

Blind Citizens Australia ABN 90 006 985 226

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# **MEDIA RELEASE: CBA to become our most disability-friendly bank, unless you’re blind**

Blind Citizens Australia congratulates the Commonwealth Bank of Australia on making its facilities more accessible for people with disability, and releasing its access and Inclusion plan 2017-2020. But we strongly criticise the CBA for rolling out over 75,000 devices to retail outlets that blind people cannot use independently.

The Commonwealth Bank is the only Australian bank to have released an EFTPOS device which has a touchscreen, but no telephone style keypad. The CBA has stated publicly that as of April this year, 75,000 of these devices are being used by retailers in the Australian market, with more being rolled out each week.

"You can't aspire to be the most accessible bank in the country while continuing to create thousands of retail outlets which exclude people who are blind or vision impaired," said Emma Bennison, Executive Officer of Blind Citizens Australia.

"You may have a great Smartphone banking app, and talking ATMs, but until your Albert EFTPOS machine can be used quickly and independently by people such as me who cannot see the touchscreen, you have not achieved access to your services for all Australians."

The lack of a tactile, physical keypad on a machine, which has inadequate and inaccessible speech output, means that a person who cannot see the screen cannot independently complete their transaction.

"People who are blind are being asked to divulge their pin number to a retail staff member to make a payment. This is totally unacceptable, no doubt breaches the terms of their credit card agreement and is probably against the law. I cannot complete transactions which other Australians make ten or twenty times a day." Ms Bennison said.

"We have raised this issue with the bank, and they are engaging with us. But in the mean-time, our members are finding that each week, many more shops and restaurants in their local communities are no longer accessible to them. This exclusion of thousands of people who are blind or vision impaired is simply unacceptable conduct from one of our largest corporate citizens."

Blind Citizens Australia has requested the bank to stop the rollout until the machines are able to be used by all, and has encouraged other financial institutions not to go down the same path of exclusion.

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