

A guide to Disability Access and Inclusion Plans (DAIPs) for Local Government contractors managers



making a difference

Contents

Disability affects one third of all Western Australians	3
The Disability Services Act	3
Requirements of agents and contractors	4
Service provision requirements	4
Reporting requirements	5
Proposed contracting process	9
Ways to provide access for people with disabilities.....	11
Examples of access related to each outcome area.....	12
Appendix 1.	15
Appendix 2.	17
Appendix 3.	18

Disability affects one third of all Western Australians

People with disabilities and their families and carers have the same rights as other people to access services within the community. These rights are built into State and Commonwealth legislation which makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person with a disability.

It is estimated that 405,500 Western Australians have a disability (20.6 per cent of the total population). An estimated 246,800 Western Australians are carers for people with disabilities (12.6 per cent of the total population). By 2026 over 600,000 Western Australians will have a disability due mainly to our ageing population.

While the degree and type of disability varies with individual circumstances, people with disabilities frequently face barriers with everyday activities such as climbing stairs, hearing or understanding what is said, reading small print, or understanding signs.

Access and inclusion is about ensuring that all public services, facilities and information are available to all community members, including those who have a disability, so that they have the opportunity and choice to participate in all aspects of community life.

For more information refer to the Disability Services Commission's websites:

✓ www.dsc.wa.gov.au; and

✓ www.countusin.com.au

The Disability Services Act

Public authorities (State Government agencies and local governments) in Western Australia have been required to have Disability Service Plans (DSPs) as part of the Disability Services Act (1993). DSPs have been in place for over 10 years, and a great deal of progress has been made by State and local government towards ensuring that their services, buildings, and information are accessible to people with disabilities.

The Disability Services Act was amended in 2004 and now requires public authorities to develop and implement Disability Access and Inclusion Plans (DAIPs). The requirements of DAIPs build on those of DSPs, so that people with disabilities can access services provided by public authorities in Western Australia in a way that facilitates increased independence, opportunities and inclusion within the community.

The Act makes DAIPs mandatory, and guides their development, implementation and reporting. The Act also requires that DAIPs apply to agents and contractors providing a service to the public for public authorities as well as the staff of the authority.

Section 29B of the Act states “**a public authority that has a disability access and inclusion plan must take all practicable measures to ensure that the plan is implemented by the public authority and its officers, employees, agents or contractors**”.

The Act (schedule 3 of the Disability Services Regulations 2004) specifies six desired outcomes that DAIPs progress.

1. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by, a public authority.
2. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of a public authority.
3. People with disabilities receive information from a 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 a public authority as other people receive from the staff of that public authority.
5. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to a public authority.
6. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by a public authority.

Requirements of agents and contractors

Service provision requirements

The Act requires DAIPs to be implemented by agents and contractors as well as the staff of a local government. Where agents and contractors provide services to the public on behalf of the contracting local government, these services are to be conducted consistent with the DAIP of the contracting local government. This furthers the expectation that services provided to residents are accessible for all members of the local community.

Overall, the Act aims to increase awareness of access requirements so that consideration is given to the needs of people with disabilities when providing a service to the public. Undertaking activities consistent with the contracting local government's DAIP applies at the broadest level, that is, the focus is upon broadly supporting the DAIP's six desired outcomes. It does not necessarily mean that agents and contractors will be involved in implementing every strategy outlined in the local government's DAIP.

Making contracted services accessible need not be expensive or complex. Examples of activities provided by agents and contractors that should be accessible include:

- ✓ information for the public (newsletters, websites, advertisements);
- ✓ sporting and recreation programs; and
- ✓ events, such as fairs and festivals.

Contracted services in which the local government itself is the recipient of the services (for example rewired telephone lines, waste removal) are not relevant to the DAIP. However where a service provided specifically for the local government authority intersects with the community, those activities should be undertaken in a manner that reflects the DAIP's outcome areas.

Each local government has a contact person responsible for the DAIP, and can provide details and assistance.

Reporting requirements

The Disability Services Commission must provide a report each year to the Minister for Disability Services about DAIP progress across Western Australia. This report is produced from data submitted to the Commission by public authorities about the implementation of their DAIP, including progress by their agents and contractors. Local government must provide these reports to the Commission by 31 July each year.

The Act's associated Regulation 8 states "Information in reports about disability access and inclusion plans (s. 29). For the purposes of section 29(4) of the Act, a report about a disability access and inclusion plan must include information relating to:

- a) progress made by the relevant public authority and any agents and contractors of the relevant public authority in achieving the desired outcomes specified in Schedule 3; and
- b) the strategies implemented by the relevant public authority to inform its agents and contractors of its disability access and inclusion plan".

The reporting requirements for contractors are minimal. Contractors can advise their contracting local government authorities about the DAIP outcome areas that they have supported using the Contractor Report in Appendix 1. In the table contractors provide a brief summary of the access activities that they are undertaking for DAIP outcome areas. The reporting table also serves as a running sheet for the contractor, allowing any new staff of the contractor to quickly identify how they are providing their service in an accessible manner.

To ensure local government authorities meet this deadline, contractors must indicate which DAIP outcomes they are supporting well before July.

The reports from contractors are sent to local government contract managers. Although the report received by the Contract Manager outlines the access activities of the contractor, the Contract Manager does not have to provide the details of those access activities for the DAIP Progress Report, but aggregates which outcome areas are being addressed by contractors. For example out of 15 relevant contracts, 12 contractors may be supporting Outcome 1 and nine contractors may be supporting Outcome 3. Once this information is aggregated it then needs to be included in the local government Progress Report (Appendix 2) to the Disability Services Commission.

Ultimately each local government will determine who will collate their local government Progress Report (Appendix 2), but it is proposed that the local government's DAIP contact officer collates the DAIP Progress Report. Contract managers will need to provide their DAIP contact officer with the aggregated data from the Contractor Reports (Appendix 1) provided by all contractors.

The Disability Services Commission will collate the data from the DAIP Progress Reports (provided by public authorities) which will form the basis of an overall state-wide report for the Minister for Disability Services. The Minister then tables this report in Parliament.

The flow chart overleaf identifies the reporting responsibilities of contractors and local governments in providing accessible services to the public and identifies the reporting resources that they use.

Who reports what and when

What they use to report

Contractor – once a year, provides Contract Manager with a brief list of access activities undertaken to support the local government authority’s DAIP.

Contractor Report in Appendix 1.



Contract managers – once a year, provide the local government authority’s DAIP contact officer with the number of contractors that are undertaking access activities for each DAIP outcome area.

Can be provided in whatever manner best suits the agency, as long as it is obvious how many contractors are supporting each DAIP outcome area.



Local government’s DAIP contact officer – once a year, drafts the local government authority’s DAIP Progress Report for the Disability Services Commission, including contracting information.

Local government authority Progress Report in Appendix 2.



Disability Services Commission - aggregates the DAIP Progress Reports of all local government authorities and provides a statewide report to the Minister for Disability Services.



Minister for Disability Services – tables the statewide report in Parliament.

Contractors should note which DAIP outcomes they have supported, rather than provide long and detailed descriptions of activities. This will reduce paperwork and contractors can provide the same table to all of the local governments that fund them. Agents and contractors will not be identified in the report submitted to the Commission.

Examples of the various levels of the total reporting process relevant to DAIPs and agents and contractors are:

Subject	Action	An example of reporting activity
Contractors	Once a year, relevant contractors inform their contracting local government authority which desired DAIP outcomes they have supported.	Contractor indicates that they have supported Outcomes 1 and 3.
Local government authorities	Once a year, as part of a one page report to the Disability Services Commission, local government authorities aggregate the data provided by their contractors.	Local government authority indicates that in total: - 12 of their contractors have supported Outcome 1; - 15 have supported Outcome 3; and - 3 have supported Outcome 4.
Disability Services Commission	Once a year, the Commission aggregates reports from local government authorities into a statewide report for the Minister for Disability Services.	Report to the Minister indicates that across local government: - 240 contractors have supported Outcome 1; - 183 contractors have supported Outcome 3; and - 47 contractors have supported Outcome 4.
Minister for Disability Services	Once a year, the Minister tables the statewide report in Parliament.	Report is accepted in both Houses of Parliament.

Proposed contracting process

The State Supply Commission has best practice guidelines “Buying Wisely to Ensure Access for People with Disabilities” outlining recommended steps to make contracted services accessible for people with disabilities. Local governments will find information in “Buying Wisely to Ensure Access for People with Disabilities” relevant to contracting processes. These guidelines recommend that “tender documentation incorporate information about access requirements so that potential contractors should be provided with the opportunity to familiarise themselves with these requirements and undertake an assessment of the feasibility and costs of meeting them”.

Following the DAIP amendments to the Disability Services Act, the State Solicitor’s Office has developed a special condition which can be inserted into relevant contracts to facilitate the provision of accessible services under the Act. In developing the special condition, the State Solicitor’s Office has provided a clear framework for the Act’s intent that contracted services for the public be accessible.

Local governments can choose whether to use the special condition or develop their own clause. However, even if this special condition is not used by a local government, contracted services for the public still need to comply with the requirements of the Act. For this reason the use of the special condition by local governments is encouraged because it informs contractors of the local government’s DAIP and notes the key legislative requirements for contractors to:

- ✓ implement the local government’s DAIP; and
- ✓ report on access activities undertaken to support that implementation.

Special Condition – Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

[Note: This clause should only be used if the Customer is required to have a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan under the Disability Services Act 1993.]

(j) Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

If the Contract involves the supply of Services to the public, then the successful Respondent will:

- (i) to the extent practicable, implement the Customer’s “Disability Access and Inclusion Plan” prepared under the Disability Services Act 1993; and
- (ii) provide a report to the Customer by [] in each year of the Contract Term reporting on the extent to which the successful Respondent has implemented the Customer’s Disability Access And Inclusion Plan.

For the purpose of this special condition “the customer” refers to the local government, for example the Shire of Bridgebrook. The clause is broad, but is consistent with the general intent of the Disability Services Act.

DAIP requirements regarding a local government’s agents and contractors:

- ✓ apply only to new contracts or contract variations — where contractors are providing a service to the public on behalf of the local government authority; and
- ✓ do not apply to services provided directly to the local government, such as cleaners or park maintenance.

Agents and contractors need to:

- ✓ implement the local government’s DAIP, that is, undertake the contract in a manner consistent with the local government’s DAIP; and
- ✓ provide an annual report to the local government about DAIP outcome areas supported.

It is recommended that the DAIP, or a hyperlink to the document, be provided in tender documentation.

Ways to provide access for people with disabilities

Making contracted services accessible need not be expensive or complex. Agents and contractors should undertake activities that are broadly consistent with the six desired DAIP outcomes and relate to the type of service being provided. It does not necessarily mean that contractors will replicate every access strategy that the contracting local government is undertaking in its DAIP.

Appendix 3 provides details about each outcome area including:

- an explanation of the ways people with disabilities may be unintentionally excluded;
- the role of public authorities in ensuring access and inclusion for people with disabilities;
- examples of good practice; and
- links to useful information and resources.

It is also important that contract management staff get involved in the development of the local government 's DAIP, as the experience of all staff will be valuable to the DAIP's development.

The following are some examples of accessible activities related to each outcome area provided by agents and contractors. Further information about access is available in the State Government Access Guidelines for Information, Services and Facilities at: www.dsc.wa.gov.au

Examples of strategies to achieve access related to each outcome area

1. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to **access the services** of, and **any events organised** by a public authority.

- ✓ Produce clear and easy-to-read invitations and flyers for events that include contact details.
- ✓ Ensure that events are held in an accessible venue.
- ✓ Read the contracting local government's Disability Access and Inclusion Plan.

2. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to **access the buildings and other facilities** of a public authority.

- ✓ Provide clear access ways free of boxes, displays and other obstructions.
- ✓ Use buildings that are accessible - if there is no lift make sure all direct service points are located on the ground floor.
- ✓ Avoid abrupt vertical changes of level (kerbs, steps, ruts, gutters) to ensure a continuous accessible path of travel.
- ✓ Provide adequate space into doorways and within rooms to allow for wheelchair dimensions and turning circles.
- ✓ Place colour contrast strip on steps.
- ✓ Provide surface finishes that are slip-resistant, evenly laid and free of hazards to minimise risk of injury.
- ✓ Provide signage with clear lettering and good colour contrast.
- ✓ Provide an appropriate number of ACROD accessible parking bays.

3. People with disabilities receive information in a format that will enable them to **access the information** as readily as other people are able to access it.

- ✓ Be prepared, if requested, to provide information in alternative formats, such as a larger sized font for brochures.
- ✓ Provide clear and easy to read information by using a san serif font such as Arial or Helvetica in a minimum size of 12 point.
- ✓ Use text of a dark colour to significantly contrast with the background.
- ✓ Display important information in bold font, avoid using upper case text only, use a minimum of italics.
- ✓ Design websites to meet accessibility guidelines developed by W3C.
- ✓ Provide Auslan interpreters when requested by people who are Deaf or have a hearing impairment.
- ✓ Incorporate captioning in DVD and TV advertisements.
- ✓ Provide business cards with good colour contrast and easy-to-read font size.

Examples of strategies to achieve access related to each outcome area

4. People with disabilities receive the same level and **quality of service from the staff** as other people receive.

- ✓ Make the DAIP information available to all staff.
- ✓ Provide staff with information about the needs of people with disabilities and where to locate extra resources.
- ✓ Provide disability awareness training for staff who deal with the public.
- ✓ Improve staff awareness of accessible information needs and how to obtain information in other formats such as large print, Braille or audio tape.

5. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to **make complaints**.

- ✓ Accept complaints in a variety of formats such as by telephone, email, written, in person or with a carer.

6. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to **participate in any public consultation**.

- ✓ Provide media releases and advertisements about public consultation in both print and electronic media, including Information Radio and the website.
- ✓ Consult people with disabilities in a range of different consultation mediums, for example focus groups, interviews, surveys.
- ✓ Request information about access requirements from participants prior to attending consultations.
- ✓ Hold consultations in accessible buildings.

Notes

Appendix 1 Contractor Report

Reporting sheet of accessible activities provided by contractors to contracting local government authority

Purpose

This reporting sheet assists contractors to record access activities in the desired outcome areas of their contracting local government's Disability Access and Inclusion Plan. If services are provided for a range of local governments, this same reporting sheet can be provided to them all.

Once a year you are required to forward this reporting sheet to the contracting local government indicating which outcomes have been progressed with a brief summary of activities undertaken. This sheet also serves as a quick reference for all the contractor's staff about how to provide a more accessible service.

Name of contracted service: _____

Activities by contractors broadly consistent with DAIP outcome areas include:

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

Assistance

For details of the DAIP and related access strategies for your contracting local government authority contact:

Local government contract officer: _____

www. _____

Ph: _____

Local government DAIP contact: _____

Ph: _____

Resources

Additional information about creating access for people with disabilities is available on the Disability Services Commission website in Access and Universal Design at:
www.dsc.wa.gov.au

Of particular interest may be:

Access Resource Kit (ARK) – contains information and checklists about the practical issues involved with the provision of access for people with disabilities. Each checklist may be used to identify access barriers and possible ways to overcome these barriers.

Buildings – A Guide to Access Requirements 2001 – provides information on planning, designing, developing and managing buildings and facilities to ensure that they are accessible. It includes information about access codes, standards and relevant legislation.

Creating Accessible Events – assists event organisers and function coordinators design, plan and conduct events which are accessible for people with disabilities.

State Government Access Guidelines for Information, Services and Facilities

You Can Make a Difference to Customer Relations for People with Disabilities in local government and State Government Agencies, 2000 – a CD based training package about customer service for people with disabilities. This can be ordered from the Commission's Community Access and Information Branch on 9426 9384.

Appendix 2 Local government authority progress report

Please complete this progress reporting template about the previous financial year's DAIP implementation and forward it to the Disability Services Commission by 31 July.

1. Please indicate for each of the outcome areas in your DAIP:

- the number of strategies that were completed, partially completed or not commenced; and
- the number of current contracts that are working towards DAIP outcomes.

	Total number of planned strategies	Number of strategies completed	Number of strategies partially completed	Number of contractors undertaking DAIP activity
Outcome 1				
Outcome 2				
Outcome 3				
Outcome 4				
Outcome 5				
Outcome 6				

2. Please indicate the number of your agents and contractors undertaking DAIP activities and the total number of your agents and contractors providing a service to the public:

Number of contractors providing a service to the public consistent with the DAIP.	
Total number of contractors providing a service to the public.	

3. How have you informed agents and contractors of your DAIP?

(Tick relevant responses)

Provided a copy of your DAIP directly to agents and contractors upon awarding contract (including as a result of a contract variation).	
Identified your DAIP in tender and contract documents as an important document in terms of providing services to the public.	
Provided a hyper-link in tendering documentation to your DAIP.	
Provided a hyper-link in tendering documentation correspondence to the agent or contractor about your DAIP.	

Appendix 3 The six desired outcomes of Disability Access and Inclusion Plans

When developing a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP), local governments must aim to achieve six desired outcomes. These outcome areas provide a framework for translating the principles and objectives of the Disability Services Act into tangible and achievable results.

Schedule 3 of the Disability Services Regulations, 2004 states the six desired outcomes of a DAIP:

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

The following pages contain information about each desired DAIP outcome including:

- an explanation of the ways people with disabilities may be unintentionally excluded;
- the role of local governments in ensuring access and inclusion for people with disabilities;
- examples of good practice; and
- links to useful information and resources.

Outcome 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.

People with disabilities frequently report difficulty in gaining access to a range of mainstream services provided by local governments.

It is important that the services provided by local government, including their contracted services appropriately meet the needs of the public they serve. This includes people with disabilities, their families and carers. Outcome 1 focuses specifically on the services currently provided by your local governments, including:

- policies;
- the services provided; and
- how the services are provided (procedures and practices).

Service delivery concerns all staff, whether they work in public contact areas such as the front counter or are policy, program and administration staff.

It is important to ensure that:

- policies do not exclude people from services; and
- services are reviewed in consultation with people with disabilities, their families and carers to determine their appropriateness and relevance.

Adapting services may involve developing a particular response to the identified needs of someone with a disability or a group of people with a disability. It could include creating options for what is provided and/or how it is provided and should not separate the person with a disability from use of the authority's mainstream services.

Ways that services and events have been successfully adapted by local governments to enhance access and inclusion for people with disabilities include:

- assistance with garbage collection, eg wheelie bin collection to verge;
- use of AUSLAN interpreters when interviewing/case managing individuals if necessary;
- event flyers and invitations clearly state information in an accessible format and request invitees to state their access requirements;
- develop links between DAIP and other council plans and strategies; and
- access to Library technology where possible.

Outcome 1 (continued)

Disability Services Commission resources

The Access Resource Kit – provides information about the outcome areas and other information relevant to DAIPs, including access checklists.

Available on the Commission's website: www.dsc.wa.gov.au

Assistive Listening Devices – an installation guide for assistive listening devices in auditoriums, theatres and cinemas. There is also a Signage Guide for Assistive Listening Devices. Available on the Commission's website: www.dsc.wa.gov.au

Creating Accessible Events – provides assistance to design, plan and conduct accessible events. Available on the Commission's website: www.dsc.wa.gov.au

State Government Access Guidelines for Information, Services and Facilities – a guide to assist government, business and community groups to create Western Australia as an accessible and inclusive community. Available on the Commission's website: www.dsc.wa.gov.au

Other resources

Expanding Your Sport and Recreation Markets: Universal Access to Your Facilities and Programs – provides assistance in planning, design, management, staffing and programming to provide accessible recreational and leisure programs. Available on the Commission's website: www.dsc.wa.gov.au.

Outcome 2

People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of the relevant public authority.

The provision of appropriate access not only benefits people with disabilities but also seniors, people with temporary disabilities and parents with young children in prams. If access requirements are considered early in the planning stage of any new development, they can frequently be incorporated for very little or no additional cost.

The vicinity around a facility needs to facilitate access. People with disabilities often experience difficulties due to the location of facilities, buildings or services. Signs that indicate where services or amenities are to be found are often absent or difficult to identify due to bad lighting, obscure placement or unclear lettering on directory boards.

Clear symbols and directions can assist people to find their way. The increasing community recognition of the importance of providing access to public buildings and facilities is reflected in a variety of legislation, standards and codes that relate to the provision of access.

Legislation and the built environment

The Western Australian Disability Services Act 1993 (amended 2004) and the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act (1992) each require that services and facilities provided for the general public also provide an equivalent access for people with disabilities.

The rights of people with disabilities, including access to premises, are recognised by State and Commonwealth legislation. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) is of particular relevance. Prior to the introduction of the DDA, all legislative access requirements were contained in the Building Codes Australia (BCA), which set out the minimum requirements of building design and construction throughout Australia.

A development that complies with the BCA may not now meet the access requirements of the DDA. Currently (2007) the BCA is being reviewed so that its access requirements can be upgraded to be consistent with those of the DDA. It is envisaged that in the future the BCA will be included as part of a DDA Standard on Access to Premises.

The Disability Discrimination Commissioner has released Advisory Notes on Access to Premises (see resources list at the end of this section).

Outcome 2 (continued)

Commissioner to assist people to understand their existing responsibilities and rights under the DDA. It is recommended that these advisory notes are followed until there is a DDA Standard on Access to Premises.

There are a number of Australian Standards on access referenced in both the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Advisory Notes on Access to Premises (see resources list at the end of this section) and the BCA. These Standards have been developed through a wide consultation process involving key stakeholders.

Local government access requirements for buildings and facilities

To achieve access in the built environment local government authorities should ensure that:

- the provision of appropriate access for people with disabilities is an integral part of any services provided, funded or contracted out; and
- the design and construction of all public buildings and facilities funded by Government comply with the BCA and the requirements of the DDA as detailed in the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Advisory Notes on Access to Premises.

It is essential that the design brief for buildings and facilities specifically addresses access provision requirements.

It is recommended that access consultants are engaged as part of the design team throughout the planning and construction phases of major projects to ensure that access is appropriately addressed. Information about access consultants can be obtained from the Association of Consultants in Access, Australia Inc (see resources list at the end of this section).

More information about access provision, and a building and facilities checklist is available in the Disability Services Commission's resource **Buildings - A Guide to Access Requirements** (see resources list at the end of this section).

It is important to note that even when the Premises Standard has been adopted, these will be minimum standards only and will not necessarily cater for all the access needs of people with disabilities.

Outcome 2 (continued)

Much progress has already been made by local governments to improve access for people with disabilities, and it is important to continue to build on those achievements.

Ways that local government authorities have improved access to their buildings and facilities for people with disabilities include:

- many local governments have undertaken internal modifications such as lowering counters and installing accessible lift controls;
- many recreational facilities and parks now provide universal access;
- making sure that an adequate number of accessible parking bays are provided;
- access audits are undertaken on all council-owned facilities; and
- Council undertakes a plan to improve and upgrade access to all footpaths.

Disability Services Commission resources

The Access Resource Kit – provides information about the outcome areas and other information relevant to DAIPs, including access checklists. Available on the Commission's website: www.dsc.wa.gov.au

Buildings – A Guide to Access Requirements 2001 – provides information on planning, designing, developing and managing buildings and facilities to ensure they are accessible. Includes information about access codes, standards and relevant legislation. Available on the Commission's website: www.dsc.wa.gov.au

Buildings – A Guide to Access Requirements brochure 2001 – gives an overview of the legislative and other requirements for access to buildings and facilities and information on Buildings – A Guide to Access Requirements. Can be ordered by contacting the Commission's Community Access and Information Branch on 9426 9384.

Easy Street – an introductory video on pedestrian access for people involved in developing road infrastructure. Can be ordered by contacting the Commission's Community Access and Information Branch on 9426 9384.

State Government Access Guidelines for Information, Services and Facilities – a guide to assist government, business and community groups to create Western Australia as an accessible and inclusive community. Available on the Commission's website: www.dsc.wa.gov.au

Outcome 2 (continued)

Other resources

Access to Heritage Buildings for People with Disabilities 1998 – produced by Cox Architects and Planners, sets out guidelines and practical solutions for making heritage properties accessible while conserving their heritage character and value. Can be found on the Australian Heritage Council's website at www.ahc.gov.au

Advisory Notes on Access to Premises. Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission. Available at www.hreoc.gov.au

Australian Standards on Access – details of current Australian Standards covering access are provided in the Commission's Access Resource Kit, and from Standards Australia at www.standards.com.au

Welcome, Design Ideas for Accessible Homes – provides guidelines for accessible home design. This book may be purchased from: Rellim Booksellers, Hay Street, Perth; Boffins Bookshop, Hay Street, Perth; The Independent Living Centre, Aberdare Road, Nedlands; or ordered online from the Victorian Building Commission at www.buildingcommission.com.au

The Accessible Parking Program in Western Australia – provides information on accessible parking in Western Australia. Available at www.acrod.org.au

Outcome 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.

Giving and receiving information is a critical aspect of our daily lives. People with disabilities frequently report frustration at the difficulties they experience in gaining access to all types of public information.

Communication difficulties are frequently associated with many disabilities, including:

- hearing loss or deafness;
- low vision or blindness; and
- disabilities that affect an individual's ability to learn or think, such as an intellectual or cognitive disability or psychiatric illness.

Local governments produce a variety of written material eg rate notices, flyers, invitation and information brochures.

Many communication difficulties can be overcome by providing information in simple, clearly written English and in a print size that is easy to read.

For people who have low vision or are blind, it is also important to have information freely available on request in alternative formats such as audio cassette or CD, large print, computer disk and Braille. Providing information by email or having it available in an accessible format on the authority's website will also make it more accessible for many people with a vision impairment.

There is a variety of communication techniques that can be used to assist people who have a hearing impairment or who are Deaf. Individuals need to have a range of options available so they can use the communication method that best meets their specific needs.

"Better Hearing" signs on public counters are valuable for informing visitors that staff know how to speak to someone who experiences difficulty hearing. The provision of audio loops at public meetings will enable people who use hearing aids to participate. For people who are Deaf, Auslan sign language interpreters should be arranged if requested.

Technology is providing many new communication opportunities for people with disabilities and it is important to keep up to date with these advances. People with disabilities often experience access difficulties due to inadequate signage. Clear, well-lit directional signs also benefit the whole community.

Inside buildings, signs which indicate where services or amenities are found are often absent or difficult to identify due to bad lighting, obscure placement or unclear lettering on directory boards. Clear symbols and directions can assist people to find their way.

For people with physical disabilities unclear signs may increase the effort required to reach their destination. People with an intellectual disability require signs which have clear symbols and words, and people with a vision impairment are assisted greatly by signs with good contrast of colours and texture.

Outcome 3 (continued)

Ways that local governments have improved access to their information for people with disabilities include:

- developing accessible information policies;
- providing accessible information training for all staff who develop public information;
- designing websites to meet the W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines;
- making all public documents available on the website in accessible formats, including audio files online;
- promoting the availability of information available in alternative format to the community;
- use of audio loops;
- increasing the accessibility of library collections through talking books and use of technology such as CCTVs;
- providing deafness awareness training for all staff who are involved in delivery of information to the public; and
- providing Auslan interpreters on request.

Disability Services Commission resources

The Access Resource Kit – provides information about the outcome areas and other information relevant to DAIPs, including access checklists.

DSC Fact Sheet 11 – Putting People First - a guide to respectful terminology when referring to people with disabilities.

State Government Access Guidelines for Information, Services and Facilities – a guide to assist government, business and community groups to create Western Australia as an accessible and inclusive community.

Outcome 3 (continued)

Other resources

Designing for People with Partial Sight and Colour Blindness – an article by Aries Arditi in Lighthouse International at www.lighthouse.org

Guidelines for the State Government Websites – to assist agencies to meet the principles of inclusive web design at www.egov.dpc.wa.gov.au

W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines – assists web designers to create websites that are accessible to a wide audience, including people with disabilities.

World Wide Web Access: Disability Discrimination Act Advisory Notes – assists web designers with making websites accessible to all internet users.

The above resources are available through the Commission's website:
www.dsc.wa.gov.au

Outcome 4

People with disabilities receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of the relevant public authority.

People with disabilities have a right to be treated like any other member of the community. Too often though, people interacting or serving people with disabilities simply do not know how to communicate appropriately with a person with a disability. They may be embarrassed when approached or simply wish to avoid any contact with the person who has a disability.

Sometimes this lack of understanding and awareness of the needs of people with disabilities can lead to talking to an adult person with a disability as if he/she were a child, or speaking to the carer of a person with a disability as if the person with a disability were not there.

It can also result in staff tending to shout at people who have a hearing impairment or who are Deaf, when it would be more helpful to face the person and speak clearly and slowly in a normal voice or, if the person prefers, write instead.

Disability awareness training has been shown to improve the confidence of staff and competence in subsequent dealings with people with disabilities. This training should include information about the nature of the most common types of disability combined with practical hints on how to communicate most effectively.

Ways that local government authorities have improved staff awareness and skills in assisting people with disabilities include:

- providing disability awareness training for all staff;
- providing training specifically tailored for staff in different areas eg communication for front counter staff about the needs of people with alternative communication needs;
- promoting achievements and good news stories on access in staff newsletters;
- disability awareness training as apart of staff induction and orientation; and
- Elected members receive disability awareness training and information regarding the local government's DAIP.

Outcome 4 (continued)

Disability Services Commission resources

The Access Resource Kit – provides information about the outcome areas and other information relevant to DAIPs, including access checklists. Available on the Commission's website: www.dsc.wa.gov.au

Getting There – Access Awareness Video, 1994 – identifies some of the common barriers facing people with disabilities and provides practical examples of ways to improve access to information, services and facilities. This can be ordered from the Commission's Community Access and Information Branch on 9426 9384.

State Government Access Guidelines for Information, Services and Facilities – a guide to assist government, business and community groups to create Western Australia as an accessible and inclusive community. Available on the Commission's website: www.dsc.wa.gov.au

You Can Make a Difference to Customer Relations for People with Disabilities in local government and State Government Agencies, 2000 - a training package consisting of five modules, to assist local and State Government authorities to improve customer service for people with disabilities. This can be ordered from the Community Access and Information Branch on 9426 9384.

Outcome 5

People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the relevant public authority.

Local governments are committed to a service culture that focuses on customers needs. As outlined in many Customer Service Charters, local governments are:

- improving the services that residents pay for through rates;
- eliminating services that do not match customers needs; and
- providing the opportunity for customers to express their views in relation to services and service delivery.

People with disabilities, their families and carers are a specific customer group and require consideration to ensure they are able to access the grievance mechanisms of each authority. Such consideration may take the form of making information available about planning, decision-making and grievances in simple clear language or in alternative formats where required.

Some people with disabilities, their families and carers do not like to complain about the services they receive, for fear that those services will be withdrawn. Other people with disabilities may not know how to complain or appeal about aspects of the service.

Local governments need to review their grievance policies and procedures to ensure that they clearly communicate to people with disabilities, their families and carers:

- the local government's policy on customer feedback on their services;
- how complaints can be made within the organisation; and
- where to go if the problem is not able to be resolved within the local government.

Ways that local governments have made complaints processes more accessible for people with disabilities include:

- producing a plain English pamphlet explaining the complaints procedure;
- having complaints processes accessible online; and
- enabling people to make verbal as well as written complaints.

Disability Services Commission resources

The Access Resource Kit – provides information about the desired outcome areas and other information relevant to DAIPs, including access checklists.

State Government Access Guidelines for Information, Services and Facilities

– a guide to assist government, business and community groups to create Western Australia as an accessible and inclusive community.

Available at www.dsc.wa.gov.au

Outcome 6

People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by the relevant public authority.

Local governments are committed to focusing on residents' needs through regular consultations of residents.

People with disabilities, their families and carers are also customers and require consideration to ensure their participation. Such consideration may take the form of:

- making information available about planning and decision-making in simple clear language or in alternative formats where requested;
- ensuring that venues where public consultations are held are physically accessible;
- knowing particular communication needs and responding appropriately, for example, providing a deaf interpreter, a hearing loop, or displaying Better Hearing Kits; and
- providing options for giving information during the local government's consultative process, such as a choice between verbal or written presentations.

When local governments involve people with disabilities, their families and carers on advisory committees – such as a disability access and inclusion service planning reference group – it is important to:

- provide an appropriate orientation to the organisation's policies, services and functions and to the meeting processes and procedures; and
- minimise the use of acronyms and/or terminology specific to the organisation that others may not understand.

Ways that local government authorities have made consultation processes more accessible for people with disabilities include:

- disability access advisory committees which can be used for consultation related to specific issues;
- ensuring that consultation meetings are planned and conducted using the Accessible Events checklist;
- providing Auslan interpreters, where requested, at consultations;
- providing a range of ways in which people can provide input, including online; and
- conducting reviews of community consultation processes across local government.

Disability Services Commission resources

The Access Resource Kit – provides information about the outcome areas and other information relevant to DAIPs, including access checklists.

State Government Access Guidelines for Information, Services and Facilities – a guide to assist government, business and community groups to create Western Australia as an accessible and inclusive community.

These resources can be found on the Commission's website:

www.dsc.wa.gov.au

Other resources

Consulting Citizens: A resource guide - www.citizenscape.wa.gov.au

Inclusive Consultation: A practical guide to involving people with disabilities

Notes

Further resources

Each local government authority has been provided with a resource guide to assist with the formulation of DAIPs. Additional copies are available from the Disability Services Commission (see below) or online at **www.dsc.wa.gov.au**

A wide range of information regarding access is also available on the Disability Services Commission's websites:

- ✓ **www.dsc.wa.gov.au**; and
- ✓ **www.countusin.com.au**

Other contact details

Direct access with an officer of the Community Access and Information Branch at the Commission.

Address: 146-160 Colin Street
West Perth WA 6005

Telephone: 9426 9384

Facsimile: 9226 2306

TTY: 9426 9315

Country : 1800 998 214

Postal: PO Box 441
West Perth WA 6872

Email: access@dsc.wa.gov.au

Website: www.dsc.wa.gov.au

This document is available in alternative formats on request.



587/230507