



Australian Government
Productivity Commission

Productivity Commission

Access for People with a Disability

Agency Plan 2013 -15

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Productivity Commission's *Access for People with a Disability: Agency Plan 2013-15* sets out its commitment and approach to addressing awareness, access and opportunities for people with disabilities in accordance with the *Australian Public Service Values, Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the *National Disability Strategy*.
- 1.2 Related documents are the Commission's *Enterprise Agreement, Service Charter* and *Workplace Diversity Program*, which incorporates a disability employment strategy.

2 Definitions

2.1 For the purposes of this plan, section 4 of the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* defines disability in relation to a person to mean:

- 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 a [disability](#) that:

- presently exists; or
- previously existed but no longer exists; or
- may exist in the future (including because of a genetic predisposition to that [disability](#)); or
- is imputed to a person. [ss. 4 (1c) (a)-(k)]

3 National Disability Strategy - background

- 3.1** The Commonwealth, State and Territory governments have developed a *National Disability Strategy* (NDS), with a shared vision for an inclusive Australian society that enables people with disability to fulfil their potential as equal citizens. The strategy sets out a ten year national plan for improving life for Australians with disability, their families and carers.
- 3.2** In developing the NDS, the Commonwealth, States and Territories assessed the extent to which their existing legislation, policies and programs comply with the obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. One of the policies common to most jurisdictions was the existence of government disability action plans.
- 3.3** This plan is a continuation of the Productivity Commission’s previous disability action plans, consistent with the continuing commitment of Australian governments under the NDS.

4 National Disability Strategy – principles

- 4.1** The NDS principles are:
- respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one’s own choices, and independence of persons
 - non-discrimination
 - full and effective participation and inclusion in society
 - respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity
 - equality of opportunity
 - accessibility
 - equality between men and women
 - respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities and respect for the right of children with disabilities to preserve their identities.

5 The Commission's Role

- 5.1** The Productivity Commission is the Australian Government's independent research and advisory body on a range of economic, social and environmental issues affecting the welfare of Australians.
- 5.2** The Commission's core function is to conduct public inquiries on key policy or regulatory issues bearing on Australia's economic performance and community wellbeing. It also undertakes a variety of research at the request of government and to support its responsibilities.
- 5.3** The Commission's work covers all levels of government and encompasses all sectors of the economy, as well as social and environmental issues.

6 The Commission's Approach

- 6.1** The Commission is committed to promoting the *APS Values* and the *National Disability Strategy* principles through the following strategies:

A. *Employee awareness raising*

We will continue measures to promote heightened awareness amongst our employees of the CDS principles through:

- making this Plan available to all employees
- promoting this Plan at appropriate opportunities (such as the Chairman's staff meetings, Staff News, International Day for People with a Disability)
- provision of information for selection panels as required
- ensuring induction programs include information about this Plan.

B. *Employment*

A disability employment strategy will be incorporated in our overall Workplace Diversity program.

C. *Undertaking our core business*

In conducting our public inquiries, research projects and other activities we will assess the impact of our policy proposals on the lives of people with disabilities prior to finalisation of those proposals through:

- including in our activity checklists the requirement to consider the needs of people with disabilities, and recording such consideration in the public document or internal records
- providing guidance to our employees on the steps to be considered by having available an appropriate checklist

D. *Consultation*

Where considerations reveal a likely impact on the lives of people with disabilities, consultation with those people or their representatives will be initiated through:

- determining the nature and extent of such consultations on a case-by-case basis as this is likely to vary according to individual circumstances.

E. *Information provision*

Where we identify, or people with disabilities self-identify, the need for information in formats other than those normally provided, we will endeavour to meet such needs in a timely manner through:

- ensuring our website complies with World Wide Web Consortium's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines
- including on our web site information related to accessibility issues and assistance
- meeting all reasonable requests for the provision of information in accessible formats
- undertaking any other reasonable actions to ensure timely accessibility to Commission information
- maintaining a 'register of requests for information and assistance' to assist in planning for future needs and to aid our external reporting requirements.

F. *Access to premises*

We will ensure our activities are undertaken in premises accessible to employees and stakeholders with disabilities through:

- having regard to the needs of people with disabilities in respect of our existing premises, any new premises we may consider, and any external premises we may use in the conduct of our activities (eg training venues, public hearings)
- making appropriate arrangements to specifically assist people with disabilities with access to Commission premises and venues.

G. *Reporting*

This plan will be reviewed annually through a report to the Commission's Management Committee.

H. *Complaints mechanisms*

We will have available for stakeholders and employees avenues by which to raise issues and concerns relating to disability matters for:

- external stakeholders, through the avenues set out in the Commission's Service Charter
- employees, through the avenues set out in the Commission's Enterprise Agreement.

For further information, contact the Diversity Co-ordinator on 03 9653 2348.