**Summary of BCA Inform - Challenges with Taxi and Rideshare Services**

The July session of BCA Inform was all about the challenges faced by people who are blind or vision impaired when attempting to use taxis or rideshare services.

We were joined by Annette Ferguson (President - Dog Guide Handlers Australia), Jeremy Anderson (National Policy & Government Relations Advisor - Guide Dogs Australia), Nina Smith (Founder & Director - TravelPaws) and Sarah Emery (Chief Operating Officer - Assistance Dogs Australia), who along with Jack Reynolds-Ryan (Manager of Policy & Advocacy - BCA) form the Assistance Dogs Advisory Committee - Taxi & Rideshare Services (AACTRS).

The members of the AACTRS Panel spoke about the way they are working together to prevent and eliminate refusals in taxi and rideshare services in Australia for people with approved Assistance Dogs. The panel talked about the problem of taxi/rideshare refusals getting worse, and the need for collective advocacy, including building collective action not just in the blind and vision impaired community, but with handlers of accredited assistance dogs and wheelchair users. The importance of data and evidence was also discussed, and BCA members were encouraged to either get in touch with the BCA Advocacy Team, or use the Dog Guide Handlers Australia ‘Refusal Register’ whenever this occurs.

BCA members then had a chance to ask questions or raise comments, and the group discussed how both education and enforcement will be important strategies for tackling this issue. Members also heard how challenging it can be to take Uber through a court process and the techniques they use to avoid accountability.

Members then heard from Corey Crawford (National Policy Officer - BCA) with a summary of the various taxi subsidy schemes that operate across the States and Territories.

The session ended with an acknowledgement that not all the issues were able to be covered in the one session, and future BCA Inform or Conversations events could cover topics including: accessibility of booking apps, consistency of subsidy schemes as well as portability for use interstate, and the backwards steps in the accessibility of vehicles themselves.

You can access [DGHA’s Dog Guide Refusal Register here](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd6Uq7CvPrFnq3kgx76HznGGKvN-WxahOQq2AfBI5QpPfQOyw/viewform?usp=sf_link).