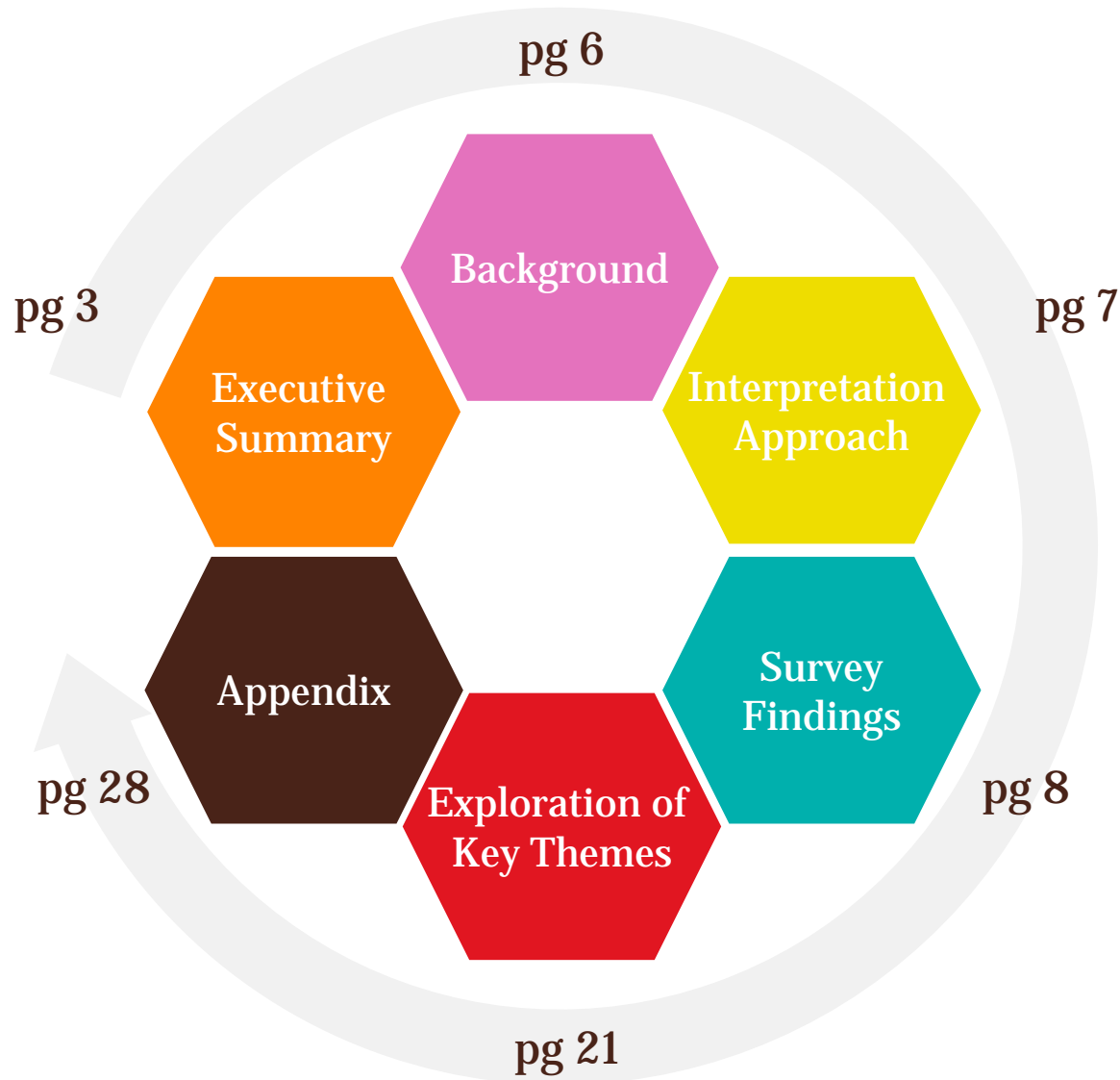


Improving Perth's Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Service

September 2013



Contents



Executive Summary

In August and September 2013, Metrix Consulting analysed a total of n=1,141 self completion questionnaires from TUSS users. Survey findings will be used by the Department of Transport and the Taxi Industry Board to inform short and long term decisions regarding the use of taxis by people with disabilities.

A high level summary of the results for each question is shown below. Making taxis more available for those who need them and improving waiting times require significant attention from the Department of Transport and the Taxi Industry Board.

	Making Taxis More Accessible	Improving Wait Times	Improving the Driver Experience	Improving the Operator Experience	Improving the Scheme	Positive Comments
Q2: Do you think the Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Service in Perth could be improved?	38%	26%	10%	11%	6%	28%
Q3. Do you think the TUSS scheme needs any improvement?	18%	11%	15%	5%	21%	42%
Q4 What do you think the Taxi Industry Board should focus on first?	38%	17%	19%	8%	10%	20%
Q5. Have you got any other comments you would like to make?	20%	12%	10%	6%	8%	58%

Executive Summary

KEY ISSUES

Accessibility

- Not enough taxis for users, especially during late hours and busy periods.
- Priority not given to TUSS users.
- Taxis not turning up at all.
- Getting more taxis out to non-central areas and covering shorter journeys.

Waiting Time

- Long wait times even after advanced bookings.
- Safety and comfort concerns about having to wait outside (especially after dark).
- Don't arrive on time – missing important appointments.
- Lack of reliability.

Driver Issues

- Improved driver manners.
- Drivers have poor communications skills.
- Better training in terms of meeting the unique needs of users – e.g. loading and unloading.
- Driving safely and making the passenger feel comfortable.

TUSS USER SUGGESTIONS

- Allow “normal” taxis to pick up users who have foldable wheelchairs.
- Give priority to users, especially late at night, by offering greater incentives to drivers to pick them up.

- Providing updates if the taxi cannot arrive on time so the user can update their plans accordingly.
- Increasing the size of the accessible Taxi fleet.

- Improve training programs for drivers to meet the needs of users.
- Improve incentives provided to drivers so they give better service.



Executive Summary

Operator Issues

- Rudeness, had a lack of patience and understanding of user needs.
- Booking service is not reliable or efficient.
- Better communication between operators and taxis.

KEY ISSUES

Scheme Issues

- Users charged different amounts for the same journey.
- Vouchers are not as clear as could be.
- Subsidy should be increased.
- Should move away from vouchers to a swipe card system.
- Increasing the incentives for drivers to pick up users.

Positive Comments

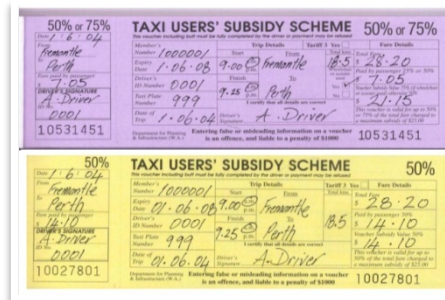
- Allows users to keep an active lifestyle and see family and friends.
- Allows users to attend important appointments.

TUSS USER SUGGESTIONS

- Providing updates if the taxi cannot arrive on time so the user can update their plans accordingly.
- Better operator training.
- Online systems to take away the pressures faced by operators.

- Move to a card system instead of a voucher system.
- Increase the discount being applied and standardise the amount across users.

- TUSS users value the personal relationships they have with drivers.
- They value having a reliable and efficient service.



In August 2012, the Taxi Industry Board held a forum for stakeholders that have an interest in improving the taxi service for people with disabilities. The areas of coverage included:

- *What does Perth's Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Service look like when it is the best it can be? How do we get there from here?*
- *What should a taxi subsidy scheme look like in the 21st Century?*
- *Looking at all that has been said about our "best that it can be" taxi service and our new subsidy scheme – what do you want to tell the Taxi Industry Board about the priority for change?*
- *Top issues/other issues which had not been raised.*

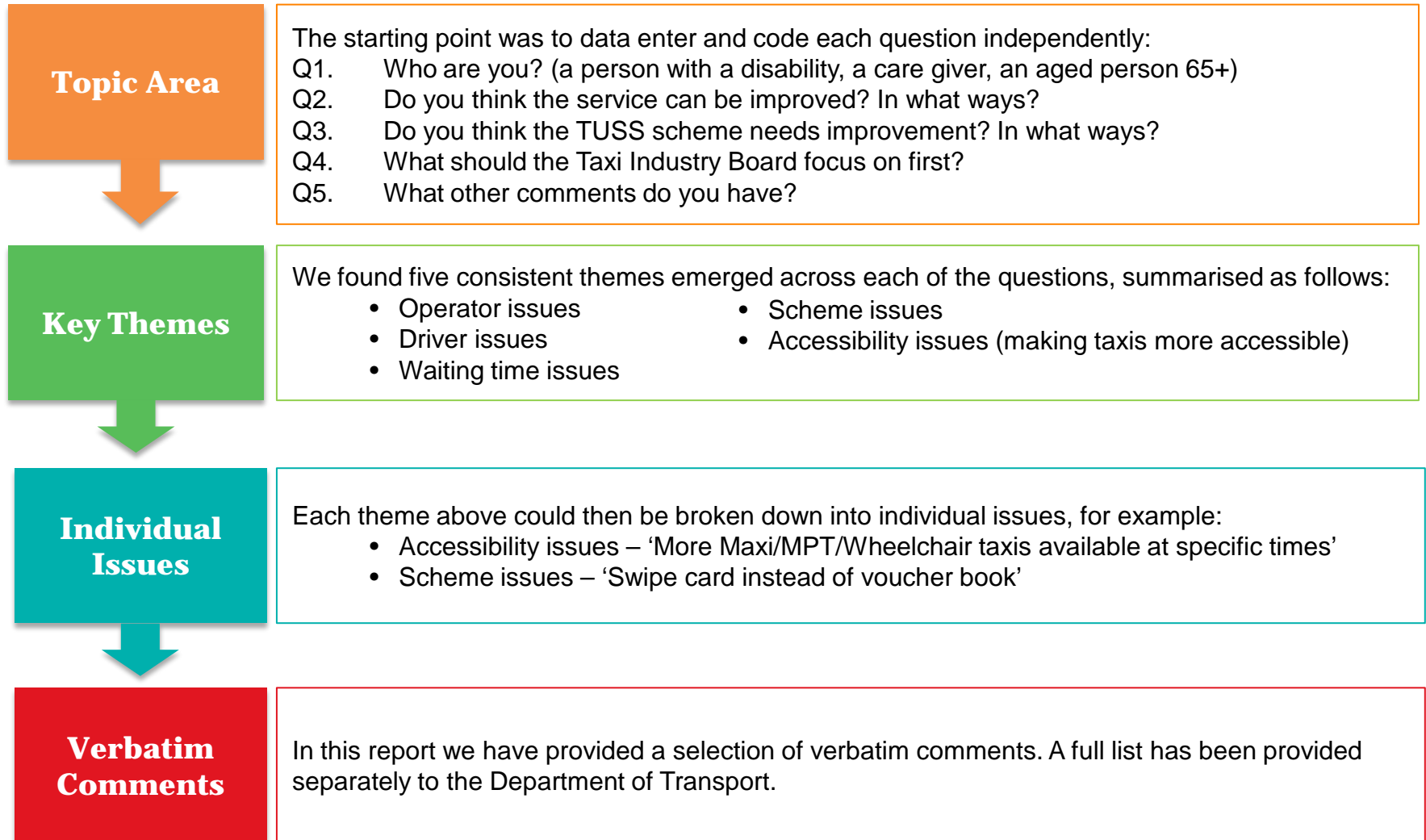
Unfortunately, a number of Taxi User Subsidy Scheme (TUSS) users were unable to participate in the forum so a questionnaire was developed by the Taxi Industry Board and distributed to capture feedback in the following areas:

- *Do you think the Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Service in Perth could be improved? If so, what areas could be improved to make Perth's Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Service the best it could be?*
- *Do you think the TUSS scheme needs any improvement? If so, what areas could be improved?*
- *If you think there could be improvements, what do you think the Taxi Industry Board should focus on first?*
- *Have you got any other comments you would like to make about the Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Service in Perth?*

A total of 1,114 questionnaires were returned to the Department of Transport. Metrix was engaged to provide an independent analysis of the results - the subject of this report.

Our Interpretation Approach

Some respondents wrote a great deal in their survey responses, while others wrote very little. The interpretation approach we used is summarised below:



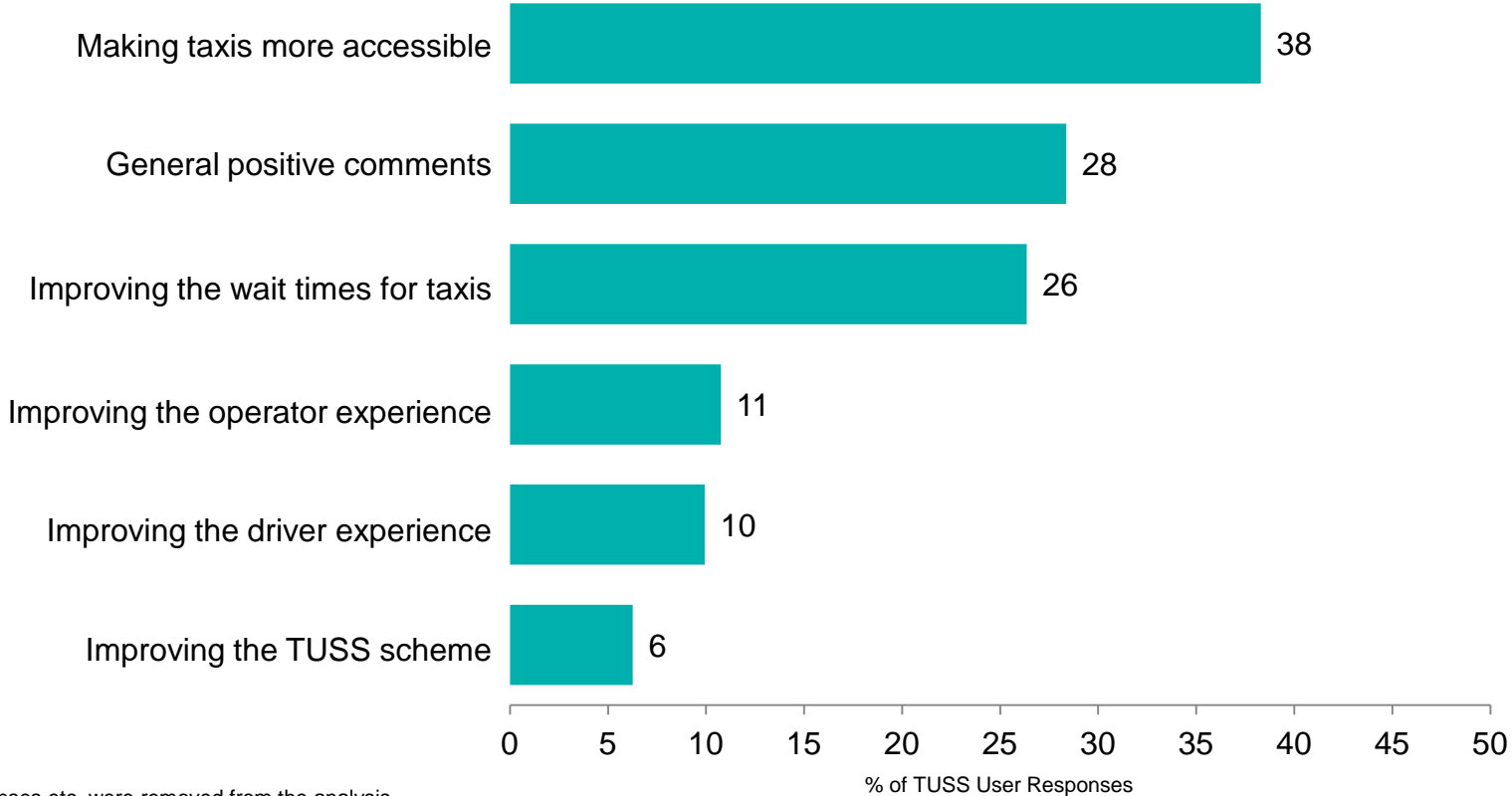
The Survey Findings



Written responses were data entered and coded into key themes and issues. The following charts display the frequencies of the various themes and issues mentioned for each survey question.

Improving the Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Service

The greatest scope for improvement in Perth's Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Service is in areas that relate to making taxis more accessible to people who need them and reducing waiting times. To a lesser degree issues related to operators, drivers and the TUSS scheme were also of concern.

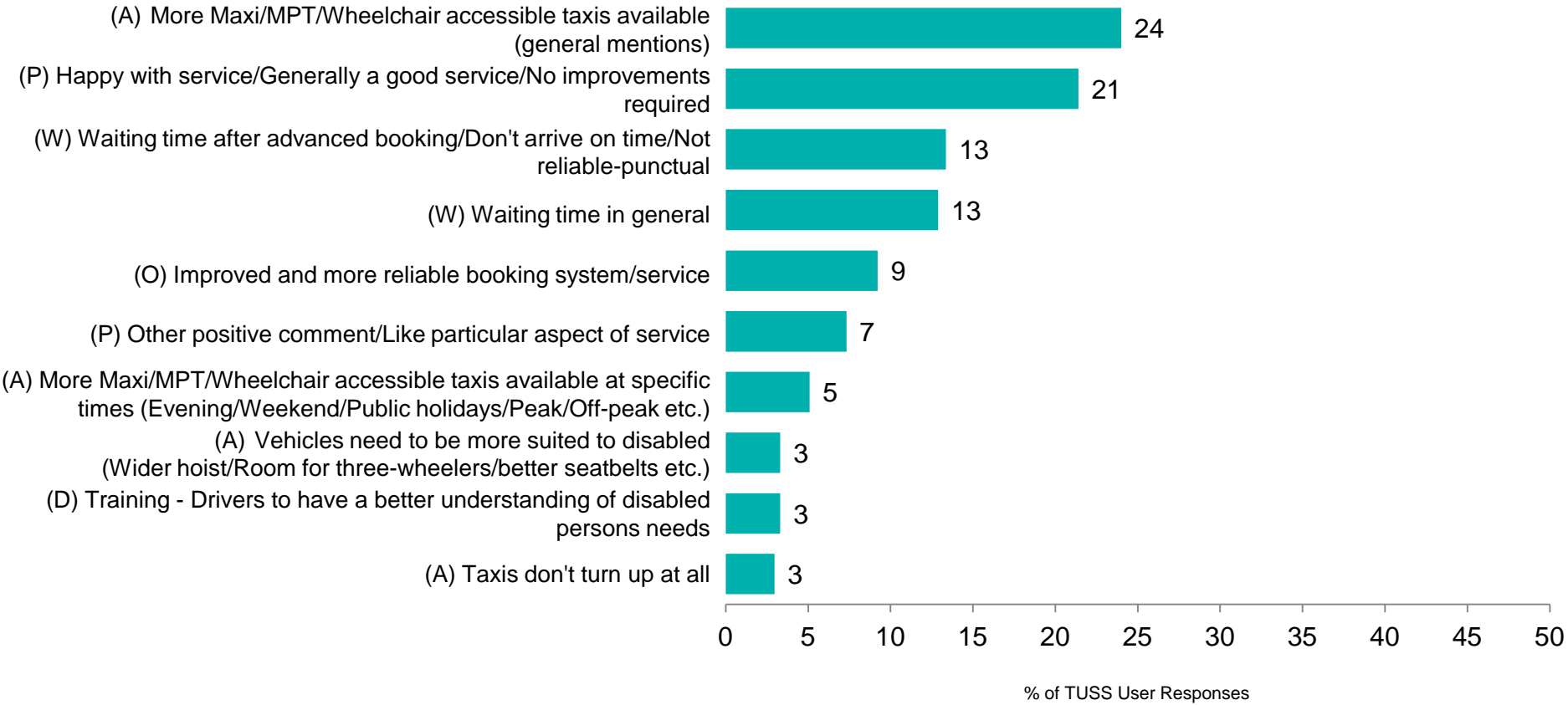


n=833
Note: Blank responses, n/a responses etc. were removed from the analysis.

Q2: Do you think the Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Service in Perth could be improved?
If so, what areas could be improved to make Perth's Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Service the best it could be?

Improving the Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Service

One in five users believe that no improvements to the taxi service are needed – a positive result. Waiting time is seen as an area that could be improved, with users identifying issues relating taxis not arriving on time, particularly when they are booked in advance. The main operator issue refers to potential to make the booking system easier to use and more reliable.



n=833
 Note: Blank responses, n/a responses etc. were removed from the analysis.
 Note: Top 10 responses shown. Others are provided on the following page.

(A) = Making taxis more accessible (O) = Improving the operator experience
 (P) = General positive comments (D) = Improving the driver experience
 (W) = Improving the wait times for taxis (S) = Improving the TUSS scheme

Q2: Do you think the Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Service in Perth could be improved?
 If so, what areas could be improved to make Perth's Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Service the best it could be?

Improving the Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Service

The complete list of coded responses (1% or greater) is provided below.

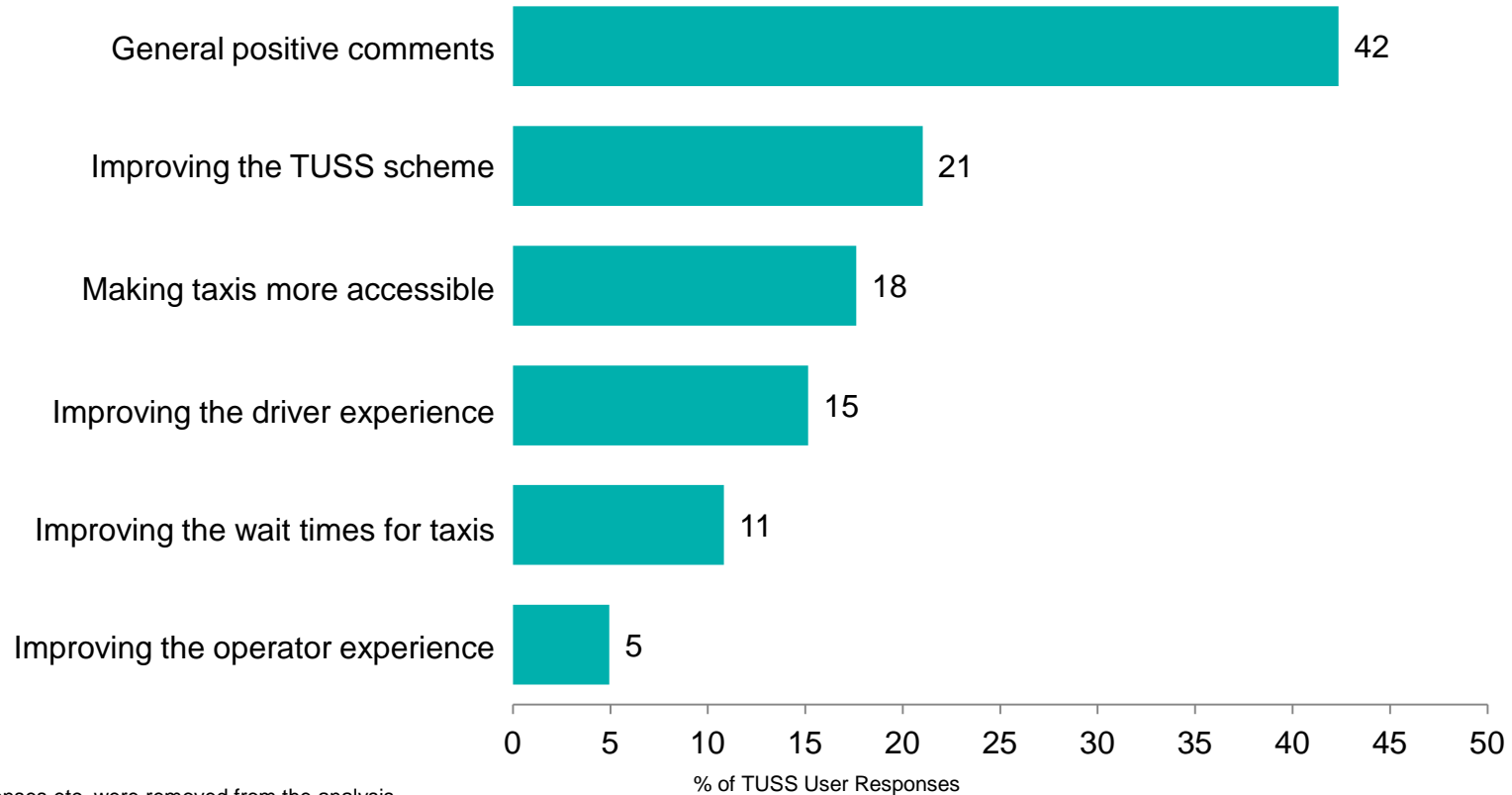
	Total (n=833) %
Total	100
TOTAL (A) ACCESSIBILITY	38
TOTAL (P) POSITIVE	28
TOTAL (W) WAIT TIME	26
TOTAL (O) OPERATOR	11
TOTAL (D) DRIVER	10
TOTAL (S) SCHEME	6
(A) More Maxi/MPT/Wheelchair accessible taxis available (general mentions)	24
(P) Happy with service/Generally a good service/No improvements required	21
(W) Waiting time after advanced booking/Don't arrive on time/Not reliable-punctual	13
(W) Waiting time in general	13
(O) Improved and more reliable booking system/service	9
(P) Other positive comment/Like particular aspect of service	7
(A) More Maxi/MPT/Wheelchair accessible taxis available at specific times (Evening/Weekend/Public holidays/Peak/Off-peak etc.)	5
(A) Vehicles need to be better suited to disabled (Wider hoists/Room for three-wheelers/Seatbelts etc.)	3
(D) Training - Drivers to have a better understanding of disabled persons needs	3
(A) Taxis don't turn up at all	3
(A) Give priority to disabled/Don't pick up party groups first	3
(A) Being able to guarantee a return service/Difficulty returning home	2
(A) Taxis not turning up for short distances	2
(D) Drivers to speak better English/Prefer Australian drivers	2
(D) Poor service from drivers/Reluctant drivers/Need to monitor drivers	2
(N/A) Training (General mentions)	2
(D) Better driver manners (More polite/Less surly/More respectful etc.)	2

	Total (n=833) %
Total	100
(N/A) Improvements needed - general mention	2
(D) Vouchers/Training drivers on correct completion of vouchers/Issues with filling in vouchers/Takes too long	1
(S) Mention/commend another Taxi service (Interstate/Other WA service/International service)	1
(D) Driver courtesy - Knock on door/help in and out of car	1
(A) Other improvements to vehicle ambience/Comfort	1
(O) Operator and/or driver to call if running late/Confirm booking/Time of arrival	1
(S) Swipe card instead of voucher book	1
(S) Subsidy limit/Increase the limit/Cost issues/Too expensive	1
(S) Happy with TUSS scheme	1
(W) Suggestions on how to ease waiting time	1
(D) Driver dishonesty	1
(D) Safety and security - drivers not talking on phone/Shouldn't take private calls	1
(D) Safety and security - Unsafe driving	1
(D) Training - Area knowledge	1
(O) Operator-Driver-Client - Communication issues	1
(S) Meter - Incorrect taxi charges	1

Q2: Do you think the Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Service in Perth could be improved?
If so, what areas could be improved to make Perth's Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Service the best it could be?

Improving the TUSS Scheme

Four in ten users made a positive comment about at least one aspect of the TUSS scheme. Improvements on how the scheme can be improved covered a variety of topics, with one in five users made a specific comment about features of the scheme. This is explained in more detail in the following pages.



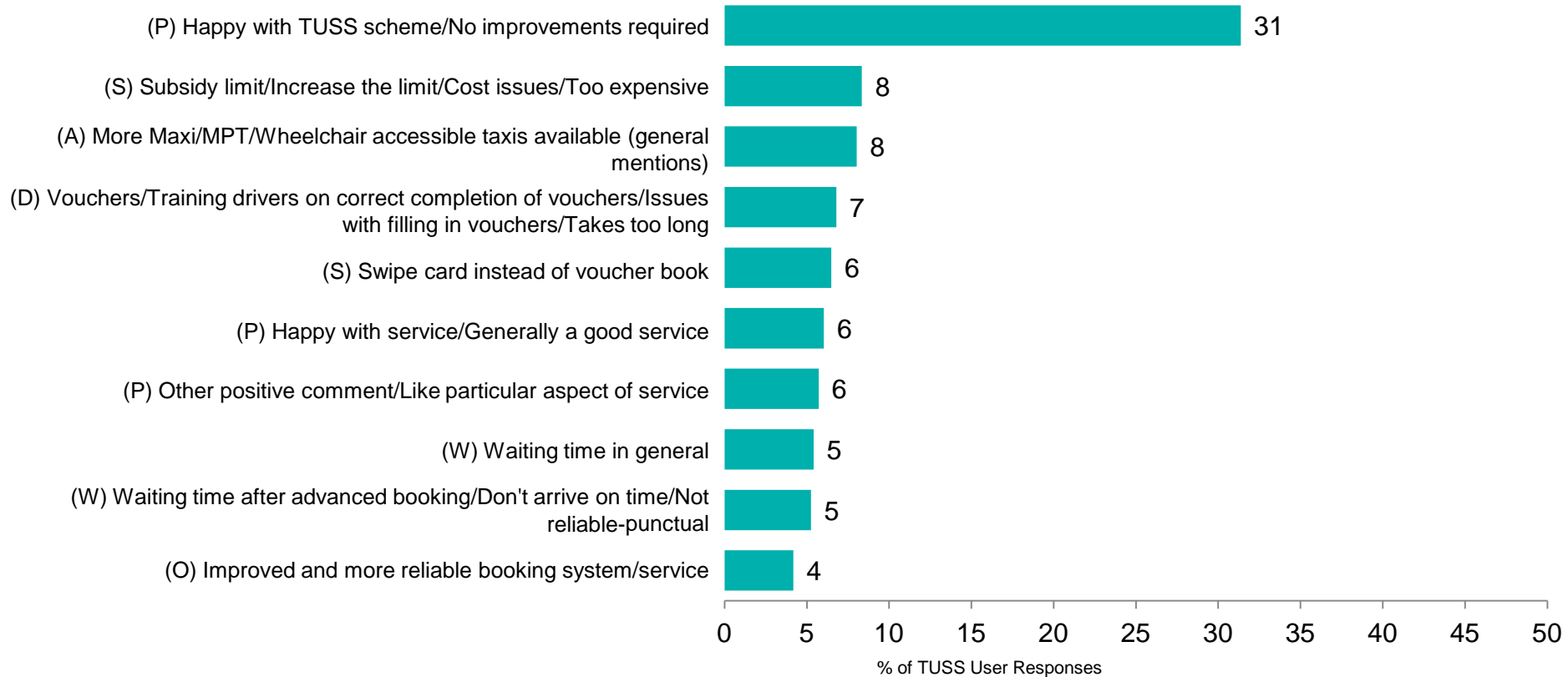
n=647

Note: Blank responses, n/a responses etc. were removed from the analysis

Q3. Do you think the TUSS scheme needs any improvement? If so what areas could be improved?

Improving the TUSS Scheme

Three in ten users are happy with the TUSS scheme and do not feel it needs to be improved. The two main improvements to the scheme relate to increasing the subsidy limit and implementing a swipe card system.



n=647

Note: Blank responses, n/a responses etc. were removed from the analysis.
 Note: Top 10 responses shown. Others are provided on the following page.

(A) = Making taxis more accessible

(P) = General positive comments

(W) = Improving the wait times for taxis

(O) = Improving the operator experience

(D) = Improving the driver experience

(S) = Improving the TUSS scheme

Q3. Do you think the TUSS scheme needs any improvement? If so what areas could be improved?

Improving the TUSS Scheme

The complete list of coded responses (1% or greater) is provided below.

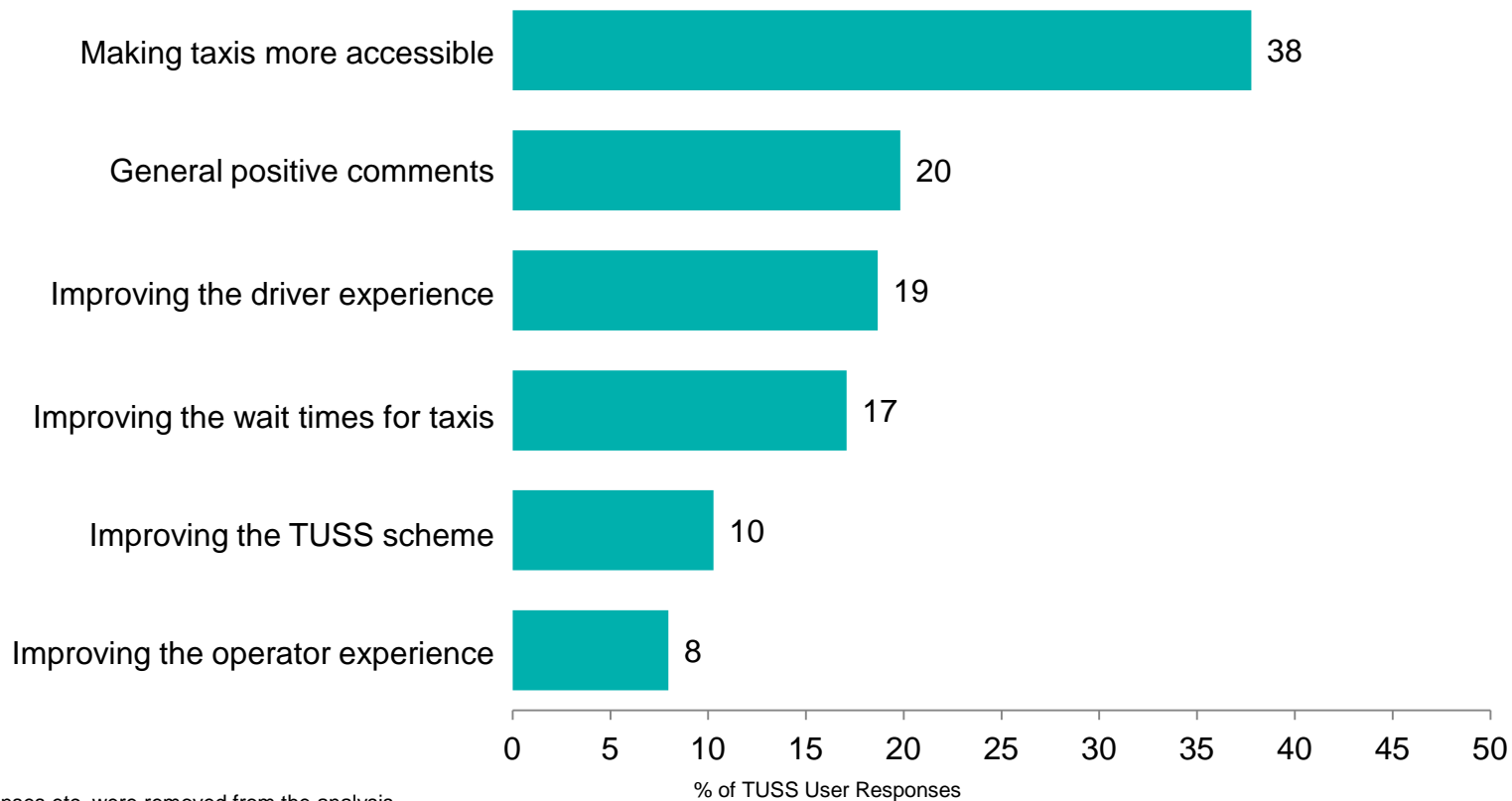
	Total (n=647) %
Total	100
TOTAL (P) POSITIVE	42
TOTAL (S) SCHEME	21
TOTAL (A) ACCESSIBILITY	18
TOTAL (D) DRIVER	15
TOTAL (W) WAIT TIME	11
TOTAL (O) OPERATOR	5
(P) Happy with TUSS scheme/No improvements required	31
(S) Subsidy limit/Increase the limit/Cost issues/Too expensive	8
(A) More Maxi/MPT/Wheelchair accessible taxis available (general mentions)	8
(D) Vouchers/Training drivers on correct completion of vouchers/Issues with filling in vouchers/Takes too long	7
(S) Swipe card instead of voucher book	6
(P) Happy with service/Generally a good service	6
(P) Other positive comment/Like particular aspect of service	6
(W) Waiting time in general	5
(W) Waiting time after advanced booking/Don't arrive on time/Not reliable-punctual	5
(O) Improved and more reliable booking system/service	4
(D) TUSS Training - Drivers take more vouchers than required/need to be more accountable/open to abuse	3
(N/A) Improvements needed (General mentions)	2
(A) More Maxi/MPT/Wheelchair accessible taxis available at specific times (Evening/Weekend/Public holidays/Peak/Off-peak etc.)	2
(A) Taxis not turning up for short distances	2
(S) Same discount should apply for all cab types	2
(D) Driver courtesy - Knock on door/help in and out of car	2
(D) Drivers to speak better English/Prefer Australian drivers	2
(D) Poor service from drivers/Reluctant drivers/Need to monitor drivers	2

	Total (n=647) %
Total	100
(A) Being able to guarantee a return service/Difficulty returning home	1
(A) Taxis don't turn up at all	1
(D) Better driver manners (More polite/Less surly/More respectful etc.)	1
(N/A) Training (General mentions)	1
(S) Australia wide/same system in all states (National system)	1
(S) Need more clarity/information on vouchers	1
(S) TUSS - Greater reductions when travelling to work or doctor appointment/expensive to do	1
(A) Vehicles need to be better suited to disabled (Wider hoists/Room for three-wheelers/Seatbelts etc.)	1
(S) Mention/commend another Taxi service (Interstate/Other WA service/International service)	1
(D) Driver dishonesty	1
(A) Give priority to disabled/Don't pick up party groups first	1
(D) Training - Drivers to have a better understanding of disabled persons needs	1
(A) Other improvements to vehicle ambience/Comfort	1
(A) Taking multiple disabled WC passengers/shared cabs	1
(D) Training - Area knowledge	1
(S) Greater incentive for drivers to turn up/Turn up on time (Better pay/Treatment etc.)	1
(A) Make a taxi service solely for disabled/Elderly	1
(O) Operator and/or driver to call if running late/Confirm booking/Time of arrival	1
(S) Meter - Different fee each time	1

Q3. Do you think the TUSS scheme needs any improvement? If so what areas could be improved?

Priorities for Improvement

Making the taxi service more accessible to those who need it is the key priority for improvement. This is followed by improving the service provided by drivers and reducing the amount of wait time involved in getting a taxi.

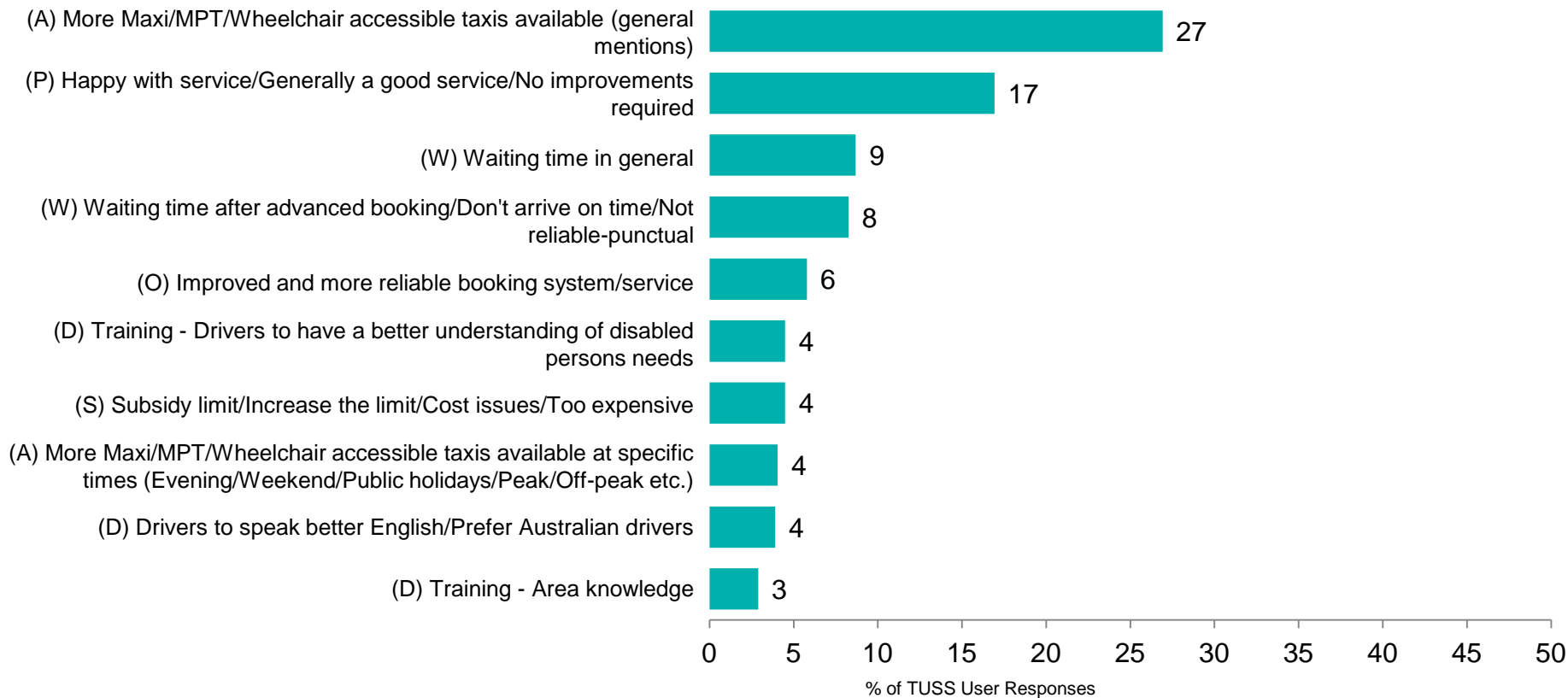


n=691

Note: Blank responses, n/a responses etc. were removed from the analysis

Priorities for Improvement

TUSS users would like to prioritise making taxis more available to the people who need them and to reduce the waiting times. Other lower ranking priorities extend to operator, driver and subsidy issues.



n=691

Note: Blank responses, n/a responses etc. were removed from the analysis.
 Note: Top 10 responses shown. Others are provided on the following page.

(A) = Making taxis more accessible

(P) = General positive comments

(W) = Improving the wait times for taxis

(O) = Improving the operator experience

(D) = Improving the driver experience

(S) = Improving the TUSS scheme

Q4. If you think there could be improvements, what do you think the Taxi Industry Board should focus on first?

Priorities for Improvement

The complete list of coded responses (1% or greater) is provided below.

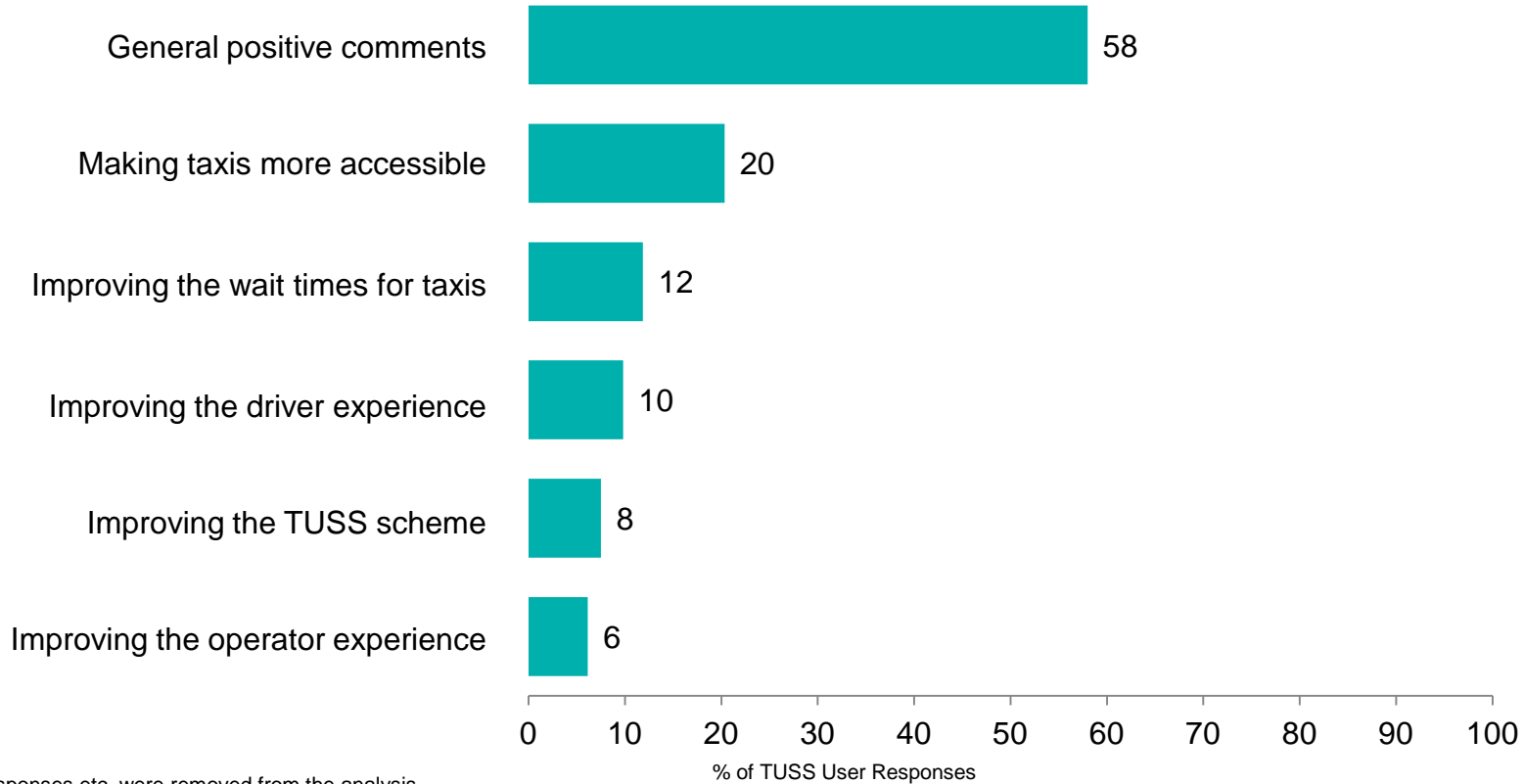
	Total (n=691) %
Total	100
TOTAL (A) ACCESSIBILITY	38
TOTAL (P) POSITIVE	20
TOTAL D (DRIVER)	19
TOTAL (W) WAIT TIME	17
TOTAL (S) SCHEME	10
TOTAL (O) OPERATOR	8
(A) More Maxi/MPT/Wheelchair accessible taxis available (general mentions)	27
(P) Happy with service/Generally a good service/No improvements required	17
(W) Waiting time in general	9
(W) Waiting time after advanced booking/Don't arrive on time/Not reliable-punctual	8
(O) Improved and more reliable booking system/service	6
(D) Training - Drivers to have a better understanding of disabled persons needs	4
(S) Subsidy limit/Increase the limit/Cost issues/Too expensive	4
(A) More Maxi/MPT/Wheelchair accessible taxis available at specific times (Evening/Weekend/Public holidays/Peak/Off-peak etc.)	4
(D) Drivers to speak better English/Prefer Australian drivers	4
(D) Training - Area knowledge	3
(D) Vouchers/Training drivers on correct completion of vouchers/Issues with filling in vouchers/Takes too long	3
(P) Other positive comment/Like particular aspect of service	3
(D) Better driver manners (More polite/Less surly/More respectful etc.)	3

	Total (n=691) %
Total	100
(A) Vehicles need to be better suited to disabled (Wider hoists/Room for three-wheelers/Seatbelts etc.)	2
(D) Driver courtesy - Knock on door/help in and out of car	2
(D) Poor service from drivers/Reluctant drivers/Need to monitor drivers	2
(S) Swipe card instead of voucher book	2
(N/A) Improvements needed (General mentions)	2
(A) Give priority to disabled/Don't pick up party groups first	2
(O) Operator and/or driver to call if running late/Confirm booking/Time of arrival	2
(A) Other improvements to vehicle ambience/Comfort	2
(N/A) Training (General mentions)	2
(A) Taxis don't turn up at all	1
(A) Make a taxi service solely for disabled/Elderly	1
(D) Driver dishonesty	1
(S) Greater incentive for drivers to turn up/Turn up on time (Better pay/Treatment etc.)	1
(S) Meter - taking longer route	1
(D) Safety and security - Unsafe driving	1
(S) Meter - Incorrect taxi charges	1
(A) Taxis not turning up for short distances	1
(A) Being able to guarantee a return service/Difficulty returning home	1
(A) Need dual use taxis/All MPTs to be wheelchair accessible/More flexible use	1
(O) Operator - rude/impolite/lack patience-understanding	1

Q4. If you think there could be improvements, what do you think the Taxi Industry Board should focus on first?

Summary of Other Comments

The majority of the 'other comments' were positive towards Perth's Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Service. The balance related to the issues of accessibility, wait times, drivers, the scheme and operators.



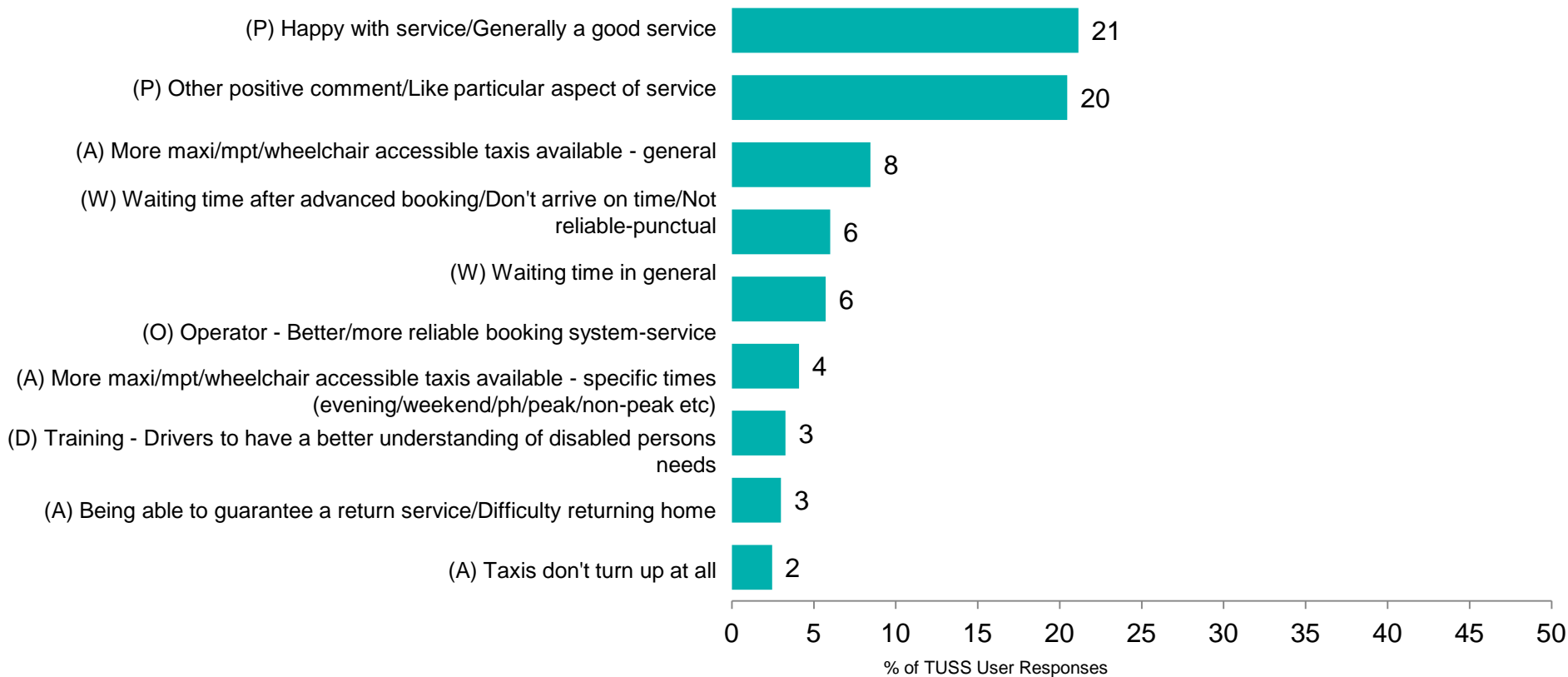
n=733

Note: Blank responses, n/a responses etc. were removed from the analysis

Q5. Have you got any other comments you would like to make about the Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Service in Perth?

Summary of Other Comments

The specific comments (excluding positive comments) are consistent with key issues emerging from previous questions.



n=733

Note: Blank responses, n/a responses etc. were removed from the analysis.
 Note: Top 10 responses shown. Others are provided on the following page.

(A) = Making taxis more accessible

(P) = General positive comments

(W) = Improving the wait times for taxis

(O) = Improving the operator experience

(D) = Improving the driver experience

(S) = Improving the TUSS scheme

Q5. Have you got any other comments you would like to make about the Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Service in Perth?

Summary of Other Comments

The complete list of coded responses (1% or greater) is provided below.

	Total (n=733) %
Total	100
TOTAL (P) POSITIVE	58
TOTAL (A) ACCESSIBILITY	20
TOTAL (W) WAIT TIME	12
TOTAL (D) DRIVER	10
TOTAL (S) SCHEME	8
TOTAL (O) OPERATOR	6
(P) Happy with service/Generally a good service	21
(P) Other positive comment/Like particular aspect of service	20
(P) No/Nothing/None (written)	18
(A) More Maxi/MPT/Wheelchair accessible taxis available (general mentions)	8
(W) Waiting time after advanced booking/Don't arrive on time/Not reliable-punctual	6
(W) Waiting time in general	6
(O) Improved and more reliable booking system/service	4
(A) More Maxi/MPT/Wheelchair accessible taxis available at specific times (Evening/Weekend/Public holidays/Peak/Off-peak etc.)	3
(D) Training - Drivers to have a better understanding of disabled persons needs	3
(A) Being able to guarantee a return service/Difficulty returning home	2
(A) Taxis don't turn up at all	2
(D) Better driver manners (More polite/Less surly/More respectful etc.)	2
(A) Vehicles need to be better suited to disabled (Wider hoists/Room for three-wheelers/Seatbelts etc.)	2
(D) Driver courtesy - Knock on door/help in and out of car	2
(A) Other improvements to vehicle ambience/Comfort	2
(S) Subsidy limit/Increase the limit/Cost issues/Too expensive	2

	Total (n=733) %
Total	100
(S) Mention/commend another Taxi service (Interstate/Other WA service/International service)	1
(A) Give priority to disabled/Don't pick up party groups first	1
(N/A) Improvements needed (General mentions)	1
(D) Drivers to speak better English/Prefer Australian drivers	1
(N/A) Training (General mentions)	1
(O) Operator and/or driver to call if running late/Confirm booking/Time of arrival	1
(S) Meter - Incorrect taxi charges	1
(D) Vouchers/Training drivers on correct completion of vouchers/Issues with filling in vouchers/Takes too long	1
(W) Safety and security - Waiting times for taxi (night time-other times)	1
(D) Driver dishonesty	1
(D) Poor service from drivers/Reluctant drivers/Need to monitor drivers	1
(D) Training - Area knowledge	1
(O) Operator - rude/impolite/lack patience-understanding	1
(S) Vouchers are good/appreciate vouchers	1
(A) Taxis not turning up for short distances	1
(O) Operator-Driver-Client - Communication issues	1
(P) Happy with TUSS scheme	1
(S) Meter - taking longer route	1
(A) Need dual use taxis/All MPTs to be wheelchair accessible/More flexible use	1
(D) Safety and security - Unsafe driving	1
(S) Australia wide/same system in all states (National system)	1
(S) Greater incentive for drivers to turn up/Turn up on time (Better pay/Treatment etc.)	1

Q5. Have you got any other comments you would like to make about the Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Service in Perth?

Exploration of the Key Themes



The results from the previous section are a quantitative summary of key issues and themes. The purpose of this section is to explore these in greater detail and provide examples of what was written by TUSS users.

This section has been ordered by the relative frequency of high level issues: Accessibility, Wait times, Drivers, Operators, and the Scheme itself. We have also included a section consisting of Positive comments made throughout the survey.

Accessibility - Exploration

More Accessible Taxis on the Road

Among some TUSS users, the demand for accessible taxis simply outweighs the supply. The 'proof' for users is the long waiting times and the difficulties in booking.

The problem appears to be geographically widespread rather than limited to Perth's inner or outer suburbs.

The main suggestion was to increase the number of the number of accessible taxis on the road, particularly during peak periods.

Some comments related to changing the specifications of the taxis themselves by implementing wider hoists, ensuring room for three-wheelers and changing the seatbelts system etc.

More Accessible Taxis Available in the Evening and at Night

The lack of taxis is affecting how some TUSS users choose to socialise with friends and family. Users would like to stay out longer in the evenings and on Friday and Saturday nights but they may depart early in fear of not being able to secure a taxi home.

Suggestions included providing drivers with a greater incentive to pick up TUSS passengers and prioritising TUSS users over other passengers – e.g. party bookings.

"I live in a non-metro area and find it hard to get a taxi."

"More vehicles suitable for automatic wheelchairs are needed to reduce waiting periods during peak hour."

"I live in Mandurah and there are no taxis here that are big enough to take my gopher."

"More taxis are needed to cut down waiting times for passengers."

"More vehicles suitable for automatic wheelchairs would reduce waiting periods during peak hour."

"There is only one driver in my area."

"Basically we need wider hoists. I have an extra large wheelchair and even three inches each side would stop me from having to hold the wheelchair every time."

"It is very difficult to obtain a wheelchair accessible Taxi early in the morning as they are often already booked."

"As my wheelchair is foldable I should be able to use this scheme for normal taxis."

"My son uses MPT's and can't get one on a week night."

"Bringing all sorts of taxi services out to Byford, because Byford is growing fast and yet we have no taxis serving us of any kind."

"Getting there is fine, but getting back is a nightmare."

"Drivers who can work night shifts are needed. My wheelchair broke down one evening and I had to wait three hours for a taxi - not good at all."

"More wheelchair taxis available and increased availability at night times."

"Better night time availability of multipurpose taxis."

Wait Time - Exploration

Problems Associated with Long Waiting Times

The length of time spent waiting for taxis is a major concern for many TUSS users. Some TUSS users feel they are overlooked in favour of other passengers because they are a 'low revenue' fare.

TUSS users mentioned bladder problems, serious mobility issues and mental disabilities, and given their needs they physically cannot wait too long for a taxi to arrive to transport them to their destination.

Long waiting times are uncomfortable when passengers are forced to wait outside, subject to the elements, for an extended period of time.

Long waiting times also cause distress when users are depending on the service to get to an appointment for which they cannot arrive late (doctor/specialist). Despite advance bookings, there are many examples of drivers not arriving at the scheduled time.

Suggestions were made to having a more organised, central booking system and more 'specialised drivers' with greater incentives for picking up TUSS passengers.

"The drivers and the taxis were great but the waiting! 'Welcome to the real world!' Mum had been in bed 3 months and she was finally allowed out for her 99th birthday. We ordered a taxi in advance and waited an hour and a half and it never came."

"You need to book so far in advance and you are still not sure that your taxi will arrive on time, if at all. When you book a return trip you will often be left at venue because they have double booked."

"I don't like ordering a multi-purpose taxi. You book the day before, say for 9.30 in the morning and it is 10.00 before it arrives. As for coming home, you ring for a multi-purpose and they say they will send the next free taxi but that could be in an hour. I don't like to leave my pickup area to go to the toilet, but I have MS and can't control my bladder."

"A couple of months ago we waited over two hours for a taxi to bring us home after shopping at the Park Centre in East Vic Park."

"Response times to calls are too long, even on pre-booked calls"

"Reduced waiting periods are needed in peak hours. Recently I had to wait 50 minutes for a large taxi."

"They were an hour late when I had a specialist appointment, even though we ordered it the day before."

"Once I waited at RPH for over two hours for a taxi in spite of repeated phone calls. In the end, one of the drivers whom I knew came back for me after dropping off his passenger. I had a similar incident one morning while waiting to go to RPH."

"I average a three hour waiting time. Once I waited 11 hours."

"Taxis left me waiting outside hospital. They should come inside to help."

"I would really like to see a more prompt service made available for important appointments."

Driver Issues - Exploration

Attitude

TUSS users experienced drivers with poor manners and who were lacking the basic communication skills required to deal with their clientele. Increasing the standard of English communication and providing incentives to recruit a 'better' type of driver were mentioned.

Serious safety issues with driving speed and lack of seatbelts for wheelchairs was a major concern for some TUSS users. Suggestions included educating drivers to understand the impact that certain driving habits can have on passengers - too fast/applying the brakes forcefully/corning quickly/not slowing down for speed bumps, etc.

Knowledge

Users felt drivers were not sufficiently trained in how to deal with the needs of disabled clients and how to load/unload passengers. Suggestions were made for more training in terms of how to load/unload passengers and tighten seatbelts were necessary.

There were also instances of drivers not having a knowledge of the area to transport the user along the most efficient route.

"I find it quite rude to have the driver speaking in another language on his phone the entire journey."

"Some drivers have a very poor attitude and take the LONG way to reach my destination."

"Taxis go too fast and I feel uncomfortable in the back."

"Taxi drivers don't assist you, they just sit in their car and wait while you struggle getting out."

"Drivers need to drive a little slower in congested traffic as the stop/starts are often are very uncomfortable."

"Drivers should be TUSS certified. I once had a driver who wasn't able to use the hold down straps."

"My driver criticised disabled people and said he only drove these taxis so he could transport large groups of able people."

"Drivers need to be told to fill in the book butt and only take one voucher for each job."

"The safety and security issue is huge. Once my husband and I had to wait in the dark."

"Most drivers are courteous and friendly, but the ones that aren't are very bad."

"My safety belt isn't applied all the time."

"It's important for drivers to make the client feel assured and at ease when securing the wheelchair."

"The manners of some taxi drivers should improve towards the passenger"

"Taxi drivers for wheelchair taxis should be competent in strapping a wheelchair and take all precautions necessary."

More effort is needed by drivers to 'feel ones way' with blind clients."

"More incentives for taxi drivers to pick up disability or wheelchair passengers."

"Some drivers don't know where to go or they will take long way around."

"Some taxis don't even have seatbelts for us."

Operator Issues - Exploration

Attitude

Users thought some of the phone operators were rude and unhelpful during the booking process.

Suggestions ranged from getting better training for staff to creating an online system to lessen the pressure on the operators.

Informing if Late

Taxis are often arriving late and this leaves users unable to arrive at appointments on time. As aforementioned, it is difficult for some users to wait outside if taxi is late. It is the operators responsibility to inform the users if the taxi is coming late so they can plan accordingly.

Improving the Process

Some users suggested a booking service where they would not have to talk to an operator e.g. online or via apps.

Other users would like to book their service more than 24 hours in advance.

"One operator was rude when I called asking about the service provided."

"The attitude of the people on the phones can be very rude."

"Have a local phone service for when ordering a cab not a national one."

"There needs to be better communication from the call centre to drivers. There was a denial of our booking being made, despite our specific request for a MPT station wagon to be dispatched."

"If you don't have a regular arrangement with a driver the service is unreliable."

"I always make sure the calls are picked up. That way I'm not just left in the lurch not knowing if a driver will come."

"There needs to be better phone service to cut delays."

"One taxi service refused to take a booking for the following day. I was told to phone back the following morning."

"It would be helpful if we could book a day early and then have the driver ring us to confirm that he can handle the fare."

"I live by myself and I rely on the service three times a week. Sometimes the taxi is very late, even after calling three or four times for an update."

"They need someone to answer the office phone. I rang intermittently for two days I couldn't get through or anyone to answer."

"I ordered a taxi days before we needed it to go to an appointment and it didn't come - even though we waited an hour and a half."

"Last time when I pre-booked a taxi I waited four hours and it never turned up. I had even made six phone calls."

"The Sydney service is impeccable. You get a phone call to let you know exactly what time they will arrive and they are always punctual."

Scheme Issues - Exploration

Vouchers

Some users found the voucher system difficult to understand, particularly in knowing which discounts should be applied and under what circumstances. There was a perception that drivers do not know the correct discount to apply, and a lower than entitled discount may be used to ensure the driver's claim is fully reimbursed.

In some cases the passenger completes or advises on filling out of the voucher and in other cases the driver manages the whole process.

Given the majority of the issues centred around the discount confusion and filling out the vouchers, users recommended bringing in an electronic card system, streamlining this process.

For instance, cards will only be able to give certain discounts and can be linked to accounts making payment quicker and easier.

Cards were suggested to make it easy to track driver and user activities allowing for more meaningful changes to be made in future.

Pricing

Users felt there should be an increased subsidy for non-optional journeys such doctors appointments and trips to the hospital.

"When the taxi driver signs the voucher they always keep the voucher for themselves so I can't see if the journey is a longer trip."

"Fill in the voucher book properly, especially the amount."

"Voucher books are being filled in incorrectly and sometimes the customer slip is not filled in."

"Instead of the book of vouchers why not implement an access card for a machine. It would be easier to carry and there would be no paperwork for the driver."

"Drivers get nasty and can be quite intimidating. Some say that often when they give the 75% discount they are not reimbursed the full amount when they present their vouchers."

"The vouchers should cover the full 75% regardless of who turns up."

"Taxi drivers need to understand the voucher system properly."

"Using the interstate taxi vouchers is not well received in Victoria. There need to be a national card system."

"Please give a guide to make things clearer for the voucher holders."

"I have to make regular trips and it gets expensive."

"A small number of drivers give discount and in return will remove several vouchers from the book. Or they offer to do a deal and swap several vouchers for a trip instead of a cash payment."

"Increase the maximum price to \$50.00."

"The top one says MPT 75% discount to the value of \$35 but the middle one just states subsidy value to the maximum of \$25. It does not state the percentage of subsidy."

Positive Comments - Exploration

The TUSS Scheme

This scheme allows users the opportunity to get out and about and attend important appointments concerning their own health.

Many users are extremely grateful for the scheme and have no issues or concerns at all.

Service

Many users wrote about the positive attitudes of drivers and them being able to help out when needed.

Users who have regular drivers develop strong personal relationships which are highly valued.

"I appreciate the TUSS scheme very much. It works very well for me. Amity taxis in Albany are kind, caring and considerate."

"It is a generous contribution for which we are grateful."

"When my husband was alive we used the service frequently and were very satisfied."

"The scheme allows me to go to my doctor appointments."

"I'm very grateful and appreciate the taxi vouchers."

"Everything went very smoothly and our family gave you full marks. The drivers were very helpful and polite."

"Thank you so much for working in a job that helps people."

"We are very impressed with excellent service given. In the five months we have used it drivers are prompt, pleasant, helpful and caring."

"I've taken my mother on numerous outings with the aid of the taxi service and have always been happy with their punctuality, reliability and service."

"The scheme makes it possible to go out."

"I consider this an excellent scheme. I can't think of any areas that warrant improvements."

"I can go out when I want."

Appendix



Q2. Do you think the Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Service in Perth could be improved? If so, what areas could be improved to make Perth's Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Service the best it could be?

	Total (n=833) %	A person with a disability (n=711) %	A carer/relative of a person with a disability (n=88) %
Total	100%	100%	100%
TOTAL (A) ACCESSIBILITY	39	39	35
TOTAL (P) POSITIVE	29	29	27
TOTAL (W) WAIT TIME	27	26	34
TOTAL (O) OPERATOR	11	9	24
TOTAL (D) DRIVER	10	10	11
TOTAL (S) SCHEME	6	6	1
(A) More Maxi/MPT/Wheelchair accessible taxis available (general mentions)	24	25	20
(P) Happy with service/Generally a good service/No improvements required	21	22	17
(P) Happy with service/Generally a good service	18	18	14
(W) Waiting time after advanced booking/Don't arrive on time/Not reliable-punctual	14	13	20
(W) Waiting time in general	13	12	15
(O) Improved and more reliable booking system/service	9	9	19
(NA) Do not use/can't comment	8	9	3
(P) Other positive comment/Like particular aspect of service	7	7	11
(N/A) Other	6	6	3
(A) More Maxi/MPT/Wheelchair accessible taxis available at specific times (Evening/Weekend/Public holidays/Peak/Off-peak etc.)	5	5	5
(P) No/Nothing/None (written)	4	4	3
(A) Vehicles need to be better suited to disabled (Wider hoists/Room for three-wheelers/Seatbelts etc.)	3	4	2
(D) Training - Drivers to have a better understanding of disabled persons needs	3	3	6
(A) Taxis don't turn up at all	3	3	5
(A) Give priority to disabled/Don't pick up party groups first	3	3	0
(A) Being able to guarantee a return service/Difficulty returning home	2	2	6

Q2. Do you think the Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Service in Perth could be improved? If so, what areas could be improved to make Perth's Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Service the best it could be?

(cont.)	Total (n=833) %	A person with a disability (n=711) %	A carer/relative of a person with a disability (n=88) %
Total	100%	100%	100%
(A) Taxis not turning up for short distances	2	2	0
(D) Drivers to speak better English/Prefer Australian drivers	2	2	2
(D) Poor service from drivers/Reluctant drivers/Need to monitor drivers	2	2	0
(N/A) Training (General mentions)	2	2	1
(D) Better driver manners (More polite/Less surly/More respectful etc.)	1	1	2
(D) Vouchers/Training drivers on correct completion of vouchers/Issues with filling in vouchers/Takes too long	1	2	1
(N/A) Improvements needed (General mentions)	1	1	2
(S) Mention/commend another Taxi service (Interstate/Other WA service/International service)	1	2	0
(A) Other improvements to vehicle ambience/Comfort	1	1	2
(D) Driver courtesy - Knock on door/help in and out of car	1	1	5
(O) Operator and/or driver to call if running late/Confirm booking/Time of arrival	1	1	5
(S) Swipe card instead of voucher book	1	1	0
(S) Subsidy limit/Increase the limit/Cost issues/Too expensive	1	1	0
(P) Happy with TUSS scheme	1	1	2
(W) Suggestions on how to ease waiting time	1	1	0
(D) Driver dishonesty	1	1	0
(D) Safety and security - drivers not talking on phone/Shouldn't take private calls	1	1	0
(D) Safety and security - Unsafe driving	1	1	0
(D) Training - Area knowledge	1	0	1
(O) Operator-Driver-Client - Communication issues	1	0	1

Q3. Do you think the TUSS scheme needs any improvement? If so, what areas could be improved?

	Total (n=647) %	A person with a disability (n=588) %	A carer/relative of a person with a disability (n=65) %
Total	100	100	100
NET	100	100	100
TOTAL (P) POSITIVE	42	43	42
TOTAL (S) SCHEME	21	22	20
TOTAL (A) ACCESSIBILITY	18	17	20
TOTAL (D) DRIVER	15	16	14
TOTAL (W) WAIT TIME	11	11	8
TOTAL (O) OPERATOR	5	4	15
(P) Happy with TUSS scheme/No improvements required	31	32	25
(S) Subsidy limit/Increase the limit/Cost issues/Too expensive	8	9	9
(A) More Maxi/MPT/Wheelchair accessible taxis available (general mentions)	8	8	9
(D) Vouchers/Training drivers on correct completion of vouchers/Issues with filling in vouchers/Takes too long	7	7	6
(S) Swipe card instead of voucher book	6	7	5
(P) Happy with service/Generally a good service	6	5	9
(P) Other positive comment/Like particular aspect of service	6	6	9
(W) Waiting time in general	5	6	0
(W) Waiting time after advanced booking/Don't arrive on time/Not reliable-punctual	5	5	6
(O) Improved and more reliable booking system/service	4	3	14
(D) TUSS Training - Drivers take more vouchers than required/need to be more accountable/open to abuse	3	3	0
(N/A) Improvements needed (General mentions)	2	2	2
(A) More Maxi/MPT/Wheelchair accessible taxis available at specific times (Evening/Weekend/Public holidays/Peak/Off-peak etc.)	2	2	2
(A) Taxis not turning up for short distances	2	2	0
(S) Same discount should apply for all cab types	2	2	3
(D) Driver courtesy - Knock on door/help in and out of car	2	1	3
(D) Drivers to speak better English/Prefer Australian drivers	2	1	3
(D) Poor service from drivers/Reluctant drivers/Need to monitor drivers	2	2	2

Q3. Do you think the TUSS scheme needs any improvement? If so, what areas could be improved?

(cont.)	Total (n=647) %	A person with a disability (n=588) %	A carer/relative of a person with a disability (n=65) %
Total	100	100	100
(A) Being able to guarantee a return service/Difficulty returning home	1	1	6
(A) Taxis don't turn up at all	1	1	2
(D) Better driver manners (More polite/Less surly/More respectful etc.)	1	2	0
(N/A) Training (General mentions)	1	1	5
(S) Australia wide/same system in all states (National system)	1	2	0
(S) Need more clarity/information on vouchers	1	2	0
(S) TUSS - Greater reductions when travelling to work or doctor appointment/expensive to do	1	1	3
(A) Vehicles need to be better suited to disabled (Wider hoists/Room for three-wheelers/Seatbelts etc.)	1	1	2
(S) Mention/commend another Taxi service (Interstate/Other WA service/International service)	1	1	2
(D) Driver dishonesty	1	1	2
(A) Give priority to disabled/Don't pick up party groups first	1	1	0
(D) Training - Drivers to have a better understanding of disabled persons needs	1	1	0
(A) Other improvements to vehicle ambience/Comfort	1	1	0
(A) Taking multiple disabled WC passengers/shared cabs	1	1	0
(D) Training - Area knowledge	1	1	2
(S) Greater incentive for drivers to turn up/Turn up on time (Better pay/Treatment etc.)	1	1	2
(A) Make a taxi service solely for disabled/Elderly	1	0	3
(O) Operator and/or driver to call if running late/Confirm booking/Time of arrival	1	1	2
(S) Meter - Different fee each time	1	1	0

Q4. If you think there could be improvements, what do you think the Taxi Industry Board should focus on first?

	Total (n=691) %	A person with a disability (n=594) %	A carer/relative of a person with a disability (n=69) %
Total	100	100	100
TOTAL (A) ACCESSIBILITY	38	37	45
TOTAL (P) POSITIVE	20	21	9
TOTAL D (DRIVER)	19	19	19
TOTAL (W) WAIT TIME	17	18	13
TOTAL (S) SCHEME	10	11	9
TOTAL (O) OPERATOR	8	7	14
(A) More Maxi/MPT/Wheelchair accessible taxis available (general mentions)	27	26	36
(P) Happy with service/Generally a good service/No improvements required	17	18	9
(W) Waiting time in general	9	9	9
(W) Waiting time after advanced booking/Don't arrive on time/Not reliable-punctual	8	9	4
(O) Improved and more reliable booking system/service	6	5	12
(D) Training - Drivers to have a better understanding of disabled persons needs	4	5	6
(S) Subsidy limit/Increase the limit/Cost issues/Too expensive	4	5	4
(A) More Maxi/MPT/Wheelchair accessible taxis available at specific times (Evening/Weekend/Public holidays/Peak/Off-peak etc.)	4	4	3
(D) Drivers to speak better English/Prefer Australian drivers	4	4	0
(D) Training - Area knowledge	3	3	1
(D) Vouchers/Training drivers on correct completion of vouchers/Issues with filling in vouchers/Takes too long	3	3	6
(P) Other positive comment/Like particular aspect of service	3	3	0
(D) Better driver manners (More polite/Less surly/More respectful etc.)	3	3	1
(A) Vehicles need to be better suited to disabled (Wider hoists/Room for three- wheelers/Seatbelts etc.)	2	3	1
(D) Driver courtesy - Knock on door/help in and out of car	2	2	6
(D) Poor service from drivers/Reluctant drivers/Need to monitor drivers	2	2	1

Q4. If you think there could be improvements, what do you think the Taxi Industry Board should focus on first?

(cont.)	Total (n=691) %	A person with a disability (n=594) %	A carer/relative of a person with a disability (n=69) %
Total	100	100	100
(S) Swipe card instead of voucher book	2	2	1
(N/A) Improvements needed (General mentions)	2	1	4
(A) Give priority to disabled/Don't pick up party groups first	2	2	1
(O) Operator and/or driver to call if running late/Confirm booking/Time of arrival	2	2	3
(A) Other improvements to vehicle ambience/Comfort	2	2	3
(N/A) Training (General mentions)	2	1	4
(A) Taxis don't turn up at all	1	2	0
(A) Make a taxi service solely for disabled/Elderly	1	1	4
(D) Driver dishonesty	1	2	0
(S) Greater incentive for drivers to turn up/Turn up on time (Better pay/Treatment etc.)	1	1	1
(S) Meter - taking longer route	1	1	0
(D) Safety and security - Unsafe driving	1	1	0
(S) Meter - Incorrect taxi charges	1	1	1
(A) Taxis not turning up for short distances	1	1	1
(A) Being able to guarantee a return service/Difficulty returning home	1	1	0
(A) Need dual use taxis/All MPTs to be wheelchair accessible/More flexible use	1	1	0
(O) Operator - rude/impolite/lack patience-understanding	1	1	1

Q5. Have you got any other comments you would like to make about the Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Service in Perth?

	Total (n=733) %	A person with a disability (n=633) %	A carer/relative of a person with a disability (n=72) %
Total	100	100	100
TOTAL (P) POSITIVE	58	58	54
TOTAL (A) ACCESSIBILITY	20	20	28
TOTAL (W) WAIT TIME	12	11	15
TOTAL (D) DRIVER	10	10	14
TOTAL (S) SCHEME	8	8	4
TOTAL (O) OPERATOR	6	6	11
(P) Happy with service/Generally a good service	21	21	19
(P) Other positive comment/Like particular aspect of service	20	20	31
(P) No/Nothing/None (written)	18	18	8
(A) More Maxi/MPT/Wheelchair accessible taxis available (general mentions)	8	8	15
(W) Waiting time after advanced booking/Don't arrive on time/Not reliable-punctual	6	6	8
(W) Waiting time in general	6	5	8
(O) Improved and more reliable booking system/service	4	3	11
(A) More Maxi/MPT/Wheelchair accessible taxis available at specific times (Evening/Weekend/Public holidays/Peak/Off-peak etc.)	3	3	6
(D) Training - Drivers to have a better understanding of disabled persons needs	3	3	3
(A) Being able to guarantee a return service/Difficulty returning home	2	2	4
(A) Taxis don't turn up at all	2	2	4
(D) Better driver manners (More polite/Less surly/More respectful etc.)	2	2	6
(A) Vehicles need to be better suited to disabled (Wider hoists/Room for three-wheelers/Seatbelts etc.)	2	2	0
(D) Driver courtesy - Knock on door/help in and out of car	2	2	0
(A) Other improvements to vehicle ambience/Comfort	2	2	1
(S) Subsidy limit/Increase the limit/Cost issues/Too expensive	2	2	1

Q5. Have you got any other comments you would like to make about the Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Service in Perth?

(cont.)	Total (n=733) %	A person with a disability (n=633) %	A carer/relative of a person with a disability (n=72) %
Total	100	100	100
(S) Mention/commend another Taxi service (Interstate/Other WA service/International service)	1	2	0
(A) Give priority to disabled/Don't pick up party groups first	1	1	0
(N/A) Improvements needed (General mentions)	1	1	4
(D) Drivers to speak better English/Prefer Australian drivers	1	1	1
(N/A) Training (General mentions)	1	1	6
(O) Operator and/or driver to call if running late/Confirm booking/Time of arrival	1	1	1
(S) Meter - Incorrect taxi charges	1	1	0
(D) Vouchers/Training drivers on correct completion of vouchers/Issues with filling in vouchers/Takes too long	1	1	1
(W) Safety and security - Waiting times for taxi (night time-other times)	1	1	1
(D) Driver dishonesty	1	1	1
(D) Poor service from drivers/Reluctant drivers/Need to monitor drivers	1	1	1
(D) Training - Area knowledge	1	1	0
(O) Operator - rude/impolite/lack patience-understanding	1	1	0
(S) Vouchers are good/appreciate vouchers	1	1	0
(A) Taxis not turning up for short distances	1	1	0
(O) Operator-Driver-Client - Communication issues	1	1	1
(P) Happy with TUSS scheme	1	1	0
(S) Meter - taking longer route	1	1	0
(A) Need dual use taxis/All MPTs to be wheelchair accessible/More flexible use	1	1	0
(D) Safety and security - Unsafe driving	1	1	0
(S) Australia wide/same system in all states (National system)	1	1	0
(S) Greater incentive for drivers to turn up/Turn up on time (Better pay/Treatment etc.)	1	1	0

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