

Disability Action Plan for 2010 - 2014

Department for Water

Promoting Independence

Introduction

The Department for Water (DFW) acknowledges the diversity of the South Australian community. As part of its endeavour to reflect and benefit from this diversity, DFW has developed the Disability Action Plan 2010 – 2014. The main purpose of this plan is to provide a structured approach in DFW towards identifying and systematically removing discriminatory practices affecting people with disabilities. The plan's intention is to effect proactive change that makes equal opportunity a reality for people with disabilities, including people who might make use of specialist services provided by the agency, who seek employment in, or who are already a part of DFW's work force.

Legislative and Policy Context

The Commonwealth's *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the disability discrimination provisions of the South Australian *Equal Opportunity Act 1984* provide the legislative basis for eliminating policies and practices that treat people with disabilities less favourably than those without a disability. The strategy, **Promoting Independence: Disability Action Plans for SA**, provides a framework for action by South Australian Government Portfolios and their agencies to address the requirements of this legislation.

The **Promoting Independence** strategy is developed and monitored by the Department for Families and Communities.

A core component of this strategy is that each State Government department is required to have an Executive endorsed Disability Action Plan, furthering the cause of the strategy.

The **Promoting Independence** strategy provides the following six key outcome areas for government departments to focus on:

1. **Accessibility** to services for people with disabilities.
2. **Information provision** is inclusive of people with disabilities.
3. Informed delivery of **advice or services** to people with disabilities, built on an awareness and understanding of the issues affecting people with disabilities.
4. **Effective consultation** with people with disabilities, specifically in the decision-making processes regarding service delivery and the implementation of complaints and grievance mechanisms.
5. **Compliance** with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA) and the South Australian Equal Opportunities Act 1984, and
6. **An increase in rate of employment** of people with a disability.

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The Department's Disability Action Plan will outline activities within the Department for Water that will deliver real outcomes for People with Disabilities. The plan is designed to include the six key objectives as articulated in the Promoting Independence strategy.

Of specific note, within South Australia's Strategic Plan 2007, Outcome 6 Expanding Opportunity is target T6.22 – which seeks to double the number of people with disabilities employed in the public sector by 2014.

The plan is for a period of 4 years, designed to align with the department's Strategic Directions 2010 – 2014 plan and is linked to the State Government electoral cycle.

Progress against the plan will be reported annually via the Promoting Independence report. Objective owners identified are expected to manage their deliverables and report against them appropriately.

Definition of Disability

The *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* provides a broad definition of disability so that anyone with a disability can be protected from unlawful discrimination. All categories of disability are covered: physical, intellectual, psychiatric, sensory, neurological or learning. Discrimination against a person because of some physical disfigurement or because they have some disease-causing organism (for example, the HIV virus) is also included. This definition is therefore broader than the categories of persons with disabilities covered under the South Australian *Disability Services Act 1993* or the South Australian *Equal Opportunity Act 1984*. It is this definition that underpins the *Promoting Independence* strategy.

Definition of Discrimination

Discrimination covers less favourable treatment of a person because of a disability or the disability of a relative or associate. Discrimination can be direct or indirect. Direct discrimination occurs when an individual is treated less favourably because of a disability or perceived disability. Indirect discrimination occurs when reasonable changes or adjustments are not made for a person with a disability or if there are conditions or requirements that disadvantage people with disabilities¹.

¹ Under section 4 of the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*, disability means:

- a. total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions; or
- b. total or partial loss of part of the body; or
- c. the presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness; or
- d. the presence in the body of organisms capable of causing disease or illness; or
- e. the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person's body; or
- f. a disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction; or
- g. a disorder, illness or disease that affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgment or that results in disturbed behaviour.

It includes a disability that:

- h. presently exists; or
- i. previously existed but no longer exists; or
- j. may exist in the future; or
- k. is imputed to a person

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Outcome 1

Accessibility to services for people with disabilities.

No.	Objective	Actions	Performance Indicators / Milestones	Responsibility	Timeline
1.1	Facilities Management – departmental accommodation (in line with the department’s strategic accommodation plan) meets Disability Discrimination Act standards.	Renegotiation of leases for department accommodation is to include the completion of the Department for Transport, Energy and Infrastructure ‘Disability Access Checklist – Guide for Government Owned & Leased Premises’.	Completed checklists are held for each renewed building lease.	Manager, Facilities Management	Ongoing
1.2	Facilities Management – implementation of access audit recommendations.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the recommendations of the previous Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation access audit for the new Department for Water. 2. Determine actions/activities that need to be included in Facilities work program. 	Facilities Management work program includes relevant actions from the access audit.	Manager, Facilities Management	June 2011

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Outcome 2

Information provision is inclusive of people with disabilities.

No.	Objective	Actions	Performance Indicators/Milestones	Responsibility	Timeline
2.1	Ensure the department's Communication strategies consider the needs of people with disabilities.	<p>Where appropriate and practical, supply information in alternative formats.</p> <p>Ensure that interpreter services are engaged if and when requested.</p> <p>Update the department's Communication Strategy template. Ensure template provides author's reference to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Equal Opportunity Act 1984</i> • <i>Disability Discrimination Act 1993</i> 	<p>Communication and Community Engagement (CCE) to maintain qualitative data.</p> <p>Ensure template provides authors reference to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Equal Opportunity Act 1984</i> • <i>Disability Discrimination Act 1993</i> 	Manager, Communication and Community Engagement	Ongoing
2.2	Ensure that printed publications consider the needs of people with disabilities.	<p>All Department for Water publications to be produced within the guidelines recommended by the Office for Disability and Client Services.</p> <p>http://www.sa.gov.au/subject/Community+Support/Disability</p>	CCE to maintain qualitative data.	Manager, Communication and Community Engagement	Ongoing

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<p>2.3</p>	<p>Ensure websites and electronic communications are inclusive where possible of people with disabilities.</p>	<p>The CCE to ensure that websites comply with the State Government’s website standards and adhere to the conformance of level A of the W3C guidelines. (To be noted – www.sa.gov.au is built to Level A compliance. www.waterforgood.sa.gov.au is built to Level AA, and has an accessibility style sheet built into the site.) CCE to also ensure that electronic communication (both internal and external) complies with relevant guidelines for typeface size and style, and colour contrast.</p>	<p>CCE to maintain qualitative data.</p>	<p>Manager, Communication and Community Engagement</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
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Outcome 3

Informed delivery of **advice or services** to people with disabilities, built on an awareness and understanding of the issues affecting people with disabilities.

No.	Objective	Actions	Performance Indicators	Responsibility	Completion Date
3.1	Disability awareness training to be facilitated within the department.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) All new employees to have disability awareness training as part of the department's induction program. 2) Refresher training to be provided periodically as required. 	<p>Disability awareness module to be included in all induction training.</p> <p>80% of all staff to have had disability awareness training (including refresher training) within the past 3 year.</p>	Manager, Organisational Development	Ongoing
3.2	Events	CCE to ensure that adequate access is available at events coordinated by the group, and that information is made available in an appropriate manner.	CCE to maintain qualitative data.	Manager, Communication and Community Engagement	Ongoing

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Outcome 4

Effective consultation with people with disabilities, specifically in the decision-making processes regarding service delivery and in the implementation of complaints and grievance mechanisms.

No.	Objective	Actions	Performance indicators	Responsibility	Completion Date
4.1	Service delivery in relation to Water Licensing to incorporate consideration of disability issues.	Water Licensing Form refresh project to consider access issues in the redesign of Water Licensing forms.	CCE to be engaged to provide advice on incorporating Disability Access within Form design.	Director, Water Planning	June 2011
4.2	Public Safety advice to incorporate consideration of disability access issues.	Hazard warning advice, especially in relation to Riverbank collapse, is to take into consideration messaging options for disabled people. In particular sight impaired people.	Evidence of alternate advice.	Program Leader, Riverbank Collapse	June 2011
4.3	HR policies and procedures are to incorporate information related to people with disabilities.	<p>Updated HR policies and procedures need to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • applicable to all staff • mindful of the requirements of staff with a disability • a support for managers who have staff with a disability <p>Complaints resolution process to be clear and robust to ensure complaints are resolved swiftly to promote a workplace that is free of discrimination, bullying and harassment.</p>	Up to date HR policies and procedures.	Manager, Human Resources	Ongoing

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Outcome 5

Compliance with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA) and the South Australian Equal Opportunities Act 1984.

No.	Objective	Actions	Performance indicators	Responsibility	Completion Date
5.1	Department for Water to produce a Disability Action Plan.	1) Completion and adoption of a 4-year Disability Action Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disability Action Plan endorsed by Chief Executive. • Allocation of task responsibilities within the plan. 	Deputy Director, Business Services	Endorsed plan in place 31/12/2010.
5.2	Active promotion of the Disability Action Plan throughout the agency.	1) Posting the Disability Action Plan on the departmental intranet site; The WaterShed. 2) All staff advice from the Chief Executive endorsing the new Disability Action Plan (CE News).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Posting of Disability Action Plan on The WaterShed • CE News email. 	Deputy Director, Business Services	31/01/2011
5.3	Report on progress against the Disability Action Plan.	1) Promoting Independence annual report to Department for Families & Communities to be completed as required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of Promoting Independence report. 	Deputy Director, Business Services	Ongoing

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Outcome 6

An increase in rate of employment of people with a disability.

No.	Objective	Actions	Performance indicators	Responsibility	Completion Date
6.1	Strategies to meet the following South Australian Strategic Plan Target (T6.22): “to double the number of people with disabilities employed in the public sector by 2014”.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Ensure the Disability Employment Register is promoted and referenced on the Watershed and in applicable HR policies. 2) HR to provide advice and support line managers to maximise the opportunities for employment of people with a disability. 3) HR to continue to collect employee demographic statistics. 4) HR to work in collaboration with Disability Works Australia to identify possible strategies to increase the employment of people with a disability. 	Number of people with disabilities employed increasing within the agency.	Manager, Human Resources	Ongoing

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APPROVAL

Tim Goodes
**ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE
DEPARTMENT FOR WATER**
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