



# Our Accessibility Action Plan 2013 – 2017

## Vision

**The NDIA** aims to be an employer in which people with disability are able to access secure and sustainable employment opportunities and are respected for their skills and capabilities.

## Introduction

The National Disability Insurance Agency was established by the Australian Government to implement the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS; the Scheme). The National Disability Insurance Agency (the Agency) is working with the Commonwealth and state and territory governments to deliver the Scheme to ensure improved support for people with disability, their family and carers.

The *National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013* (the NDIS Act) received the Royal Assent on 28 March 2013, formally establishing the NDIS and the Agency. The NDIS Act established the Agency as an independent body with statutory responsibilities under the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997* (the CAC Act). Section 118 of the NDIS Act outlines the broad functions of the Agency, including;

- to support the independence and economic participation of people with disability,
- to manage, and to advise and report on, the financial sustainability of the Scheme,
- to develop and enhance the disability sector, including by facilitating innovation, research and contemporary best practice,
- to collect, analyse and exchange data about disabilities and the supports for people with disability, and
- to undertake research relating to disabilities, the supports (including early intervention supports) for people with disability and the social contributors to disabilities.

The Agency is committed to establishing and maintaining a diverse workforce at all levels. To meet the challenges of the 21st century, the NDIA must continuously strive for a workforce that reflects Australian society and promotes an environment that places high value on individual respect, dignity and professional growth. The Agency's ability to attract, develop and retain a quality and diverse workforce is key to the Scheme's success.

The creation of employment opportunities within the Agency will show leadership to other Australian employers to eliminate barriers to the employment of people with disability. Increasing access to employment opportunities is key to improving economic security and personal wellbeing for people with disability.

To achieve this, the Agency will encourage the participation and contribution of people with disability to inform policies and will work together with stakeholders to make the NDIA not just an employer of choice for employees with disability, but an exemplar employer in the Australian Public Service.

For further information see Appendix A

# STEPHEN'S STORY:

**'I am not simply a lawyer but a sounding board on a range of areas where NDIA is looking to make a difference to the lives of Australians with disability.'**

## EMPOWER<sup>1</sup>NG

Stephen is a lawyer with the NDIA and has Ushers Syndrome which is a condition where he is both deaf and vision impaired. Stephen has a cochlear implant to assist with hearing and he also uses a guide dog, Samson, for mobility. Stephen uses a captioned telephone, a Closed Circuit Television (CCTV), a Pearl Scanner and a large screen monitor and Windows 7 magnifier to assist him in his day-to-day tasks.

Stephen joined the NDIA in early 2013 as part of a small team of lawyers who provide a variety of legal services. Previously Stephen has worked at the Attorney-General's Department and in the Biosecurity Group of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. Stephen is involved in the preparation of explanatory materials for the Scheme legislation, legal training of employees, providing legal advice on the Scheme and developing legal policy.

"The NDIA is a disability-friendly employer where the views and skills of disabled employees are an asset. I am not simply a lawyer, but a sounding board on a range of areas where the NDIA is looking to make a difference to the lives of Australians with disability."

## Statement of Commitment

The NDIA is dedicated to improving the participation of people living with disability in the social and economic life of Australian society. Providing genuine employment opportunities inclusive of people with disability is one part of enhancing the Agency's intelligence, principles and values towards facilitating its goals.

Currently 18.5% of the Australian population live with disability, while the disability rate for Australians aged 15-64 years, those of 'prime working age', is 15%<sup>1</sup>.

Employing people with disability will form an integral part of all Agency recruitment and retention policies and practices. This Accessibility Action Plan is an employment strategy that aims to advance the equitable recruitment and retention of people with disability across the Agency in roles for which they are suitably qualified.

The NDIA is committed to having, as a minimum, 12% of employees identifying as living with disability employed in the Agency by 2015. By achieving this commitment the Agency will better reflect Australians of working age who identify as a person living with disability. The current APS average for employment of people with disability is 3%<sup>2</sup>.

The Agency recognises and values the expertise and lived experience of people with disability that will in turn improve the NDIA's policy development and service delivery. By removing the barriers that inhibit meaningful participation and providing multiple strategies to attract and retain staff, the Agency aims to increase employment of people living with disability.

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<sup>1</sup> Australian Network on Disability (AND)

<sup>2</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, While this figure cannot be directly compared with representation in the APS, it gives context to the APS representation rate.

## Meeting obligations

The Agency has legal obligations under the *Fair Work Act 2009* and the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* to ensure that its employment processes do not discriminate against people with disability.

This plan is consistent with the requirements and recommendations of the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (DDA), the *Disability Discrimination and Other Human Rights Legislation Amendment Act 2009*, the Commonwealth Disability Strategy and the Management Advisory Committee Report 6: Employment of People with Disability in the APS (MAC Report 6).

The NDIA will report in its Annual Report against five performance indicators outlined in the Commonwealth Disability Strategy on its success in achieving continuous improvement in recruitment and retention of employees with disability (see list of performance indicators at Appendix B).

## Benefits and costs

By employing people with disability the Agency is likely to attract new skills and bring new and valuable perspectives to the organisation to better understand our participants. People with disability can bring high potential and a diverse range of skills and abilities to any organisation and have proven to be valuable employees in a wide range of occupations and industries.

An Australian Government review found that workers with disability are no more likely to be injured at work than other employees. Similarly, studies conducted in Australia and overseas have found no differences in performance and productivity, and found that employees with disability actually have fewer scheduled absences as well as increased tenure. While there will be some increase to costs, the Agency will be able to offset other costs e.g. some workplace adjustments, through the Australian Government funded Workplace Modifications Scheme.

## Disability – a definition

The Australian Bureau of Statistics defines disability as “a person has disability if they report that they have a limitation, restriction or impairment which has lasted or is likely to last, for at least six months and restricts everyday activity”. With this in mind defining disability in a contemporary social model is viewed as the barriers which prevent people with significant function limitation to equal and meaningful participation as a valued member of community. The Scheme determines that disability is a social construction occurring largely for those who have function limitations.

Under the DDA, the definition of the term “disability” is very broad. This means that people who might not be regarded as having disability and people who may not even think of themselves as having disability, are included.

In relation to the DDA, the term “disability” refers to:

Physical limitation	Sensory limitation
Intellectual limitation	Neurological limitation
Psychiatric limitation	Learning limitation

The purpose of this broad definition is to ensure that the law applies to every person with disability. This does not include conditions which do not interfere with participation in everyday life such as mild diabetes or wearing glasses.

Please see Appendix C for full details.

# ANDREW'S STORY

## SUPPORTED AT EVERY STEP

Andrew joined the Agency shortly after it first commenced. Andrew is employed as an APS 1 Administration Officer in the Human Resources team.

Previously Andrew started with DSS under the 2009 Pilot Traineeship Program for People with Intellectual Disability.

During the traineeship program Andrew completed a Certificate II in Business Administration and applies his studies to his work every day by producing Word documents, updating spreadsheets and ensuring the quality of records management.

Andrew said that when he first started work he was shy and not very confident. Since becoming permanently employed, he has gained personal confidence and increased his financial independence. Working with the NDIA has helped him build his communication skills and meet new people.

Andrew believes that a manager plays an essential role in building employees' skills by providing regular supervision, giving clear instructions and building a respectful relationship.

## Building a strong foundation

While this is the NDIA's first Accessibility Action Plan, our vision under the Plan has very much been a part of how we will operate as an organisation for the years to come. While we are continuing to build momentum in this area, the following initiatives will be developed and implemented.

### **1. Reasonable Adjustments Assessment Process**

Integrated into our 'business as usual' activities, reasonable adjustments allow us to change the physical workplace or the way a task is performed to allow our people to perform their role effectively. This allows people with disability to pursue roles on a more level playing field including during the recruitment process.

Workplace assessments and adjustments for people with disability apply to all levels of employment. These assessments can lead to modifications of existing equipment or the provision of specialist equipment, assistive technology or furniture. The Agency also offers flexible work arrangements, changes to workplace practices and training or retraining.

### **2. Consciously Addressing Unconscious Bias Program**

Development and implementation of a Program which will help overcome unconscious barriers when it comes to hiring, identifying and recognising talent with a disability as well as improving development and reward outcomes. This program will explore bias and its impact on individual and group decision making.

Using a variety of rigorous, innovative and engaging activities, the program will give senior leaders access to the tools they need to retain and effectively use the talent of our people.

### **3. Improving our technology**

Our new intranet offers greater accessibility for our employees with vision and motor disabilities. The intranet website complies with the DDA.

### **4. Identification and appointment of a Disability Coordinator**

The Disability Coordinator will assist in organising support for employees with disability through advocacy, networking, advice on reasonable adjustments and other activities, including setting up a Disability Employees Network at each site and the National Office.

### **5. Property Management**

Buildings and office fit-outs have been designed and constructed to comply with Australian Building Standards. Additionally, office buildings have access and egress that is safe, equitable and dignified for all staff and visitors, including those with disability.



## Our accessibility objectives

The Accessibility Action Plan outlines the Agency's approach to increasing employment opportunities and accessibility for people with disability, increasing disability awareness, and ensuring consultation with people with disability occurs when developing policies and programs that may impact them.

The Agency aims to attract and retain employees with disability and provide support and opportunities to all employees. This includes creating an environment where employees are comfortable disclosing their disability and confident that they will receive support to operate at a high level in the workplace.

The Agency should mirror the diversity of the broader population and reflect Australia's diversity of cultural backgrounds, including people with disability, women and men from wider age ranges, and the Indigenous population. This underpins the Scheme's responsibility as an employer to implement policies that actively promote the employment of people with disability and provide a variety of avenues to join the Agency as an employee.

The Agency has identified eight key accessibility objectives to work towards over the next four years. These are:

1. to develop a culture that values diversity and actively promotes the employment of people with disability;
2. to employ flexible recruitment strategies that are accessible to applicants with disability;
3. access to training, cadetships and mentoring opportunities for all employees including people with disability;
4. special employment measures to employ people with disability, for example the Australian Public Service Commission's Recruitability initiative, targeted employment strategies and flexible working arrangements;
5. to have accessible premises, workplaces and supportive work environments for people with disability;
6. to develop a reduced complexity, cost and risk for managers employing people with disability;
7. to employ continuous improvement in retaining people with disability.

**Our Accessibility Action Plan focuses on improving accessibility for our three core stakeholder groups:**



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**One big difference to lots of lives.**

## Action Plan

### Objective 1 –Value diversity and actively promotes the employment of people with disability

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measure
Identify an SES Champion to provide leadership on working with people with disability	NDIS Executive	December, 2014 Tasks on-going	Position promoted within the Agency Champion to promote disability issues across the Agency and lead the Agency on disability issues and meet with other APS Disability Champions
Workplace Health and Safety team to assist organising support for employees with disability through reasonable adjustments.	Human Resources	Tasks on-going	
Establishment of a Diversity Council to assist in the advocacy, networking and other activities including setting up a Disability Employees Network at each site and at National Office.	Human Resources		Establishment of a Diversity Council Network and initiatives established.
Partner with disability organisations AND, to increase awareness and confidence (see Appendix D)	Human Resources –	Tasks on-going	Increased awareness across the Agency
Include information on disability issues and services at Agency induction.	Human Resources	On-going	Slides included in induction presentations and disability fact sheets included into learning materials
Continue to adopt best organisational practice principles on issues of disability, and offer training where available and appropriate	Human Resources	On-going	Measure approval and satisfaction of employees with disability in the Agency through annual reporting and other feedback mechanisms, and adapt accordingly
Celebrate people with diversity by promoting and participating in formal events and celebrating the achievements of our Agency PWDs through story-telling events	Human Resources	On-going	Organise at least one event each year for either the International Day for People with Disability or World Mental Health Day
Undertake audit of NDIS website so content, where practicable, is accessible	Information Services and Comms/Media Branch	Audit completed – maintain content	Website content is accessible

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measure
Office buildings have access and egress that is safe, equitable and dignified for all employees and visitors, including those with disability	Property and Financial Management Branch-	On-going	Buildings and office fit outs designed and constructed to comply with Australian Building Standards
Ensure that employees with disability are encouraged to develop their careers and seek promotion including leadership development	Human Resources	On-going	Proportion of employees seeking career advancement

## Objective 2 – Flexible recruitment strategies that are accessible to applicants with disability

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measure
Investigate and promote the advertising of appropriate Agency vacancies on disability employment websitesRadio for the Print Handicapped, e-mail newsletters from CDNET	Human Resources	On-going	A significant number of Agency positions advertised on disability employment websites as well as through regular avenues
Raise the awareness of managers and employees undertaking recruitment activities (including interview panel members, managers, graduate recruiters and divisional support units) regarding the employment of people with disability	Human Resources	Tasks on-going	Reasonable adjustments made to recruitment practices to better target people with disability
Develop and implement employment practices to identify any unintended barriers to recruitment of people with disability (see Appendix E)	Human Resources	Tasks on-going	Employment practices have no identified barriers
The standard application process for employment within Agency to include the opportunity for people with disability to make known any special requirements they have for an interview situation	Human Resources	On-going	Applicant Details form
Ensure Recruitment companies used by the Agency are aware the Agency encourages applications from people with disability and the expectation that they will facilitate reasonable adjustment for applicants with disability	Human Resources — Recruitment Team	On-going	Proportion of applicants with disability and proportion then recommended for shortlisting Recruitment companies briefed

### Objective 3 – Accessible training, cadetship and mentoring opportunities

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measure
Actively organise opportunities for employees with disability to meet and interact with the SES Champion for disability	Human Resources	On-going	Functions organised at least once per year depending on employees interest
Participate in DSS's Graduate and Internship Programs to university students with disability	Human Resources — Workforce Planning	On-going	Number of outreach activities to students with disability Proportion of applicants with a disclosed disability and proportion of graduates or interns with disability participating in relevant programs
Investigate innovative pathways to employment for people with disability, e.g. trial internship and scholarship programs for students with disability, with an aim to on-going employment in NDIS	Human Resources— Policy and Support Team	December 2014	Options paper submitted to Group Manager, Enabling Services Branch
Ensure employees with disabilities are afforded equal access to training and career development opportunities	Human Resources — Learning and Development	On-going	Learning and development opportunities are accessible Training venues and documents are accessible

### Objective 4 – Special employment measures to employ people with disability

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measure
Establish relationships with relevant disability employment networks to build recruitment opportunities and tap into new talent pools within disability sector	Human Resources — Recruitment Team	December 2014 Tasks on-going	Number of disability employment networks contacted and relationships established. Number of referrals received
Investigate and trial targeted employment strategies to recruit employees with disability at all levels of the Agency	Human Resources — Recruitment Team	December 2014	Options paper submitted to Chief Financial Officer
Promote and trial the Public Service Commissioner's Special Measures to improve flexibility and recruitment of people with disability	Human Resources— Policy and Support Team	On-going	Information available to recruiting managers Number of employees engaged using the special measures
Ensure flexible working arrangements and employment conditions are promoted during recruitment and information on how to apply for flexible working arrangements is made available	Human Resources — Recruitment Team	On-going	Application information contains relevant content Information included in New Starter and Graduate training

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measure
The Agency to investigate employing people with intellectual disability through disability employment agencies e.g. Jobmatch Office Support Agency (a division of Koomari Association) or outsourcing of work e.g. collating, copying etc. (See Appendix D)	Human Resources— Disability Coordinator	December 2014 Tasks on-going	Options paper submitted to Group Manager, Enabling Services Branch Agency successfully employs temporary employees with intellectual disability, or contracts work to Jobmatch, if relevant to tasks to be performed.
The Agency to include selection criteria - additional requirement section in all advertising	Human Resources — Recruitment Team	On-going	Selection criteria includes For non-client contact roles e.g. admin/office support Relevant experience working with people with disability or lived experience of disability desirable For client contact roles e.g. Planners/LACs Relevant experience working with people with disability or lived experience of disability highly desirable

## Objective 5 – Accessible premises, workplaces and supportive work environments

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measure
Seek expert advice on disability issues where necessary including consulting with appropriate organisations on policy issues. (see Appendix D)	Human Resources— Policy and Support Team	As required	Compliance with the DDA and CRPD, Building Codes and the National Disability Strategy
Employees are asked in the annual employee survey to voluntarily disclose whether they have disability	Human Resources— Policy and Support Team	Employee Survey	Increased disclosure rate of employees who identify as having disability which can subsequently be included in Workforce Planning reporting
Develop and implement a 'reasonable adjustments' policy to support placement of new employees with disability or to assist in supporting current employees who have or acquire disability (see Appendix E)	Human Resources— Policy and Support Team	Policy completed, to be reviewed Q4 2014	Policy is drafted and approved Implementation is monitored over the life of the Plan
Assess options for improved support to employees and visitors with disability during an evacuation or emergency consistent with emergency evacuation procedures	Human Resources — Work Health and Safety Section	Tasks are on- going	Employees/fire wardens informed of the appropriate process for evacuating employees and visitors with disability

## Objective 6 and 7 – Reduced complexity, cost and risk for managers

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measure
Seek expert advice on disability issues where necessary including consulting with appropriate organisations on policy issues (see Appendix D)	Human Resources— Policy and Support Team	As required	Managers and employees satisfied with advice and policy decisions regarding disability issues
Guidance and support is available to support managers and teams working closely with people with disability	Human Resources —	On-going	Number of Australian Network on Disability guides distributed JobAccess referral information available to managers to support employees
Educate line managers about their obligations in terms of managing employees with disabilities and their role in promoting equal opportunities and diversity	Human Resources — Learning and Development	On-going	Training programme and documentation to promote employment and retention of people with disabilities

## Objective 8 – Continuous improvement in recruiting and retaining people with disability

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measure
Draft information for dissemination to all employees emphasising why it is in the employee's interest to disclose disability	Human Resources	Ongoing, periodic reminders to employees	Increased promotion via employees meetings and online media
Include information about disclosure of disability at induction for new employees	Human Resources	Ongoing	Information included and rate of disclosure increased
Employees encouraged to update their disability status via the personal and payroll system to improve reporting and monitoring of recruitment and retention	All employees	On-going	Rate of disclosure is increased
Undertake regular performance audits and reviews	Human Resources	On-going	Rate of disclosure is increase.

# Measuring progress

The NDIA will measure progress towards implementing the Accessibility Action Plan. We are committed to continuous improvement in recruiting and retaining people with disability. Training and professional development of employees will play a significant role in improving the confidence of those with disability to make a significant contribution to the Agency.

We recognise the importance of accessible, open and inclusive environments for employees, stakeholders and the general public to achieving our goal of increasing the Agency's proportion of employees with disability and improving the experience of existing employees with disability.

The Disability Coordinator within will work with relevant business areas to monitor progress against the actions and timelines set out in this Plan. Progress will be reported regularly to the Agency's Disability Champion. The Disability Coordinator will also provide input to the Agency's Annual Report and collate information for the Australian Public Service Commission's (APSC) yearly State of the Service Report about the numbers of employees with a disability. Additionally, the Agency will comply with the APSC Disability Employment Strategy (As One) and the National Disability Strategy.

The NDIA will use the Agency Workplace Consultative Forum (WCF) and other appropriate committees and groups to provide ongoing monitoring of the Plan. These groups will have the ability to recommend updates and actions to supplement the Plan as it is implemented.

To support this group, the Disability Coordinator will maintain a log of issues and concerns raised regarding accessibility, workplace culture and inclusive practice for employees, stakeholders and visitors with disability.

The NDIA will also use employee surveys to measure the success of the Plan, especially in relation to the experience and retention of employees.

Progress and achievements made under the Plan will be communicated and promoted through various channels, including via the intranet and external reports.

# Appendix A: Business drivers for disability employment

Inclusive workplaces are central to the future of the NDIA for four important reasons:

**Fig 1 Benefits from increasing the representation of people with disability in the NDIS.**



## Strategic benefits

- The NDIA touches the lives of many Australians. The effects of the policies and services it delivers are important to the life of these people.
- By recruiting and retaining more people with disability, the Agency will increase the diversity of its workforce to better reflect the diversity in the Australian community. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) found that 18.5% of Australians have disability, where disability is defined as “any limitation, restriction or impairment which restricts everyday activities and has lasted or is likely to last for at least six months.”<sup>3</sup> Increasingly businesses and individuals in the Australian community are looking to interact with organisations that reflect their own diversity.<sup>4</sup>
- Having a workforce that reflects the community will also result in the production of programs and policy that take into account the experiences of people with disability. Our diversity has and will continue to increase the flow of diverse ideas and a broader range of perspectives. This is especially true when the Agency is confronted by difficult and complex challenges.
- Having people with disability within the Agency will help ensure that policies and programs respond to the needs of the community and deliver good practice.

## Workforce planning benefits

- The Agency will benefit from the retention of a talented and skilled workforce.
- The 2010 Intergenerational Report has highlighted that population ageing will put significant pressures on the economy, and employing the working age population will become increasingly important.<sup>5</sup> According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), countries who experience skills shortages and an ageing population will seek to spur the recruitment and retention of workers who currently need adjustments to fully participate.<sup>6</sup> Currently people with disability are an under utilised part of the potential workforce and are subject to unfounded attitudes by employers about their value as workers.<sup>7</sup>
- Around 44% of ongoing APS employees are in the 45 and over age group and will be eligible for retirement in the next 10 years.<sup>8</sup> Almost three in four Senior Executive Service officers are in this category.<sup>9</sup> We also

<sup>3</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 2009, cat. no. 4430.0, ABS, Canberra, 2010, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Australian Employers Network on Disability, Opportunity, Switzer Media & Publishing, 2008, p. 6.

<sup>5</sup> Department of the Treasury, Intergenerational Report 2010: Australia to 2050: Future challenges, Canberra, 2010

<sup>6</sup> OECD Directorate for Employment, Labour and Social Affairs, ‘Sickness, Disability and Work: Keeping on track in the economic downturn’, background paper prepared for the High-Level Forum, Stockholm, 14-15 May 2009 [www.oecd.org/dataoecd/42/15/42699911.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/42/15/42699911.pdf).

<sup>7</sup> Mark L. Lengnick-Hall, Philip M. Gaunt, Mukta Kulkarni ‘Overlooked and underutilized: People with disabilities are an untapped human resource’, Human Resource Management, vol 47, no 2, summer 2008, pp. 255–273; J. Graffam et al, ‘Employer Benefits and Costs of Employing a Person with a Disability’, Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, vol. 17, 2002, pp. 251–63.

<sup>8</sup> State of the Service Report 2010- 11, pp. 101-2.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. p.4.



know that disability prevalence increases with age and the majority of people of working age with disability develop their condition while at work.<sup>10</sup> In the APS the median age of employees with disability is 48 years, compared to the total APS workforce average of 42 years.<sup>11</sup> There is also anecdotal evidence that many workers who develop a medical condition will leave an employer without fully investigating reasonable adjustments that could have enabled them to remain at work.<sup>12</sup>

#### Professional and technological benefits

- Flexible working arrangements enable people with disability to better manage their duties thereby increasing their team's efficiency.
- Technology can help employees with disability to fully use their skills. Conversely, the adoption of technology driven by the inclusion of people with disability will mainstream the productivity benefits of remote technology to all employees, such as those who travel, have work commitments outside a normal office or outside normal office hours.<sup>13</sup>
- The APS is becoming increasingly open to new ways of working. By 2020, the Australian Government aims to at least double its level of teleworking so that at least 12% of Australian employees report having such an arrangement with their employers.<sup>14</sup> For example, IP Australia, the Commonwealth's intellectual property rights agency, demonstrated how teleworking had enabled it to retain highly-qualified patent examiners in a very competitive market.<sup>15</sup>

#### Leadership benefits

- The creation of employment opportunities in the NDIA will show leadership to other Australian employers to eliminate barriers to the employment of people with disability. Increasing access to employment opportunities is a key to improving economic security and personal wellbeing for people with disability.
- The NDIA aims to be the Employer of Choice with innovative recruitment and retention policies and practices. This will enable access to a broader talent pool as people with disability bring a diverse range of skills and abilities and new and valuable perspectives to the workplace
- With a labour shortage predicted for all major industries and occupations, employers will be looking to take advantage of Australia's untapped workforce—which includes people with disability.

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<sup>10</sup> Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, Disability programs in need of reform: Policy Brief, OECD, March 2003.

<sup>11</sup> State of the Service Report 2010- 11, p. 179.

<sup>12</sup> Beatty, J. E. & Joffe, R. 'An overlooked dimension of diversity: The career effects of chronic illness.' *Organizational Dynamics*, vol 35, no 2, 2006, pp. 182-195.

<sup>13</sup> Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, *Telework Forum: Bringing home the benefits of telework using the NBN*, record of the Telework Forum, Sydney, 3 August 2011.

<sup>14</sup> Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, *Government Initiatives*, Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, Canberra, 2012, viewed 16 April 2012, <<http://www.nbn.gov.au/telework/government-initiatives/>>.

<sup>15</sup> Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, *Telework Forum: Bringing home the benefits of telework using the NBN*, record of the Telework Forum, Sydney, 3 August 2011, p. 9.

# Appendix B: The Disability Management Framework

The APS policy framework for providing recruitment and other services to people with disability is made up of the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*, the *Commonwealth Disability Strategy*, and the *Management Advisory Committee Report: Employment of People with Disability in the APS (2006)*.

This Disability Strategy is underpinned by the following:

## **The Disability Discrimination Act 1992**

The DDA deems it unlawful to discriminate against people on the basis of disability. Section 4 of the DDA defines disability as:

- a) total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions; or
- b) total or partial loss of a 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;

and includes 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.

The DDA defines discrimination as less favourable treatment against somebody because of disability, or the disability of a relative or associate. There are two broad types of discrimination — direct and indirect discrimination.

The DDA encourages everyone to recognise the contributions that people with disability make to the community and the economy, and requires as far as practicable, that the specific needs of people with disability are met:

- the right to services to attain a reasonable quality of life;
- the right to choose their own lifestyle, have access to information provided in a manner appropriate to their disability and cultural background and allow informed choice; and
- the right to receive services in a manner which least restricts their rights and opportunities.

## **The Commonwealth Disability Strategy**

The Commonwealth Disability Strategy (CDS) was introduced in 1994 as a planning framework to assist Australian Government organisations to meet their obligations under the DDA. The CDS provides a basis to assist organisations to improve access for people with disability to Australian Government policies, programs, services and facilities.

The CDS recommends all Australian Government departments develop a Disability Action Plan to identify and remove barriers to the full participation of people with disability.

The five performance indicators departments are required to report against annually, as an employer, are as follows:

- 1) Employment policies and procedures comply with requirements of the DDA
- 2) Recruitment information for potential job applicants is available on request in accessible formats
- 3) "Reasonable adjustment" principles are applied by managers and recruiters
- 4) Training and development programs consider and respond to the needs of people with disabilities and include information on disability issues where they relate to program content
- 5) Complaints/grievance mechanism, including access to external mechanisms, in place to address issues and concerns raised by employees and public.

## **The Management Advisory Committee Report: Employment of People with Disability in the APS**

In August 2006, the Management Advisory Committee (MAC) published a report titled 'Employment of People with Disability in the APS'. This report sets out eight objectives for promoting the employment of people with disability and identifies a range of better practice strategies for meeting these objectives.

The intent of the report is to assist departments to provide a work environment that attracts applicants with disability and supports the career aspirations of successful applicants and existing employees.

## **The Work, Health and Safety Act**

*The Work, Health and Safety Act 2011* (WHS Act) provides a framework to protect the health, safety and welfare of all workers at work and of all other people who might be affected by the work. The Agency has an obligation under the WHS Act to ensure a safe environment for all employees.

## Appendix C: Definition of Disability

### Disability Discrimination Act 1992

**Disability**, in relation to a person, means:

- 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; and includes disability that:
- presently exists; or
- previously existed but no longer exists; or
- may exist in the future; or
- is imputed to a person.

### Australian Bureau of Statistics - 2003 Disability, Ageing and Carers Survey

#### Disability definition

A person has disability if they report that they have a limitation, restriction or impairment, which has lasted or is likely to last, for at least six months and restricts everyday activities. This includes:

- Loss of sight (not corrected by glasses or contact lenses)
- Loss of hearing where communication is restricted, or an aid to assist with , or substitute for, hearing is used
- Speech difficulties
- Shortness of breath or breathing difficulties causing restriction
- Chronic or recurrent pain or discomfort causing restriction
- Blackouts, fits or loss of consciousness
- Difficulty learning or understanding
- Incomplete use of arms or finger
- Difficulty gripping or holding things
- Incomplete use of feet or legs
- Nervous or emotional condition causing restriction
- Restriction in physical activities or in doing physical work
- Disfigurement or deformity
- Mental illness or condition requiring help or supervision
- Long-term effects of head injury, stroke or other brain damage causing restriction
- Receiving treatment or medication for any other long-term conditions or ailments and still restricted
- Any other long-term conditions resulting in a restriction.

#### DISCRIMINATION

##### Disability Discrimination Act 1992

##### 5 Disability discrimination

- 1) For the purposes of this Act, a person (**discriminator**) discriminates against another person (**aggrieved person**) on the ground of disability of the aggrieved person if, because of the aggrieved person's disability, the discriminator treats or proposes to treat the aggrieved person less favourably than, in circumstances that are the same or are not materially different, the discriminator treats or would treat a person without the disability.
- 2) For the purposes of subsection (1), circumstances in which a person treats or would treat another person with disability are not materially different because of the fact that different accommodation or services may be required by the person with disability.

## Appendix D: Key organisations

Organisation	Description	Website
Australian Network on Disability (AND)	AND is a not-for-profit organisation funded by its members who include large multinational corporations, small to medium enterprises, government departments and not-for-profit organisations. Its role is to help its members and clients to become more confident and prepared to welcome people with disability into their organisations. AND does this by providing advice and services on disability to employers, government representatives and industry bodies.	<a href="#">Australian Network On Disability's website</a>
Disability Employment Australia (DEA)	DEA is the peak industry body for Disability Employment Services (DES) providers. It has a critical role in monitoring the DES program's implementation to ensure it achieves outcomes consistent with the <i>Disability Services Act 1986</i> and the Disability Service Standards. DEA also represents the interests of its members to government at the national level, promotes the sector through events and undertakes an educational role in best practice and innovative ways to find people with disability real jobs.	<a href="#">Disability Employment Australia's website</a>
National Disability Recruitment Coordinator (NDRC)	NDRC is a government funded service that provides free, confidential information and expert assistance to employers about recruiting and working with people with disability. It does this by connecting its employment partners with job seekers who are registered with Disability Employment Services Providers. The NDRC sends information about the employer's job vacancies to Disability Employment Services Providers who service the area where the jobs are located and highlights the support available to people with disability through initiatives including workplace modifications and employer incentives. It offers a free pre-screening interview service at the point of recruitment to obtain suitable referrals of potential candidates for the vacancies.	<a href="http://www.workfocus.com/how-can-we-help/help-with-advice.aspx#ndrcanchor">http://www.workfocus.com/how-can-we-help/help-with-advice.aspx#ndrcanchor</a>
Australian Federation of Disability Organisations (AFDO)	AFDO is the peak national body for organisations for people with disability. It aims to promote the rights of people with disability in Australia and promote the participation of people with disability in all parts of social, economic, political and cultural life.	<a href="#">AFDO's website</a>
National Disability Services (NDS)	NDS is the industry association for disability services. It represents 750 non-governmental organisations working to improve the lives of people with disability. These include Autism Spectrum Australia, Calvary Home Care Services Ltd. and Melbourne City mission Inc. Its members operate in every State and Territory. NDS aims to increase its members' capacity to provide quality services and to ensure they have a voice in government policy-making. It also provides information and advice to its subscribers from the for-profit and government sector.	<a href="#">National Disability Services Website</a>
Job Access Australia	Job Access Australia provides help and workplace solutions for the employment of people with disability, including the management of the Employment Assistance Fund, which provides financial assistance to purchase a range of work related modifications and services for people with disability and mental health conditions	<a href="#">Job Access Australia's website</a>
Australian Human Rights Commission (HREOC)	AHRC leads the implementation of the <a href="#">Disability Discrimination Act 1992</a> , <b>making</b> disability discrimination unlawful. It promotes equal rights, opportunity and access for people with disabilities and has major responsibilities under the international <a href="#">Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities</a> .  The Commission also performs a wide range of functions to assist organisations and individuals to understand their rights and meet their legal responsibilities.	<a href="#">Australian Human Rights Commission's website</a>

## Appendix E: Checklist for Developing Reports, Policies and Procedures

### Consider the Needs of People with Disability

This applies to all mainstream Commonwealth policies and programs as well as internal Agency specific policies and programs —not just those that are disability specific.

- Do you know what the impact of your report, policy or procedure will be for people with disability?
- Do you consider how the impact of your proposal may vary between people with different types of disability?
- Do you consult with people with disability, their representatives or other relevant agencies to determine the likely impact of any changes?
- How do you document that you have considered disability access issues as part of the process?

### Identify the Needs of People with Disability

The DSS website lists a range of [National Peak Disability Bodies](#) that may be able to advise on the impact of your proposed report or policy on people with disability.

The Agency would undertake regular audits to assist with identifying any barriers that may be encountered by Agency employees.

### Identify and Include People with Disability as Stakeholders

This applies to all mainstream Commonwealth policies and programs as well as internal Department specific policies and programs —not just those that are disability specific.

- In defining your target audience for consultation, do you consider whether some members of your audience will be people with disability?
- Are there any barriers in your consultation methods which would prevent a person with disability from participating in the process for example, inaccessible venues for public consultations, lack of information in accessible formats, restricted timeframes for providing input?
- Do you seek input from organisations that represent the views of people with disability?
- Do you invite people with disability to be part of your reference or focus groups when developing reports or reviewing policies?

### Consultation

The disability community consists of people with disability, their families, carers, advocates and service providers. These people may be from different cultural or linguistic backgrounds, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background, or may live in rural or remote areas. Ideas, strategies and procedures need to be developed around how to contact these people and groups.

Targeted consultations with people with disability are necessary for the following.

- Disability specific policies, programs or services are being developed or changed
- Whole community policies, programs or services which may have direct impacts on people with disability are being developed or changed

When a whole community report or policy impacts equally on all, specific targeting of people with disability is not necessary. However, people with disability represent a significant part of the community and they should be included as part of broadly representative consultations.