info.gov.hk/td/eng/services/disable_index.html">http://www.info.gov.hk/td/eng/services/disable_index.html</a>
Highlights of A Baseline Survey on Public Attitudes towards Persons with a Disability	<a href="http://www.eoc.org.hk/ce/research/attitude/page1e.html">http://www.eoc.org.hk/ce/research/attitude/page1e.html</a>
HK Tourist Board	<a href="http://webserv1.discoverhongkong.com/eng/">http://webserv1.discoverhongkong.com/eng/</a>
Hong Kong Access Guide for Disabled Visitors	<a href="http://www.hkcss.org.hk/rh/accessguide/default.htm">http://www.hkcss.org.hk/rh/accessguide/default.htm</a>
Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation	<a href="http://www.rehabsociety.org.hk/rehabus/english/news.htm">www.rehabsociety.org.hk/rehabus/english/news.htm</a>
Hong Kong Sports Association for the Physically Disabled	<a href="http://www.hksap.org">http://www.hksap.org</a>
Ocean Park	<a href="http://www.oceanpark.com.hk/eng/main/index.html">http://www.oceanpark.com.hk/eng/main/index.html</a>
The Hong Kong Geriatrics Society	<a href="mailto:tkkong@ha.org.hk">tkkong@ha.org.hk</a>

## **India**

Accessible Journeys Inc.	<a href="http://www.disabilitytravel.com/aj_details/travel_agent.htm">http://www.disabilitytravel.com/aj_details/travel_agent.htm</a>
Action for Austim & Opendoor Arya Vaydia Sala Hospital at their web site	<a href="http://www.autism-india.org/">http://www.autism-india.org/</a> <a href="http://www.aryavaidyasala.com">www.aryavaidyasala.com</a>
Centre for Rehabilitation & Education of the Mentally Retarded.	<a href="http://pathwayindia.org/">http://pathwayindia.org/</a>
Department of Tourism India, MOTAC	<a href="http://www.tourismofindia.com/">http://www.tourismofindia.com/</a>
Disability India Network	<a href="http://www.disabilityactindia.org/">http://www.disabilityactindia.org/</a>
India Legislation	<a href="http://www.healthlibrary.com/reading/disability/right.htm">http://www.healthlibrary.com/reading/disability/right.htm</a>
Madras Institute to Habilitate Retarded Afflicted	<a href="http://pcsadv.com/mithra/">http://pcsadv.com/mithra/</a>
National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (NCPEDP)	<a href="mailto:ncpedp@vsnl.com">ncpedp@vsnl.com</a>
National Society for Equal Opportunity for the Handicapped (NASEOH)	<a href="mailto:naseoh@vishwa.com">naseoh@vishwa.com</a>

Timeless Excursions	<a href="http://www.timelessexcursions.com/pics.htm">http://www.timelessexcursions.com/pics.htm</a>
Transport concessions	<a href="http://www.spinalsoothers.com/concession1.html">http://www.spinalsoothers.com/concession1.html</a> <a href="http://www.disabilityindia.org/introduction.cfm">http://www.disabilityindia.org/introduction.cfm</a>

## **Indonesia**

Garuda Indonesia Airlines	<a href="http://www.garuda-indonesia.com/">http://www.garuda-indonesia.com/</a>
Ministry	<a href="http://www.tourismindonesia.com/">http://www.tourismindonesia.com/</a>
Search engine	<a href="http://www.searchindonesia.com/">http://www.searchindonesia.com/</a>

## **Japan**

Accessible Japan,	<a href="http://www.jreast.co.jp/e/">http://www.jreast.co.jp/e/</a>
Accessible Japan, Guide for wheelchair users	<a href="http://www.wakakoma.org/aj/">http://www.wakakoma.org/aj/</a>
Accessible Kyoto	<a href="http://accessible.jp.org/kyoto/en/index-e.html">http://accessible.jp.org/kyoto/en/index-e.html</a>
Accessible Toyko	<a href="http://accessible.jp.org/tokyo/en/index.html">http://accessible.jp.org/tokyo/en/index.html</a>
Independent Living Japan	<a href="http://member.nifty.ne.jp/shojin/">http://member.nifty.ne.jp/shojin/</a>
Information Resources for People with Disabilities in JAPAN	<a href="http://www.sd.soft.iwate-pu.ac.jp/sensui/japanese_res_eng.html">http://www.sd.soft.iwate-pu.ac.jp/sensui/ japanese_res_eng.html</a>
Japanese Society for Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities (JSRPD)	<a href="mailto:soumu@dinf.ne.jp">soumu@dinf.ne.jp</a>
National Rehabilitation Center for the Disabled	<a href="mailto:whoclbc@rehab.go.jp">whoclbc@rehab.go.jp</a>
National Tourist Organisation Web Site	<a href="http://www.jnto.go.jp/english/">http://www.jnto.go.jp/english/</a>
Tokyo Airport Access Information	<a href="http://www.narita-airport.or.jp">http://www.narita-airport.or.jp</a>

## **Lao People's Democratic Republic**

Land Mine Monitor Disability Policy and Practice	<a href="http://www.icbl.org/lm/2001/lao/Land Mine Monitor">http://www.icbl.org/lm/2001/lao/Land Mine Monitor</a>
Hanko, Johanne	Disabled people in rural areas of Lao PDR
Lao National Tourism Authority Special: Empowering the rural disabled in Asia and the Pacific	<a href="http://www.mekongcenter.com">www.mekongcenter.com</a>

## **Malaysia**

Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board	<a href="http://tourism.gov.my/">http://tourism.gov.my/</a>
Malaysian Airlines	<a href="http://www.mas.com.my/">http://www.mas.com.my/</a>

## **Nepal**

Navyo Nepal	<a href="http://www.navyonepal.com/indexe.html">http://www.navyonepal.com/indexe.html</a>
Nepal Tourism Board	<a href="http://www.welcomenepal.com/">http://www.welcomenepal.com/</a>

## **New Caledonia**

Tourism Council of the SP. South Pacific Tourism Organisation	<a href="http://www.tcsp.com/destinations">http://www.tcsp.com/destinations</a>
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## **New Zealand**

Accessible Kiwi Tours	<a href="http://www.tours-nz.com/">http://www.tours-nz.com/</a>
Accessible Options, New Zealand	<a href="http://www.travelaxess.co.nz">http://www.travelaxess.co.nz</a>
Air New Zealand	<a href="http://www.airnz.co.nz/">http://www.airnz.co.nz/</a>
Easy Rider Tours	<a href="http://www.easyrider.co.nz/">http://www.easyrider.co.nz/</a>
Galaxy Autos	<a href="http://www.galaxyautos.co.nz/rentals.html">http://www.galaxyautos.co.nz/rentals.html</a>
New Zealand	<a href="http://www.purenz.com">http://www.purenz.com</a>
NZ Visitors Bureau	<a href="http://www.nzvisitorsbureau.com/visitorinfo/">http://www.nzvisitorsbureau.com/visitorinfo/</a>
Taxinet	<a href="http://www.taxinet.org.nz/Links/WebLinks.asp">http://www.taxinet.org.nz/Links/WebLinks.asp</a>

## **Philippines**

Department of Tourism	<a href="http://www.wowphilippines.com.ph/cgi-bin/dotindex2.asp">http://www.wowphilippines.com.ph/cgi-bin/dotindex2.asp</a>
Dept Philippine Convention and visitors corporation	<a href="http://www.dotpcvc.gov.ph/">http://www.dotpcvc.gov.ph/</a>
St Bernard Beach Resort Bantayan Island	<a href="http://www2.mozcom.com/~fhl/">http://www2.mozcom.com/~fhl/</a>
Sampaguita Journey	<a href="http://www2.mozcom.com/~fhl/engelsk/engelskuk.htm">http://www2.mozcom.com/~fhl/engelsk/engelskuk.htm</a>
Philippine Physical Therapy and Caregiver Foundation Inc. (PPTAC)	<a href="mailto:ptac@qoplay.com">ptac@qoplay.com</a>

## **Republic of Korea**

Korean Air	<a href="http://Koreanair.com">Koreanair.com</a>
Korean National Tourism Association	<a href="http://english.tour2korea.com/">http://english.tour2korea.com/</a>
Korean Spinal Cord Injury Cybercentre	<a href="http://www.kscic.or.kr/">http://www.kscic.or.kr/</a>
Seoul Subway	<a href="http://www.seoulsubway.co.kr/english_subway/e_subway05.htm">http://www.seoulsubway.co.kr/english_subway/e_subway05.htm</a>

## **Singapore**

Access Singapore	<a href="http://www.ncss.gov.sg">http://www.ncss.gov.sg</a>
Access Singapore Guide	<a href="http://www.dpa.org.sg/">http://www.dpa.org.sg/</a>
Christian Outreach to the Handicapped	<a href="http://www.coh.org.sg/">http://www.coh.org.sg/</a>
S A Deaf	<a href="http://www.sadeaf.org.sg/">http://www.sadeaf.org.sg/</a>
Singapore Association of Visually Handicapped	<a href="http://www.savh.org.sg/">http://www.savh.org.sg/</a>
Singapore Sports Council For The Disabled	<a href="mailto:info@sscd.org">info@sscd.org</a>
Singapore Tourism Board	<a href="http://www.stb.com.sg/">http://www.stb.com.sg/</a>

## **Solomon Islands**

Solomon Islands Visitors Bureau	<a href="mailto:visitors@welkam.solomon.com.sb">visitors@welkam.solomon.com.sb</a>
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## **Sri Lanka**

Ministry of Tourism website	<a href="http://www.slmts.slt.lk/">http://www.slmts.slt.lk/</a>
Sri Lanka Tourist Board	<a href="http://www.lanka.net/ctb/">http://www.lanka.net/ctb/</a>

## **Thailand**

Adventure Island	<a href="http://www.adventure-holidays-thailand.com/">http://www.adventure-holidays-thailand.com/</a>
Karsten Blokker	<a href="http://members.ams.chello.nl/danblokker/e_home.html">http://members.ams.chello.nl/danblokker/e_home.html</a>
Thai Air	<a href="http://www.thaiair.com/">www.thaiair.com/</a>
Tourism Authority of Thailand	<a href="http://www.tat.or.th/">http://www.tat.or.th/</a>
Travel Thailand	<a href="http://travel.thailand.com/hotel/">http://travel.thailand.com/hotel/</a>

## **Tonga**

Tonga Visitors Board	<a href="http://www.vacations,tvb.gov.to/">http://www.vacations,tvb.gov.to/</a>
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## **Vanuatu**

Vanuatu National Tourism Office <http://www.vanuatutourism.com/>

## **Viet Nam**

Disability Forum Viet Nam <http://forum.wso.net/>  
Hanoi Association of the Blind  
Hanoi Self-help Club of Disabled People  
PDP group (Progress of Disabled People of Hoi An) Tiến Bộ  
The GLADNET Association <http://www.gladnet.org>  
Vietnam National Administration of Tourism <http://www.vietnamtourism.com/>  
VNAH (Viet Nam Assistance for the Handicapped) <http://www.vnah.com/>

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