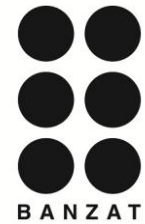


# The Braille Authority of New Zealand Aotearoa Trust



11 February 2016

Small Passenger Services Review  
Submissions  
Ministry of Transport  
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Wellington 6140  
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## Submission – Small Passenger Services Sector Review

- 1 This submission from the Braille Authority of New Zealand Aotearoa Trust (BANZAT) focuses exclusively on the proposal to remove braille labels from taxis, which we strongly oppose.
- 2 The writer of this submission was one of two blind people who delivered the original submission to Parliament that won braille signs in taxis. This submission is endorsed by all ten BANZAT trustees.
- 3 BANZAT was set up in August 2010. Its purpose is to:
  - set standards and to make rulings on braille code usage within New Zealand,
  - maintain awareness and consistency with current international developments in all braille codes,
  - accredit practitioners involved in braille production,
  - promote braille as the prime literacy medium for blind people, and
  - promote best practice in teaching, acquisition and distribution of braille.
- 4 We believe that the effect of the Human Rights Act 1993 and the Bill of Rights Act 1990 is that New Zealanders should have equal access to public information.
- 5 We believe the proposal to remove braille signs in taxis violates the principles of equal access to public information in:
  - The Human Rights Act 1993;
  - The Bill of Rights Act 1990; and
  - the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities which New Zealand has ratified.

- 6 BANZAT endorses the Accessible Signage Guidelines that describe braille and raised print signage on the Blind Foundation website at [www.blindfoundation.org.nz/about/business-services/environmental-design-advisory/accessible-signage](http://www.blindfoundation.org.nz/about/business-services/environmental-design-advisory/accessible-signage).
- 7 Braille provides equal access to public information for those who cannot read print. Raised braille signs are independent of technology solutions which require different skills to use and may fail at time of use.
- 8 Braille signs in taxis give their readers equal access to the information provided to non braille readers:
  - the city and taxi company name (abbreviated)
  - the taxi number
  - the phone number of the complaints line for the taxi company.
- 9 At least one taxi company texts a cell phone caller when the taxi is within 200 metres with the taxi number. The braille and print enabled readers can confirm the correct taxi has arrived.
- 10 BANZAT represents the interests of all braille readers in New Zealand including visitors to our country.
  - We use taxis frequently going about our daily business in the community.
  - The braille signage allows braille reading passengers to use taxis with the same sense of safety and security as is provided to print enabled passengers.
  - As we step into the front of the taxi we slide our hand along the door looking for the braille sign. If the sign is not there or has been damaged and is unreadable, we can question the driver immediately and make a decision about whether or not to ride in the vehicle.
- 11 To improve choice and safety, we would prefer that braille signs were placed on both the front and rear left doors in taxis.
- 12 In conclusion, we urge you retain braille signs in taxis.




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Mary Schnackenberg  
Secretary/Treasurer  
The Braille Authority of New Zealand Aotearoa Trust