

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan for Peel Development Commission 2015 to 2020

This plan is available upon request in alternative formats upon request and includes in electronic format by email, in hard copy in both large and standard print, in audio on cassette or compact disc and on the website at www.peel.wa.gov.au

Document Control

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Overview of the Peel Development Commission

The Peel Development Commission (Commission) was established by the State Government on 1 January 1993 under the *Regional Development Commissions Act 1993*. The Commission is one of nine regional development commissions each governed by the same legislation. The role of the Commission is to coordinate and facilitate actions that will support the development of the Peel Region.

Under the *Regional Development Commissions Act 1993*, the objectives of the Commission are to:

- maximise job creation and improve career opportunities in the region;
- develop and broaden the economic base of the region;
- identify infrastructure services to promote economic and social development within the region;
- provide information and advice to promote business development within the region;
- seek to ensure that the general standard of government services and access to those services in the region is comparable to that which applies in the metropolitan area; and
- generally take steps to encourage, promote, facilitate and monitor the economic development of the region.

Functions, facilities and services

The Peel Development Commission's role is to:

- promote the region;
- facilitate coordination between relevant statutory bodies and State government agencies;
- cooperate with representatives of industry and commerce, employer and employee organisations, education and training institutions and other sections of the community within the region;
- identify the opportunities for investment in the region and encourage that investment;
- identify the infrastructure needs of the region, and encourage the provision of that infrastructure in the region; and
- promote equitable delivery of services throughout the region through cooperation with –
 - departments of the State and the Commonwealth, and other agencies, instrumentalities and statutory bodies of the State and the Commonwealth; and
 - local government authorities.

Planning for better access

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (2012), 4.2 million people in Australia representing 18.5% of the population, identify themselves as having some form of disability. While the degree and type of disability varies with individual circumstances, people with disability frequently experience barriers to participation in community life.

The rights of people with disability are protected under the:

- Western Australian Disability Services Act 1993 (amended 2004);
- Western Australian Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (amended 1988);
- Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1992; and
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with a Disability (2007).

The Western Australian Disability Services Act (1993) amended 2004 part 5 requires State Government agencies and local governments to develop and implement a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP).

The Peel Development Commission DAIP provides a planned and systematic approach to progressively improve access to its facilities and services.

Development of the DAIP

Community consultation process

This is the third iteration of the Commission's DAIP with consultation processes undertaken in 2008, 2011 and then 2015 to inform the current plan.

The Commission has conducted an internal review of the 2012 – 2016 plan and outcomes to inform further improvements to access and inclusion.

Community consultation is to occur through a two week public comment period advertised via:

- Peel Development Commission website: <http://www.peel.wa.gov.au>
- West Australian Newspaper
- Peel Development Commission fortnightly newsletter.

In addition direct consultation is to occur with representatives of disability organisations and relevant community groups.

Responsibility for implementing the DAIP

It is a requirement of the *Disability Services Act* that public authorities must take all practical measures to ensure that the DAIP is implemented by its officers, employees, agents and contractors.

An Implementation Plan will be developed to detail actions, responsibilities and timeframes to achieve the required outcomes. Whilst implementation of the DAIP is the responsibility of all areas of the Commission some actions in the Implementation Plan will apply to all areas of the Commission while others will apply only to a specific area. The DAIP planning committee will guide the overall implementation of the plan.

Communicating the plan to staff and people with disabilities

In 2012 the Commission sent copies of the finalised DAIP to those who contributed to the planning process including staff, people with disabilities and disability organisations. The plan was finalised and formally endorsed by the Commission's Executive. This process will occur similarly with the finalised 2015 to 2020 DAIP.

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

As plans are amended both staff and the community will be advised of the availability of updated plans on the Peel Development Commission Website.

Policy Statement

The Peel Development Commission (Commission) is committed to ensuring that all people, including those with disability, their families, carers and the elderly are able to access the range of services and facilities of the Commission. This includes a commitment to ensuring that all members of the community are given the opportunity to participate in shaping the development of the Peel.

The Commission recognises that all members of the public are valued community members who make a variety of contributions to community, economic development and cultural life. The Commission is committed to consulting with people with disability, their families and their carers and where required, disability organisations, to ensure that barriers to access are appropriately addressed.

This includes a commitment that agents and contractors are informed about the Commission's DAIP and work toward the desired access and inclusion outcomes.

The Peel Development Commission is committed to achieving the seven outcomes outlined in the following strategy section.

Strategies to improve access and inclusion

Outcome 1

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by, Peel Development Commission.

Strategies for Outcome 1:

- Be flexible and adaptive in responding to barriers experienced by people due to various disability, including physical, sensory, cognitive and psychiatric disability.
- Ensure that procedures and practices of the Commission are consistent with the Commission's policy on access.
- Ensure that all people have access to any events organised by or on behalf of the Commission.

Outcome 2

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access Peel Development Commission offices.

Strategies for Outcome 2:

- Ensure all procedures for enabling access to our staff (including participation in meetings) by people with disability are communicated to and implemented by staff.
- Continue to investigate opportunities to develop a Government co-location building in the Peel which ensures accessibility requirements and to which the Commission can relocate.

Outcome 3

People with disability receive information from Peel Development Commission in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it.

Strategies for Outcome 3:

- Produce all materials and information on services using clear and concise language.
- Maintain community awareness that Commission information is available in alternative formats upon request.
- Improve current staff awareness of accessible information and how to obtain information in other formats.
- Ensure that the Commission's website meets contemporary good practice with regards to access.

Outcome 4

People with disability receive the same level and quality of service from the Peel Development Commission staff as other people.

Strategies for Outcome 4:

- Provide training to staff to ensure that they are aware of the needs of all people, their families and carers who use the Commission's services, particularly in relation to service provision and community consultation.
- Ensure that all staff and contractors are aware of the relevant requirements of the *Disability Services Act* in regards to service provision.
- Work collaboratively with key agencies and service providers in the Peel to improve participation of people with disability in the community and workforce.
- Commit to ongoing monitoring of the DAIP to ensure implementation and satisfaction outcomes.

Outcome 5

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the Peel Development Commission.

Strategies for Outcome 5:

- Accept complaints from all people in a variety of formats.
- Provide instruction for grievance procedures in clear and concise language.

Outcome 6

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by Peel Development Commission.

Strategies for Outcome 6:

- Investigate and implement consultation models that ensure engagement of relevant stakeholders in the development of the Peel including people with disability, their families and carers.
- Ensure public consultation forums are held in facilities that can be accessed by all people.

Outcome 7

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment with the Peel Development Commission.

Strategies for Outcome 7:

- Establish relationships with local disability employment agencies to utilise their knowledge and expertise in identifying employment opportunities for people with disability.
- Ensure employment advertisements are available in alternative formats upon request.
- Review practices for staff recruitment to ensure they meet Equal Employment Opportunity principles.
- Modify work environment where practical and as required to accommodate staff with disability.

Review and evaluation mechanisms

The DAIP planning committee will meet on a bi-annual basis to develop an implementation plan and review progress against strategies identified in the DAIP.

The Committee will prepare a report each year on the implementation of the DAIP with a status report provided to Executive.

The Disability Services Act sets out the minimum review for public authorities in relation to DAIPs. The Commission's DAIP will be reviewed at least every five years, in accordance with the Act. The DAIP Implementation Plan will be amended on regular basis to reflect progress and any access and inclusion issues which may be relevant. Whenever the DAIP is amended, a copy of the amended plan will be lodged with the Disability Services Commission.

Reporting on the DAIP

Peel Development Commission informs the community about DAIP activities through their Annual Report and provides the Disability Services Commission with a quantitative DAIP progress report once a year.