

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2011 - 2016

This plan is available upon request in alternative formats such as large print, electronic format (disk or emailed), audio or Braille.

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Acknowledgements

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet acknowledges the input received from Department staff and some individuals within the community, which has been invaluable in the preparation of this Disability Access and Inclusion Plan.

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet

Role of the Department

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC) is primarily responsible for the administration of executive government services and the management of government policy. The Department provides services primarily to the Premier and Cabinet, Ministers, current and former Members of Parliament and to State Government agencies.

The mission of the Department is to

‘Support the Premier and Cabinet in achieving the Government’s vision for all Western Australians, through leadership and coordination and promotion of excellence in the public sector.’

Departmental Structure

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet is divided up into seven directorates, each providing specific functions and services.

- **State Administration** provides support services to Ministers and Members of Parliament as well as the management of State occasions and official visits.
- **The Cabinet Secretariat** provides advice and support in relation to the management of cabinet business, State Parliament, the executive council, executive government and the Economic and Expenditure Reform Committee.
- **The Cabinet and Policy Division** provides policy advice to executive government and provides support to other agencies to identify and promote options for innovative government service delivery to better reflect community needs.
- **Corporate Support** provides a variety of services relating to finance, human resources, information management and technology, facilities management, corporate governance, FOI coordination and the media office.
- **The State Law Publisher** is the official publisher of Western Australian legislation and statutory information and provides printing services and dissemination for this information.
- **The Constitutional Centre** of Western Australia increases public awareness of the federal system of government with particular emphasis on its constitutional basis and the relationship with the State system.
- **The Office of State Security and Emergency Coordination (OSSEC)** works to enhance relationships across government and with the private sector to maximise Western Australia’s response to terrorism and other significant emergencies. The core functions of the Office are Counter-Terrorism and Emergency Coordination.

Services and Contact With the Public

The Department is essentially involved in providing services to executive government and in the management of strategic government policy. Therefore, services provided direct to the general public is limited to a few specific units of the Department.

The following sections of the Department have varying degrees of contact with the general public:

- The Department's **Community Access and Correspondence Secretariat** provides a facility for members of the general public to contact the Premier by phone, letter, email or through his website.
- The **Protocol Branch** has contact with the general public when planning and coordinating official visits to the State by overseas dignitaries, arranging State hospitality functions and major government ceremonial and special events.
- The **State Law Publisher** provides limited publishing and legislative sales services to the general public.
- The **Constitutional Centre** provides education services to school groups and other community groups visiting the Centre.
- **Ministerial Offices** generally have very limited contact with the general public. All access is subject to prior appointment and strict security arrangements.
- There are 100 **Electorate Office** sites located throughout the State to support the elected Members of Parliament. Each MP has direct contact with their constituents, although the Department has no responsibility for their role, actions or conduct of their business. The Department's role is to provide administration of members' entitlements and to provide administrative support such as assisting in leasing offices, vehicles, computing and other general office and staffing needs. The Department provides advice on the requirement for access and inclusion for people with disability where appropriate.

Planning for Better Access

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (2009), 18.5% of Australians or around one in five people, identify themselves as having some form of disability. It is a requirement of the *Disability Services Act 1993* that public authorities develop and implement a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) that outlines the ways in which the Department will ensure that people with disability have equal access to its facilities and services. Other legislation underpinning access and inclusion includes the *WA Equal Opportunity Act 1984* and the Commonwealth *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA)*.

Our Commitment to Access and Inclusion

DPC is committed to continually improving access and inclusion for people with disability their families and carers. The Department strives to achieve the highest standards in access and inclusion and to set an example for others to follow.

Progress Since 2007

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet is committed to facilitating the inclusion of people with disability through the improvement of access to its information, services and facilities. Since the adoption of Disability Access and Inclusion Plan in 2007, the Department has implemented a number of initiatives and progressed towards better access. With only limited services provided directly to the general public, and therefore people with disability, these improvements have been to ensure that where possible, all DPC buildings are accessible to people with disability, and that all events and public consultations are accessible for people with disability.

Development of the 2011-2016 Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

Responsibility for the Planning Process

A DAIP Committee of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet was established in April 2007 comprising of representatives from sections of the Department with the most direct contact to the public. This committee is ongoing and will oversee the development, implementation, review and evaluation of the Plan.

Review and Consultation Process

As required under the Act, in 2011, the Department began a review of its DAIP 2007-2011 and drafted a new five-year Plan to guide further improvements to access and inclusion. The review process included:

- An examination of the 2007-2011 DAIP.
- A review of any complaints made to the Department that are relevant to disability access and inclusion.
- A review the complaints mechanism.
- A review of the areas of the Department with direct public contact or that may impact disability access and inclusion.
- A review of key policy documents.
- An Investigation of disability access and inclusion good practice resources.
- A review of the DAIPs developed by other public service agencies.

The DAIP consultation comprised of a call for feedback on the proposed DAIP strategies by:

- Advertising the review on the DPC website.
- Advertising the review on the DPC intranet.

Findings of the Review and Consultation

The review and consultation has shown that the strategies in the 2007-2011 DAIP were successful in achieving access and inclusion of people with disability. The new plan will focus on ensuring that the Department continues to provide a high standard of access and inclusion to people with a disability. Other amendments to the Plan include a higher emphasis on the following:

Customer Service. Managers who work in public contact areas have indicated that their staff have not received training in providing customer service to people with disability and would gain some benefit from receiving adequate training. While the current strategies include providing information to new staff, there are many existing staff who should be made aware of disability access and inclusion issues.

Disability Access and Inclusion Awareness. Some business units with very limited public access were unaware of the need to ensure that people with disability were able to access their services. These units would benefit from an increased awareness of DAIP requirements and of the new Plan.

Strategies to Improve Access and Inclusion

This DAIP will be effective for five years from July 2011 to June 2016. Within the six outcome areas, strategies have been identified where there is potential for improved access and inclusion. The broad strategies provide flexibility to respond to emerging access and inclusion needs. The strategies are outlined in full on page 8 and will be used to guide the identification of initiatives in the annual implementation plans, for the duration of this DAIP.

Implementation of the DAIP

Responsibility for Implementing the DAIP

It is a requirement of the *Disability Services Act 1993* that public authorities must take all practical measures to ensure that the DAIP is implemented by its officers, employees, agents and contractors. Implementation of the DAIP is the responsibility of all areas of the Department. Each year, the DAIP Committee will develop an Implementation Plan in consultation with the Corporate Executive. Some initiatives in the Implementation Plan will apply to all areas of the Department while others will apply only to a specific area. The Implementation Plan sets out who is responsible for each action.

Communication of the DAIP

Copies of the Department's DAIP will be communicated via:

- The Department's website
- A notice placed in The West Australian newspaper
- A notice on the intranet homepage

As plans are amended both staff and the community will be advised of the availability of updated plans.

DAIP Reviewing, Evaluation and Reporting

The Department's DAIP will be reviewed at least every five years, in accordance with the *Disability Services Act 1993*.

The DAIP may be amended on a more regular basis to reflect progress and any access and inclusion issues that may arise. Whenever the DAIP is amended, a copy of the amended plan will be lodged with the Disability Services Commission.

Review and Monitoring

The Department will review progress against the strategies and undertake to develop a new DAIP every five years. The review of the Department's current DAIP and its achievements will be included in the DAIP 2016/2021 which will be submitted to the Disability Services Commission in 2016.

The Department will annually:

- Review progress on the initiatives detailed in the annual Implementation Plan.

- Prepare a report each year on the initiatives implemented from the DAIP. A status report will be provided to the Department's Corporate Executive for formal endorsement.

Evaluation

The DAIP Committee shall meet twice a year to consider the impact of any organisational and service changes to identify potential new barriers and any that may have been missed following the initial consultation and development of the 2011/2016 DAIP.

Where the DAIP Committee has identified new barriers that need to be addressed consultation shall occur with all relevant parties and action shall be taken to develop and implement strategies and tasks to improve service delivery in those areas.

Where any significant barriers have been identified the DAIP Committee may as part of the consulting process consider calling for input through the Department's website and/or directly from key disability service providers.

New or amended strategies will be included in the DAIP and submitted to Corporate Executive for approval.

New or amended DAIPs will be forwarded to the Disability Services Commission as required.

Copies of the amended DAIP, once endorsed by the Department, will be available to the community.

Reporting

The Department will report on the implementation of its DAIP through its Annual Report and the prescribed progress report template to the Disability Services Commission by 31 July each year, outlining:

- its progress towards the desired outcomes of its DAIP; and
- the progress of its agents and contractors towards meeting the six desired outcomes; and the strategies it used to inform its agents and contractors of its DAIP.

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan Strategies 2011-2016

Outcome 1: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by, the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.	
Strategy	Timeline
Monitor the Department's Access and Inclusion Plan to ensure it supports equitable access to services by people with disability throughout the various functions of the Department.	Ongoing
Ensure that any events are organised so that they are accessible to people with disability.	Ongoing
Ensure that all agents and contractors of the Department are aware of their requirements under the DAIP.	Ongoing
Incorporate the objectives of the DAIP into the Department's strategic business planning, budgeting processes and other relevant plans and strategies.	Ongoing
Ensure that all staff are aware of their requirements under the DAIP, with a focus on areas with contact with the public.	Ongoing

Outcome 2: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.	
Strategy	Timeline
Ensure, where possible, all Departmental buildings and facilities are physically accessible to people with disability.	Ongoing
Ensure, where possible, adequate parking to meet the needs of people with disability in terms of quantity and location.	Ongoing
Ensure all future premises leased by the Department take into account the needs of people with disability.	Ongoing
Ensure that Department reception and client contact areas are accessible to people with disability.	Ongoing

Outcome 3: People with disability can access information from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet as readily as other people are able to access it.	
Strategy	Timeline
Ensure there is ongoing development and maintenance of the Department's websites to improve information for people with disability.	Ongoing
Commit to making publications as accessible as possible (written in plain English and succinct).	Ongoing
Ensure all Department publications are readily available and able to be provided in alternative formats on request.	Ongoing
Improve community awareness that Department information is available in alternative formats upon request.	Ongoing
Ensure that staff are aware of accessible information needs and how to obtain information in other formats.	Ongoing

Outcome 4: People with disability receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet as other people receive.	
Strategy	Timeline
Advise new and existing staff about disability and access issues.	Ongoing
Provide specific training and support to new and existing staff who have direct contact with the public and community stakeholders on providing service to people with disability.	January 2012 and ongoing

Outcome 5: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.	
Strategy	Timeline
Ensure that grievance mechanisms/complaints handling systems are accessible for people with disability.	Ongoing
Ensure that staff have the knowledge to facilitate the receipt of complaints from people with a disability.	Ongoing

Outcome 6: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

Strategy	Timeline
Ensure that consultations with the public are held in an accessible manner.	Ongoing
Ensure information detailing the nature of the consultation is available in accessible formats	Ongoing