

THE DEPARTMENT OF THE PREMIER AND CABINET

DISABILITY ACCESS AND INCLUSION PLAN 2007 - 2011

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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Background

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet is a Department that provides services primarily to the Premier and Cabinet, Ministers, current and former Members of Parliament, State Government agencies, CEOs, the Senior Executive Service, and public sector employees. As the Department is essentially involved in the development of broad Government policy, services provided direct to the general public, and therefore people with disabilities, is limited to a few specific units of the Department.

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.’

Services are provided from buildings leased by the Department primarily in the Perth CBD and a number of other leased sites throughout the State.

Functions, facilities and services provided by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet provides:

- **Administrative support and advice responsive to the Premier’s requirements as Head of Government;** this service also includes the promotion of Western Australia’s interests overseas and communicating Government policies and activities
- **Managing Matters of State;** includes providing a range of services on behalf of the Premier, including support for the Executive Government; administration of entitlements for Members of Parliament; support for Ministerial Offices and the Leader of the Opposition Parties; developing whole-of-government positions on treaties, defence, federal reform and other matters raised through the Council of Australian Governments; managing and coordinating Western Australian input to federal negotiations, coordinating delivery of Government services to the Indian Ocean Territories; and provision of advice, briefing and support to the Premier, Ministers and other Government agencies in respect to the prevention, response and recovery from significant security and/or natural disaster incidents.

- **Management of Policy** includes providing advice to and co-ordination for the Premier and Cabinet on key policy matters to ensure an effective government-wide perspective in the following policy areas – economic, environmental, regional, social and sustainability;
- **Support for the Premier as Minister for Public Sector Management** includes providing advice, assistance and support to the Minister for Public Sector Management and the public sector or a range of public sector management matters.
- **Parliamentary, Statutory and Legislative Publishing Services** provides a secure, confidential and time critical publishing service to meet the needs of Parliament and Government;
- **Management of the Constitutional Centre Programs** involves helping to educate the community on Western Australian and Commonwealth Constitutions, and the Federal system of government through the provision of exhibitions and programs at the Constitutional Centre;
- **Support for Implementation of the State's Road Safety Initiatives** support is provided to the Road Safety Council to undertake implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the State's road safety initiatives; and
- **e-Government Policy and Coordination** promotes and leads the implementation of the e-Government Strategy for the Western Australian Public Sector; develops a policy framework, standards and guidelines that are consistent with the e-Government Strategy for the Western Australian Public Sector, and with national guidelines; initiates, leads and coordinates strategic e-government projects that deliver improved internal efficiencies, integrated service delivery and greater opportunities for community participation.

The Department's Customers

Primary Customers

- The Premier as head of Government, Minister for Public Sector Management; State Development; Federal Affairs
- Cabinet and Ministers

On behalf of the Premier and Cabinet the Department also provides services to:

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| • Members of Parliament | • Public Sector Employees (limited) |
| • Public Sector Agencies | • General Public (Limited) |
| • Chief Executive Officers | |
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Contact with the general public:

Overall the Department has limited direct contact with the general public. Its major focus is on the Premier and Cabinet and to a lesser extent to the other client groups dot pointed above. However, the following sections of the Department have varying degrees of contact with the general public.

Department of the Premier and Cabinet, 197 St George's Terrace Perth

The following Divisions, Offices or Units are located in Governor Stirling Tower at the above address.

The Department's Community Access and Correspondence Secretariat provide a facility for members of the general public to contact the Premier by phone, letter or through his website. Limited personal contact is made with the general public at the Department's Ground Floor, Reception.

The Public Sector Management Division has contact with those members of the public who are prospective State government employees or trainees. This particularly applies in the areas of general entry-level employment, Disability and Indigenous Employment in the public sector.

The Protocol and Security Services Branch also has limited 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 following Divisions, Offices or Units are located outside the Governor Stirling Tower.

State Law Publisher, 10 William Street, Perth

The business community and members of the general public make contact with the State Law Publisher.

Constitutional Centre, Parliament Place, West Perth

The general public (particularly schools and other community groups) visit the Constitutional Centre.

Ministerial Offices – Various City Locations

The general public has limited access to Minister's offices. All access is subject to prior appointment and strict security arrangements.

Office of Road Safety, 40 St George's Terrace, Perth

Key stakeholders and a limited number of members of the general public make contact with the Office of Road Safety.

Office of e-Government, Dumas House, 2 Havelock Street, West Perth

Key stakeholders and a limited number of members of the general public make contact with the Office of e-Government.

Electorate Offices

There are 91 Electorate offices located throughout the State - one for each elected Member of Parliament (MP). 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 only role is to provide administrative support such as assisting in leasing offices, vehicles, computing and other general office and staffing needs.

Planning for Better Access

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (2003), 20.6% of Australians or more than 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 disabilities 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)*.

Progress Since 1995

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet is committed to facilitating the inclusion of people with disabilities through the improvement of access to its information, services and facilities. The Department adopted its first Disability Service Plan (DSP) in 1995 to address the barriers for people with disabilities who need to access the Department's services and facilities. The DSP addressed both its statutory requirements under the *WA Disability Services Act (1993)* and its obligations under the *Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act (1992)*. The DSP has undergone three upgrades since 1995, primarily to take account of the structural changes occurring during that period.

Since the adoption of the initial DSP, the Department has implemented a number of initiatives and made progress towards better access where relevant. With only a limited services provided directly to the general public, and therefore people with disabilities, these improvements apply mainly to access to buildings we lease, the Department's internet sites and other general information.

Access and inclusion policy statement for people with disabilities, their families and carers

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet is committed to:

- ensuring that people with disabilities, their families and carers are able to fully access the range of departmental services and facilities (both in-house and contracted), providing them with the same opportunities, rights and responsibilities enjoyed by all other people in the community;
- ensuring that people with disabilities are given the opportunity to participate in shaping the development of their community through the consultative process;
- consulting with people with disabilities, their families and carers and where required, disability organisations to ensure that barriers to access and inclusion are addressed appropriately;
- ensuring that its agents and contractors work towards the desired access and inclusion outcomes in the DAIP; and
- achieving the six desired outcomes of its DAIP.

The six desired outcomes are:

1. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by, the relevant public authority.
2. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of the relevant public authority.
3. People with disabilities receive information from the relevant public authority in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it.
4. People with disabilities receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of the relevant public authority.
5. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the relevant public authority.
6. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by the relevant public authority.

Development of the 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 one representative from sections of the Department with most direct contact the public, to oversee the development, implementation, review and evaluation of the plan.

Community Consultation Process

In 2007, the Department undertook to review its DSP, consult with key stakeholders and draft a new DAIP to guide further improvements to access and inclusion.

The process included:

- examination of the initial DSP and subsequent review reports to see what has been achieved and what still needs work;
- examination of other relevant Department documents and strategies;
- investigation of contemporary trends and good practice in access and inclusion;
- consultation with key staff; and
- consultation with the community.

The *Disability Services Act Regulations* set out the minimum consultation requirements for public authorities in relation to DAIPs.

State Government authorities must call for submissions (either general or specific) by notice in a statewide newspaper or on any website maintained by or on behalf of the State Government authority. Other mechanisms may also be used.

The following strategies were used in the consultation:

- The community was advised through the Department's website that they could provide input into the development of the plan.

Findings of the Consultation

The review and consultation found that most of the initial objectives in the Department's DSP had been achieved and that a new plan was required to

ensure currency and relevance. The new plan should not only address current access barriers but also reflect contemporary values and practices, such as striving for inclusion and meeting more than the minimum compliance with access standards. The plan must also keep abreast of legislative and regulatory changes.

The consultation also identified some remaining barriers to access and inclusion, to be addressed in the DAIP Implementation Plan.

Access Barriers

While the review and consultation noted achievements in improving access it also identified some barriers that require redress. These access barriers include:

- elements of the Department 's website may require improvement to best meet the needs of people with disabilities;
- events may not always be held in a manner and location that best facilitates the participation of people with disabilities;
- physical infrastructure may not always meet the needs of people with disabilities; and
- staff may not be sufficiently informed to provide the same level of service to people with disabilities.

The identification of these barriers informed the development of strategies in the DAIP.

Responsibility for Implementing the DAIP

It is a requirement of the *Disability Services Act* 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. Some actions 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. The DAIP Committee will guide the overall implementation of the plan in consultation with the Corporate Executive.

Communicating the Plan to Staff and People with Disabilities

In May 2007, the Department sent copies of the draft DAIP to all those who contributed to the planning process for feedback. In July 2007 the plan was finalised and formally endorsed by the DPC's Corporate Executive.

The DAIP is available to the community on our website www.dpc.wa.gov.au and this has been advertised through the West Australian Newspaper as required by the *Disability Services Act*.

The Department has also advised, through its website that copies of the plan are available to the community upon request and in alternative formats if required, including hard copy in standard and large print, electronic format, audio format on cassette or CD and by email and on the Department's website.

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

Review and Evaluation Mechanisms

The *Disability Services Act* sets out the minimum review requirements for public authorities in relation to DAIPs. The Department's DAIP will be reviewed at least every five years, in accordance with the Act.

The DAIP Implementation Plan 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 DAIP Committee will meet every six months in the first year, and as required thereafter, to review progress on the implementation of the strategies identified in the DAIP.
- The review of the Department's DAIP will be included in the DAIP 2012/2016 which will be submitted to the Disability Services Commission in 2012. The report will outline what has been achieved under the Department's DAIP 2007/2011.
- The DAIP Committee will prepare a report each year on the implementation of the DAIP. A status report will be provided to the Department's Corporate Executive for formal endorsement.

Evaluation

- The DAIP Committee shall meet once a year, prior to July 31 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 2007/2011 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 in alternative formats.

Reporting on the DAIP

The *Disability Services Act* sets out the minimum reporting requirements for public authorities in relation to DAIPs. 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.

Strategies to Improve Access and Inclusion

As a result of the consultation process the following overarching strategies will guide tasks, reflected in the Implementation Plan, that the Department will undertake from 2007/2011 to improve access to its services, buildings and information. The six desired outcomes provide a framework for improving access and inclusion for people with disabilities.

Outcome 1: People with disabilities 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
Establish a DAIP Committee to guide the implementation of DAIP activities	May 2007
Monitor the Department's Access and Inclusion policy to ensure it supports equitable access to services by people with disabilities throughout the various functions of the Department.	July 2008
Ensure that any events are organised so that they are accessible to people with disabilities.	July 2007 and ongoing
Ensure that all agents and contractors of the Department are aware of their requirements under the DAIP.	July 2007 and ongoing
Incorporate the objectives of the DAIP into the Department's strategic business planning, budgeting processes and other relevant plans and strategies.	July 2008 and ongoing

Outcome 2: People with disabilities 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 all Departmental buildings and facilities are physically accessible to people with disabilities where possible.	June 2008
Ensure where possible, adequate parking to meet the needs of people with disabilities in terms of quantity and location.	June 2008
Ensure all future premises leased by the Department take into account the needs of people with disabilities.	December 2007 and ongoing
Ensure that Department reception and client contact areas are accessible to people with disabilities.	June 2008

Outcome 3: People with disabilities can access information from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet as readily as other people are able to access it.

Strategy	Timeline
Ongoing development and maintenance of the Department's websites to improve information for people with disabilities.	Ongoing
Commit to making publications as accessible as possible (written in plain English and succinct).	June 2008 and ongoing
Ensure all Department publications are readily available and able to be provided in alternative formats on request.	June 2008 and ongoing
Improve staff awareness of accessible information needs and how to obtain information in other formats.	December 2007

Outcome 4: People with disabilities 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
Inform staff of their role in implementing and monitoring the plan to ensure its success.	July 2007
Improve the awareness of new staff about disability and access issues.	December 2007

Outcome 5: People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

Strategy	Timeline
Ensure that current grievance mechanisms/complaints handling system is accessible for people with disabilities.	December 2007
Improve staff knowledge so they can facilitate the receipt of complaints from people with a disability.	March 2008

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

Strategy	Timeline
Improve access for people with disabilities to the established consultative processes of the Department, including the capacity to accept verbal communications.	March 2008
Commit to ongoing monitoring of the DAIP to ensure implementation and satisfactory outcomes.	July 2007