



Government of **Western Australia**
Pilbara Development Commission



Pilbara Development Commission

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2006 -2010

This plan is available upon request in alternative formats such as large print, electronic format (disk or emailed), audio or Braille.



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Background

The Pilbara Development Commission

The Pilbara Development Commission is a State Government Statutory Authority with a mission to achieve the balanced economic and social development of the Pilbara region. The region comprises the Shires of Ashburton, East Pilbara and Roebourne and the Town of Port Hedland.

We work closely with the region's four local Government authorities, other State and Commonwealth agencies, local industry, business and community organisations and individuals.

The following values underpin how the Pilbara Development Commission will achieve its goals:

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| Committed | ➤ We are passionate about the Pilbara, its people and its future. |
| Respectful | ➤ We embrace the cultural diversity of the region and its importance in enhancing strong cohesive communities. |
| Inclusive | ➤ We take pride in knowing, understanding and engaging the people of the Pilbara as we work together to shape the future of the region. |
| Professional | ➤ We are efficient and act with honesty, integrity and fairness, recognising the importance of being open and accountable for our actions. |



Futuristic

- We are proactive and visionary in our approach to ensure that the attributes and opportunities of the region are sustainable into the future.

Our Goals

1. Better Services
2. Jobs and Economic Development
3. The Environment
4. Regional Leadership and Planning
5. Organisational Performance

Our Projects

The Commission's projects are currently aligned to the following areas to achieve regional development.

- Continuous improvement of policies, plans, strategies and position statements on key development issues and facilitation of their implementation to generate a methodical and coordinated approach to Regional Development of the Pilbara region;
- Facilitation of greater unity and cohesion within the business community and the encouragement of business investment that is environmentally sustainable;
- Identification of the needs and coordination of infrastructure development in the region to generate employment, investment and sustainable economic and social growth;
- Identification of key economic, social and cultural infrastructure that will generate business growth as well as improve the quality of life for all Pilbara residents;
- Effective promotion of the Pilbara's many investment opportunities, great lifestyle and unique natural environment.

Corporate Structure and Area of Responsibility

The Pilbara Development Commission has a Board of ten members which is its executive and policy making body.

The Board is comprised of members from the Pilbara region. The Board meets periodically, usually bimonthly. The Pilbara Development Commission has on average



10 full time and 2 part time operational staff who manage the day to day administrative affairs of the Commission and its main development projects.

The Pilbara Development Commission has nine staff at the Port Hedland office, two at the Karratha office and one at our Newman office.

The Pilbara Development Commission is mindful of the needs of people with disabilities and delivers its services to include people with disabilities. The Commission recognises that people with disabilities have the same rights as able members of the community and will be catered for accordingly.

The Pilbara Development Commission has advertised its services widely and has also developed a Customer Service Charter.

The Pilbara Development acknowledges that all clients have a right to consultation, courtesy, information and the opportunity to express their views on Government services.

Access and inclusion policy statement for people with disabilities, their families and carers

The Pilbara Development Commission is committed to:

- ensuring that people with disabilities, their families and carers are able to fully access the range of Commission services and facilities (both in-house and contracted), providing them with the same opportunities, rights and responsibilities enjoyed by all other people in the community;
- ensuring that people with disabilities are given the opportunity to participate in shaping the development of their community through the consultative process with local business and industry and the three levels of Government;
- consulting with people with disabilities, their families and carers and where required, disability organisations to ensure that barriers to access and inclusion are addressed appropriately;
- ensuring that its agents and contractors work towards the desired access and inclusion outcomes in the DAIP; and
- achieving the six desired outcomes of its DAIP.

The six desired outcomes are:

1. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by, the Pilbara Development



Commission.

2. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of the Pilbara Development Commission.
3. People with disabilities receive information from the Pilbara Development Commission 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 the Pilbara Development Commission.
5. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the Pilbara Development Commission.
6. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by the Pilbara Development Commission.

Development of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

How the plan was developed

The Manager Corporate and Economic Development of the Pilbara Development Commission was charged with the responsibility for developing, reviewing and evaluating the Commission's Disability Access and Inclusion Plan.

The Manager Corporate and Economic Development amended the original Disability Services Plan (DSP) of the Commission in light of the new requirements of the Act and sought assistance and guidance from the Disability Services Commission in the development of the Plan.

The Commission has a well established practice of community consultation in all of its programs. The following strategies were used in the consultation:

- In December 2006 the community was informed through the West Australian newspaper, regional newspapers and the Commission's website that the Commission was developing a DAIP to address the barriers that people with disabilities and their families experience in accessing Commission functions, facilities and services.
- The community was advised through the local newspapers and the Commission's website that they could provide input into the development of the plan by:



Questionnaire: A questionnaire was made available in a variety of formats on the Commission's website during December 2006 and January 2007. Staff were also encouraged to complete the questionnaire.

The questionnaire provided information on Commission functions, facilities and services. Customers were asked to identify any problems they had using services, accessing information, contributing to the Commission's decision-making processes, making complaints, physically accessing Commission facilities, and generally dealing with staff. The Commission received 1 completed questionnaire.

Phone-In: The community was invited to contact Commission officers in December 2006 to discuss some of the difficulties they were experiencing in accessing the Commission's services. The Commission did not receive any calls.

Findings of the consultation

The review and consultation found that most of the initial objectives in the first DSP had been achieved and that a new plan was required to ensure currency and relevance. The new plan should not only address current access barriers but also reflect contemporary values and practices, such as striving for inclusion and meeting more than the minimum compliance with access standards. The plan must also keep abreast of legislative and regulatory changes.

The consultation also identified a variety of remaining barriers to access and inclusion, to be addressed in the DAIP Implementation Plan.

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.

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 Implementation Plan sets out who is responsible for each action. The DAIP planning committee will guide the overall implementation of the plan.



Strategies to improve access and inclusion

As a result of the consultation process the following overarching strategies will guide tasks, reflected in the Implementation Plan, that the Commission will undertake from 2006-2010 to improve access to its services, buildings and information. The six desired outcomes provide a framework for improving access and inclusion for people with disabilities.

Outcome 1: People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by, the Pilbara Development Commission.

Specifically the Commission will:

- Be flexible and adaptable in responding to barriers experienced by people due to various disabilities, including physical, sensory, cognitive and psychiatric disabilities;
- Be responsive to addressing the barriers experienced by families and carers of people with disabilities;



- Ensure that all policies and practices that govern the operation of departmental services are consistent with the Commission's policy on access; and
- Ensure that people with disabilities are included, as other people, to access the services of the Pilbara Development Commission and any events organised by the Commission.

Outcome 2: People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of the Pilbara Development Commission.

Specifically the Commission will:

- Ensure all buildings and facilities are physically accessible to people with disabilities;
- Ensure all future premises leased by the Commission are accessible; and
- Develop awareness and a culture within the Commission that ensures that people with disabilities do not encounter barriers to the Commission's offices or information available from the Commission.

Outcome 3: People with disabilities can access information from the Pilbara Development Commission as readily as other people are able to access it.

Specifically the Commission will:

- Provide documentation regarding services, facilities and customer feedback in an appropriate format and using clear and concise language;
- Ensure that the Commission's website meets contemporary good practice, with an emphasis upon using text to actively describe the trends displayed in charts; and
- Advise the Community that, upon request, information about the Commission's services can be made in alternative formats, such as large print or audio cassette.

Outcome 4: People with disabilities receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of the Pilbara Development Commission as other people receive.



Specifically the Commission will:

- Provide training, accessed from the Disability Services Commission, to all staff to ensure that in relation to service provision and community consultation, they are aware of the key access needs of people with disabilities, their families and carers who use the Commission's services: and
- Seek advice from the local Disability Services Commission office and the disability field on how to meet the access needs of people with various disabilities, including physical, sensory, cognitive and psychiatric disabilities.

Outcome 5: People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the Pilbara Development Commission.

Specifically the Commission will:

- Ensure that current grievance mechanisms are accessible for people with disabilities;
- Produce grievance procedure and outcome satisfaction survey forms in formats that meet the needs of people with disabilities; and
- Advertise the Commission's grievance procedures on our website.

Outcome 6: People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by the Pilbara Development Commission.

- Improve access for people with disabilities to the established consultative processes of the Commission, including the capacity to accept verbal complaints.
- Create opportunities for people with disabilities to be included in invitations to attend public workshops, public forums or community consultation processes of the Pilbara Development Commission, including notifying the local Disability Services Commission office of future public consultations or workshops to ensure that people with disabilities are included in invitations;



- Advise customers that this information can be made in alternative formats upon request; and
- Support people with disabilities, their families and carers to attend public community consultation processes arranged by the Pilbara Development Commission.

Review and evaluation mechanisms

The Disability Services Act sets out the minimum review requirements 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 may be amended on a more regular basis to reflect progress and any access and inclusion issues which may arise. Whenever the DAIP is amended, a copy of the amended plan will be lodged with the Disability Services Commission.

Review and monitoring

The Manager Corporate and Economic Development will maintain an on-going review of the Plan and provide information for the Commission's staff on issues concerning people with disabilities and the initiatives of the Disability services Commission.

The Manager Corporate and Economic Development will also report the achievements under the Plan annually in the Annual Report.

Evaluation

Annually the Manager Corporate and Economic Development will also seek to identify any additional barriers that were not identified in the initial plan.

The Pilbara Development Commission will make the Plan available to the Karratha Office of the Disability service Commission and seek feedback on the Plan and its



strategies as outlined in section 6 hereunder.

The Plan will be amended, based on feedback received and once endorsed by the Board, will be available to the community, including alternative formats, if requested.

Endorsed plans will be submitted to the Disability Services Commission on an annual basis.

Communicating the plan to staff and people with disabilities

The staff of the Commission have been notified of the Plan and have been made aware of their responsibilities under the Plan. The availability of the plan will be advertised in the local press and radio, with invitations to provide input into subsequent amendments. As noted above, a copy of this Plan has been provided to the local office of the Disability Services Commission. As the Plan is amended both staff and the community will be advised of the availability of the updated plan, using the same methods.

The Commission's Plan is also 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.

Progress since 1995 under the Disability Service Plan

1. Existing functions, facilities and services are adapted to meet the needs of people with disabilities.
 - All information produced by the Commission is available in alternative formats.
2. Access to buildings and facilities is improved.
 - A full audit of our offices has been conducted, including parking, signage and approaches to the offices, to establish priorities for improvement.
3. Information about functions, facilities and services is provided in formats which meet the communication needs of people with disabilities.



- The Pilbara Development Commission has a policy on communicating in plain English with customers; and
 - All functions are arranged with consideration to access for the disabled.
4. Staff awareness of the needs of people with disabilities and skills in delivering services is improved.
- All staff have or will participate in disability awareness training.
5. Opportunities are provided for people with disabilities to participate in public consultations, grievance mechanisms and decision making processes.
- Public consultations are advertised on the radio and in local newspapers reinforcing that interpreters or accessible formats can be made available on request to support people with disabilities to participate; and
 - The Commission is positioned to make information about our grievance procedures and outcome satisfaction surveys available in formats that meet the needs of people with disabilities.