Disability Action Plan

2008/2009

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Authorisation:

Chief Executive

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Introduction

The development of the Department for Environment and Heritage (DEH) Disability Action Plan will assist in the implementation of the requirements of the *Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (DDA) and the South Australian Government's *Promoting Independence for People with Disabilities* strategy.

The development, and implementation, of a Disability Action Plan (DAP) for DEH aims to remove barriers to access to our services and our workplaces, and to promote a culture that reflects the value of diversity in the workplace.

Purpose

The purpose of the DAP is to:

- Promote acceptance of people with disabilities;
- Identify and, where possible, remove barriers for people with disabilities whether in the workplace or in the delivery of our services and facilities;
- Eliminate discriminatory practices as an employer, service provider and purchaser of services;
- Raise the awareness of staff to the requirements of people with disabilities when developing new people management or service strategies;
- Outline strategies to enhance equality of access and opportunity for DEH's clients and staff with disabilities, and devise a planned approach to eliminate discriminatory barriers; and
- Provide a framework to ensure that DEH meets its responsibilities to *Promoting Independence* and the DDA.

In developing and implementing this plan DEH affirms its commitment to Equal Employment Opportunity, and to minimising and, where possible, eliminating discrimination.

The commitment covers:

- Provision of services;
- Employment practices; and
- Community Interaction.

The ongoing nature of this commitment will be reflected in the establishment of a process of monitoring and evaluation of the DAP against measurable criteria.

Acknowledgements

Acknowledgement is made for the contribution and support of key stakeholders in developing the DEH Disability Action Plan, in particular Peter Slee, DEH Asset Manager.

The contribution of Promoting Independence Reference Group members by providing copies of action plans and policies as examples is also acknowledged. The Implementation Table from the Department for Families and Communities Disability Action Plan was used as a starting point for the DEH Implementation Table within this document.

The Department for Environment and Heritage

DEH plays a major role in managing the conservation, protection and utilisation of South Australia's natural, cultural and built heritage and environment. The Department's functions also include providing information about the State's public land and environmental resources.

Our Values

The DEH Corporate Plan recognises that *people make organisations*, and that *the values they adopt shape organisations.* This is emphasised by the following departmental values:

- Public service, responsibility and accountability.
- Candour, diplomacy and cooperation.
- Imagination, diversity and innovation.
- Thinking, inquiry and self-discipline.
- Safety, health and enjoyment.

Our Programs

DEH provides services to both the Government and the community of South Australia through the delivery of a number of Programs, which provide a high-level overview of the Department's activities. These Programs are outlined below:

Nature Conservation

The protection and restoration of ecosystems, habitats, species and populations by developing conservation policies and programs with industries, government and communities and by undertaking and supporting research, surveys and monitoring of South Australia's ecosystems, habitats, species and populations.

Public Land — Visitor Management

The promotion of public enjoyment and the conservation of the state's natural and cultural heritage through the provision of opportunities for environmentally sensitive, economically viable and socially responsible visitor experiences.

Public Land — Fire Management

Reducing risk to life and property, while conserving our natural and cultural heritage on lands managed by the department by developing and implementing fire management policy, procedures and programs.

Public Land — Stewardship

Ensuring that public lands are managed effectively and that ecologically sustainable principles are applied when acquiring, allocating and disposing public lands.

Coast and Marine Conservation

The conservation, protection and associated management of the State's coast and marine environments.

Heritage Conservation

The identification, conservation, protection and celebration of the State's places and objects of non-Aboriginal heritage significance.

Botanic Gardens Management

Advancing plant conservation and sustainable horticultural practices, and enriching society, by managing the natural and cultural assets and resources of the Botanic Gardens and State Herbarium.

Animal Welfare

The promotion and regulation of the humane treatment of animals.

Agency Support Services

The provision of business support services to the various operational units within DEH, the Environment Protection Authority, Zero Waste SA and other related boards and committees. These services include the provision and management of information to support the state's environmental needs, human resource management, payroll, financial management, IT infrastructure, IT Helpdesk support, facilities management, project management, asset management, administrative support, business planning, governance, government business, executive support, public affairs, procurement and environmental policy advice.

Program Managers provide leadership in the strategic direction of DEH through their program responsibilities. Staff provide input into the strategic planning process through a variety of planning workshops held, and draft documents circulated for comment throughout the year, that determine the contribution of their work unit to the work of departmental programs. It may be that the work of a particular unit contributes to more than one program. Executive Directors and their staff have responsibility for service delivery, aligned with the Corporate Plan and Program priorities.

Our Services

The Department has a broad and diverse range of activities throughout the State, including the management of some 20 per cent of the land in South Australia. DEH also has a key advocacy and engagement role across Government and with business and communities throughout South Australia. It makes an important contribution to the economic and environmental health of the State by:

- Driving strategies for sustainability across government.
- Creating the basis for nature-based tourism industry.
- Providing essential environment and land information.
- Generating employment opportunities in regional areas.

DEH contributes significantly to how South Australians see themselves and their State in terms of quality of life, well-being, and sense of place, through the delivery of environmental programs and the provision of the following services.

- Nature and culture-based tourism and recreation facilities and services (including interpretive programs)

- National Parks information including:
    - Visitor Information
    - Park Passes
    - Accommodation and Tours
    - Bushwalking Trails and Maps
    - Trip Planning and Travel Advice
    - Park Use Regulations
    - Brochure Ordering

- Departmental information including:
    - Wildlife Rescue and Welfare
    - Fauna Permits
    - Coast and Marine
    - DEH Publications

- Departmental advice including:

- Environment Policy
- Nature Conservation
- Heritage Conservation
- Animal Welfare

- Environmental data and information including:
  - Air quality, climate change and ozone depletion
  - Biodiversity (threatened species, introduced species and native vegetation)
  - Coasts and the Sea (fisheries, aquaculture, marine environment)
  - Aboriginal, European, natural terrestrial and maritime heritage
  - Human Settlements (water consumption, energy consumption, transport use)
  - Inland Waters
  - Land Resources (land use, soil erosion and acidity, dryland salinity)

Commitment

DEH acknowledges the importance of providing accessible work place environments, visitor facilities and quality experiences to people with a range of disabilities. DEH will implement a program of improvement aimed at ensuring an appropriate range of visitor sites have accessible information centres, interpretive facilities, toilet facilities, walking paths and camping grounds. Improvements will also be made to workplace environments and work conditions to facilitate equitable participation by people with disabilities. It is noted, that disabled access to **all** DEH work places and visitor sites, including heritage buildings, will not be feasible due to the number of sites managed by DEH, the conservation status of certain parks, heritage values of buildings and the environmental, operational and financial impacts incurred by providing adequate access, experiences and facilities.

Continuous improvement of employment opportunities, visitor facilities and services is a long term commitment for DEH. As new technologies are developed to enhance accessibility by people with disabilities, upgrades will be made to infrastructure consistent with budget priorities for capital works and service improvements.

Definitions

Definition of Disability

Section 4 of the DDA comprehensively defines the term 'disability', as

- Total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions; or
- Total or partial loss of a part of the body; or
- The presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness; or
- The presence in the body of organisms capable of causing disease or illness; or
- The malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person's body; or
- A disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction; or
- 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:

- Presently exists; or
- Previously existed but no longer exists; or
- May exist in the future; or
- Is imputed to a person.

Definition of Disability Discrimination

Disability 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 disabilities.

The *DEH Discrimination, Harassment and Workplace Bullying Policy* provides further information.

Key Outcomes

The State Government has made a commitment to improve the rights of people with disabilities in the South Australian community. To achieve this, six key outcomes were endorsed to provide a practical framework for Government Portfolios and Departments to meet the State Government's obligations under the DDA.

As outlined in *Promoting Independence for People with Disabilities*, the six key outcomes are:

- Portfolios and their agencies ensure **accessibility** to their services to people with disabilities;
- Portfolios and their agencies ensure **information** about their services and programs **is inclusive** of people with disabilities;
- Portfolios and their agencies deliver advice or services to people with disabilities with **awareness and understanding** of issues affecting people with disabilities;
- Portfolios and their agencies provide opportunities for **consultation** with people with disabilities in decision making processes regarding service delivery and in the implementation of **complaints and grievance mechanisms**;
- Each portfolio Chief Executive will ensure that the Government has met the **requirements** of the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the *Equal Opportunity Act 1984*.
- Portfolios and their agencies will explore how they can increase the rate of **employment** of people with a disability.

Targets

Targets have been developed by the 'Promoting Independence: Disability Action Plans for SA' Implementation Reference Group, and were endorsed by the Minister for Disability, to ensure specific activities are undertaken by portfolios and their agencies to meet the requirements of the six key outcomes. The targets are outlined in the DEH Promoting Independence for People with Disabilities Procedure.

DEH supports the development and implementation of a whole of government approach to Disability Action Plans in South Australia. A DEH staff member will continue to represent DEH on the across government Reference Group, which monitors the implementation of the *Promoting Independence* strategy, and sets directions and priorities for government agencies to pursue.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The DAP is considered a continuous and evolving process with regular monitoring and reviews to be conducted to ensure that strategies identified are acted upon. It must also be evaluated to ensure that it meets the requirements of the DDA and *Promoting Independence* strategy, as well as meeting the requirements of people with a disability.

Disability Action Plan – Implementation Table

1. PLANNING AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT

OUTCOME
Greater accessibility to DEH programs and services for people with disabilities.

STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
1.1 Ensure programs and services are delivered in a non-discriminatory manner.	1.1.1 Promote inclusion of people with disabilities and their access requirements in all policy, planning, program plans and strategic plans.	Corporate Planning & Development Executive	July 2008 – June 2009
	1.1.2 Develop policy regarding information, publications and communication being accessible to people with disabilities.	Information Delivery	COMPLETED
1.2 Ensure DEH has an appropriate Disability Action Plan.	1.2.1 Review DAP in consultation with DEH Program Managers, and disability organisations.	HR Services All Program Managers	March 2009
	1.2.2 Implement DAP across DEH, including promotion to all staff.	HR Services	March 2009 – June 2009
1.3 Ensure Governance bodies (ie Boards, Management Committees) are aware of their responsibilities and involve people with disabilities in decision making processes.	1.3.1 Provide information to the Executive Officers of DEH Boards and Committees to be aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the DDA and the *Promoting Independence* strategy.	Corporate Governance & Policy	March 2009
	1.3.2 Provide instruction to Executive Officers to promote and seek representation and appointment of people with disabilities, their associates or advocates, on advisory boards, committees and networks.	Corporate Governance & Policy	March 2009

Disability Action Plan – Implementation Table

2. ACCESSIBILITY OF BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES

OUTCOME
People with disabilities will have improved physical access to buildings and facilities where DEH services and programs are provided.

STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
2.1 Ensure people with disabilities have access to a range of high quality recreation and tourism opportunities in parks.	2.1.1 Identify strategic disability access management directions as part of a state-wide visitor management strategy.	Visitor Management Services	2009
	2.1.2 Identify priority visitor facilities and trails for integrated assessment of disability access needs.	Visitor Management Services	2009
	2.1.3 Integrate the consideration of disability access needs into planning for visitor facility and trails construction projects.	Visitor Management Services	2009
2.2 DEH will work with its key stakeholders (internal and external) to improve access for people with disabilities to DEH offices.	2.2.1 Implement recommendations of assessments undertaken.	Asset Services – Asset Operations	July 2008 – June 2009
2.2 Ensure compliance with DDA, *Promoting Independence* strategy, Australian Standard 1428 - 2001 Parts 1-4, and the Building Code of Australia in regards to development and upgrades of DEH buildings and facilities.	2.2.1 Overview the planning and documentation to procure and contract out the provision of new assets and supervise and manage to completion, ensuring that new assets comply with relevant legislation and departmental policy.	Asset Services – Project Services	July 2008 – June 2009

Disability Action Plan – Implementation Table

3. COMMUNICATION AND INTERPRETER SERVICES

OUTCOME
All communications regarding DEH services are made available in the full range of formats and promoted to people with disabilities.

STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
3.1 Ensure information, publications and communications are accessible by people with disabilities.	3.1.1 Audit information, publications and communication for accessibility by identifying the information requirements of people with disabilities.	HR Services	COMPLETED
	3.1.2 Develop strategies for the provision of appropriate and readily available information to address the requirements identified.	Information Delivery Web and Knowledge Management Visitor Management Services	June 2009
3.2 Ensure services and programs publicise information on the physical accessibility of buildings and facilities as an integral part of information provision.	3.2.1 Review information on services and programs for inclusion of details regarding access by people with disabilities and update as required.	Program Managers with support from HR Services or Corporate Governance & Policy	June 2009

Disability Action Plan – Implementation Table

4. ATTITUDINAL AND CULTURAL AWARENESS IN MANAGEMENT AND SERVICE PROVISION

OUTCOME
Demonstrated awareness and understanding by staff and volunteers of the issues affecting people with disabilities.

STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
4.1 Ensure information on the requirements of people with disabilities is provided to staff and volunteers.	4.1.1 Review information on the DEH Intranet and update if necessary.	HR Services	June 2009
	4.1.2 Promote information on providing appropriate services to people with disabilities to staff and volunteers.	HR Services	June 2009
4.2 Ensure education and awareness training programs are delivered to staff on access and participation issues for people with disabilities and their associates or advocates.	4.2.1 Implement Disability Awareness and Discrimination Training.	HR Services	April 2009
4.3 Ensure that existing training includes components on DDA obligations and understanding of people with disabilities.	4.3.1 Review existing training for inclusion of DDA obligations and understanding of people with disabilities.	HR Services	June 2009

Disability Action Plan – Implementation Table

5. CONSULTATION AND COMPLAINTS MECHANISMS

OUTCOME
People with disabilities will have appropriate access to consultation and complaint handling procedures.

STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
5.1 Ensure consultation on DEH services is inclusive of people with disabilities.	5.1.1 Develop consultation processes with people with disabilities, their associates and/or advocates to inform decision making and review processes.	Program Managers with support from HR Services or Corporate Governance & Policy	June 2009
	5.1.2 Initiate consultation with disability organisations to review services by: • Determining the services to be reviewed. • Determining which disability organisations will be consulted.	Program Managers with support from HR Services or Corporate Governance & Policy	June 2009
5.2 Ensure that people with disabilities have access to internal and external complaints mechanisms.	5.2.1 Review existing mechanisms for inclusion of DDA obligations and understanding of people with disabilities.	Corporate Governance & Policy	COMPLETED
5.3 Ensure that staff are trained in how to handle complaints from people with disabilities.	5.3.1 Include handling complaints as part of Disability Awareness and Discrimination Training.	HR Services	April 2009

Disability Action Plan – Implementation Table

6. EMPLOYMENT AND HUMAN RESOURCE PRACTICES

OUTCOME
Improved equity and equal opportunity for people with disabilities in regards to employment in DEH.

STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
6.1 Ensure DEH has non-discriminatory recruitment and selection processes.	6.1.1 Review Recruitment and Selection processes for inclusion of people with disabilities and update if necessary.	HR Services	COMPLETED
6.2 Ensure DEH meets the Headline KPI in response to SASP Target T6.22.	6.2.1 Identify the number of people with disabilities employed by implementing the Staff Survey.	HR Services	COMPLETED
6.3 Ensure the recruitment, selection and retention opportunities for people with disabilities are promoted, including more flexible arrangements for accommodating the requirements of people with disabilities.	6.3.1 Promote recruitment, selection and retention opportunities for people with disabilities.	HR Services	June 2009
	6.3.2 Promote the use of more flexible arrangements for accommodating the requirements of people with disabilities.	HR Services	June 2009