**BCA Inform: Advocacy in Action - How BCA Supports You**

On Tuesday, 1st July, BCA Inform delved into various aspects of advocacy, guided by the extensive experience of Martin Stewart, BCA’s National Advocacy Officer.

Martin began by discussing the skills and pressures involved in advocacy work, underscoring the value of confident, informed support and the unique insights that lived experience brings. He encouraged advocates to remain grounded and objective, even when personally affected by the issues at hand.

The conversation expanded to the broader implications of accessibility, with Martin highlighting how individual experiences often reflect systemic barriers. He urged attendees to consider the wider community impact when raising accessibility concerns and emphasized collaboration and attentive listening as key to effective change.

Empathy and creativity were central themes throughout. Martin shared strategies for human-centered advocacy and the importance of storytelling in building understanding. A standout example was his creative approach to improving train safety, where a musical message led to real world infrastructure changes.

The session then moved to cover a discussion about practical challenges in public infrastructure and technology, including inaccessible ATMs, self-service checkouts, and vending machines. Attendees shared their lived experiences, and Martin stressed the need to inform companies about the requirements of blind or vision impaired users. Trials of accessible technologies overseas, such as talking trolleys, were mentioned as promising developments.

Concerns were also raised about the fading tactile markings on Australian banknotes. Martin committed to writing about the issue in a future Member Update to gather broader feedback before approaching the Reserve Bank.

The session concluded with reflections on the limits of advocacy - such as restrictions tied to funding or scope - and a reminder that while not every problem can be solved immediately, collective advocacy remains a powerful tool. Martin and other speakers emphasized the importance of professional, informed, and collaborative approaches in pushing for meaningful, lasting accessibility improvements.