

## Media Release

Tuesday, 19 May 2009

### Rights of people with guide dogs protected in Queensland

The case of a visually impaired person being rejected by a taxi driver in Brisbane because he was accompanied by a guide dog is clearly against the law under the Queensland *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991*, (the Act), according to Commissioner Susan Booth of the Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland.

People suffering a visual, hearing or mobility impairment cannot be refused entry to a taxi or other form of public transport under Section 225 of the Act which states that a person must not impose a term that would result in another person with a visual, hearing or mobility impairment being separated from the other person's guide dog.

Commissioner Booth said, "It is astonishing that this is still occurring — we have far too many cases where this kind of discrimination happens."

Under section 85 of the Act, it is also illegal to refuse to rent accommodation to people who require the assistance of a guide dog or to require the person to pay an extra charge because the dog lives at the accommodation.

"People need to be aware that they must comply with the Act if a complaint is lodged and, where mediation fails, can be called before the Anti-Discrimination Tribunal where matters such as these are dealt with in a formal legal manner."

Previous matters heard by the Tribunal include the case of a visually impaired man being refused entry into a motel if accompanied by his guide dog which resulted in a \$10,000 fine for the manager who refused to accept the booking because he claimed his liability insurance would not cover 'damage caused as a result of pets running out onto the road.'

**Interview opportunities:** Commissioner Susan Booth of ADCQ is available for telephone interview from 2.00 pm – 4.00 pm.

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