

PROMOTING INDEPENDENCE: DISABILITY ACTION PLANS FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA

2nd PROGRESS REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION

June 2003

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1 INTRODUCTION

In 1997, the Minister for Disability Services announced that the Government would develop a disability strategy as a commitment to South Australians with disabilities and that all Government Portfolios and their agencies would be required to develop Disability Action Plans.

On 22 November 2000 the then Minister for Disability Services launched *Promoting Independence – Disability Action Plans for SA*. The initiative provides a policy framework for the development of Disability Action Plans as a key strategy for all South Australian Government Portfolios and their agencies.¹

Promoting Independence, is an important step in clearly establishing a framework of action for Government Portfolios and their agencies to address the requirements of the *Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (DDA) and the disability discrimination provisions of the *South Australian Equal Opportunity Act 1984*. It emphasizes the leadership role of the Government in meeting the objects of the DDA in a wide range of Government activities.

The first of the *Promoting Independence Progress Reports* was forwarded to the Senior Management Council (SMC) by the Promoting Independence 'whole of Government' committee in October 2001. The SMC then forwarded the progress report to the Minister responsible for Disability Services.

The Minister for Social Justice has since agreed to a public release of the first progress report and is seeking comment from the community.

This report is the second *Promoting Independence Progress Report* and is for the period July 2001 to June 30, 2002. The report has been delayed slightly as a result of a change of Government and the restructuring of some of the Government departments.

¹ Promoting Independence: Disability Action Plans for South Australia: a policy statement on the adoption of disability action plans by the Government of South Australia. October 2000

2 SCOPE OF THIS POLICY STATEMENT

The DDA makes discrimination on the basis of disability unlawful. The Act requires employers and service providers to make whatever adjustments are necessary and reasonable to allow people with disabilities to use those services to the same extent as other people – irrespective of whether these services are provided by Government agencies, community organisations or business enterprises.

The policies contained in *Promoting Independence* apply to all publicly funded services and programs of South Australian Government Portfolios and their agencies. The focus is on ensuring that mainstream services are accessible for people with disabilities and are eliminating all practices within those services that unlawfully discriminate against people with disabilities.

2.1 Prevalence of disability

In 1998, the Australian Bureau of Statistics *Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers* estimated that there are 333,300 South Australians with disabilities² or 22.4% of our State's population. Of these, it is estimated that almost 93,300 or 6.3% experienced profound or severe core activity restrictions in communication, mobility and self-care, or in their ability to participate in schooling or employment. The survey also shows that most people with disabilities live in households in the community. Only 5% live in supported accommodation: most of who are older people living in aged care facilities.

The DDA provides a definition of the term "disability"³ which is broader than the categories of persons with disabilities covered under the South Australian *Disability Services Act 1993* or the *South Australian Equal Opportunity Act 1984*.

For the purposes of the *Promoting Independence* strategy and in turn this Whole of Government report, the DDA definition of disability has been used to promote consistency with the objects of the DDA as well as to support participation and independence. The DDA recognises people with disabilities as being equal before the law and makes discrimination on the grounds of disability unlawful.

² The definition of disability used in the survey is based on the World Health Organisation International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities and Handicaps that links the concept of disability with the consequence of disease and injury.

³ Under Section 4 of the *DDA*, disability means:

- 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.

It includes a 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 primary focus of the *Promoting Independence* strategy and in-turn this Whole of Government report is to ensure that Government services are appropriate and accessible to people with disabilities. In order to achieve this goal, the Minister for Disability Services endorsed five key outcomes to provide a practical framework for Government Portfolios and their agencies to meet the State Government's obligations under the DDA.

The Promoting Independence strategy provides a set of broad strategies under each key outcome area to enable all 11 Portfolios and their agencies to target their efforts and therefore reduce discriminatory practices within Government programs, service delivery and employment. The implementation of these strategies is to be in consultation and partnership with people with disabilities, their associates, service providers and other levels of Government.⁴

The ultimate responsibility for the achievement of the five key outcomes is with the Chief Executives of the Portfolios. The key outcomes specified within *Promoting Independence* 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 their Portfolio has met the requirements of the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the *Equal Opportunity Act 1984*

⁴ Promoting Independence: Disability Action Plans for South Australia: a policy statement on the adoption of disability action plans by the Government of South Australia. October 2000

4 REPORTING PROCESS

The Department of Human Services' Strategic Planning and Population Health division has played a lead role in the coordination of the 'Whole of Government' reporting process. The Executive of the division chairs the *Promoting Independence* Implementation Reference Group.

Each of the State Government Portfolios have a representative on this Reference Group that meets on a regular basis as a means to systematically coordinate the implementation, communication and reporting process.

The Terms of Reference for this group are to:

- support the implementation of *Promoting Independence* with a particular focus on the development of Disability Action Plans;
- develop a Whole of Government reporting framework to benchmark achievements and initiatives;
- promote awareness and systemic improvements in the accessibility of Government services to people with disabilities;
- identify issues related to the implementation of *Promoting Independence* e.g. barriers/opportunities/successes.

It has been acknowledged throughout the implementation process that Portfolios will have a range of different initiatives and approaches taken, depending on the extent of contact they have with the general community and the services provided. In this reporting period the committee agreed to a revised reporting framework and a corresponding survey questionnaire (appendix 1).

These reporting tools were developed following a forum that was held in February 2002 which had as its primary focus 'refining Disability Action Plans'. Of particular relevance was a session on reporting excellence and measuring incremental changes that occur through the implementation of policies such as Promoting Independence.

The session highlighted the need to further refine the reporting under each of the specified outcome areas. Subsections under each of the outcome areas have been identified and are:

- Policies;
- Structures/processes;
- Programs/services;
- Planning/evaluation;
- Staffing/resources; and
- Assessment.

It was agreed that not all portfolios would be able to report in detail on each of these subsections under the respective outcome areas. In providing reports, some Portfolios submitted a completed questionnaire and others provided specific comments under the 5 key outcome areas. Both levels of reporting have respective

benefits and it is useful to present the complete descriptions of progress as Portfolios have presented them.

Consistent with the Terms of Reference for the Reference Group, members agreed that the report for this period should be a collation of the progress reports developed by each Portfolio under the five Outcome areas specified in '*Promoting Independence*'. The timeframe for the compilation of annual plans across agencies varies so it was agreed that each Portfolio would submit a copy of their progress reports to the DHS Senior Policy Officer Disability, by close of business on 22nd September 2002.

This was one month later than the previous year mainly because of significant restructuring of Portfolios that has resulted from the formation of the new Government. This lateness means that the Senior Management Committee (SMC) will not be able to develop their submission to the Minister for Disability Services by 30 September 2002 as is outlined in *Promoting Independence*.

The committee has established a time-line for the next reporting period which enables Portfolios to coincide annual reporting with the 3rd progress report and to complete the reporting process in sufficient time to achieve compliance with the September target date for SMC.

5.1 Outcome 1 –Access to Services

Outcome 1

Portfolios and their agencies ensure accessibility to their services to people with disabilities

A summary of progress by the Portfolios towards each of the five outcome areas outlined in *Promoting Independence* is provided below. The information is taken directly from each of the Portfolio reports that were forwarded to the Department of Human Services, however there has been some editing to reduce the level of repetition.

It should also be noted that all Portfolios were able to submit progress reports to the Department of Human Services for collation and have been incorporated into this 'Whole of Government' progress report.

5.1.1 EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The Strategy for the Employment of People with Disabilities in the South Australian Public Sector is a public sector equal employment opportunity program set up under section 67 of the Public Sector Management Act 1995.

The Strategy enables people with disabilities to apply for temporary public sector positions. Participants are placed on a Disability Employment Register which is managed by the Disability Recruitment Coordination Service. Once registered, participants can compete for positions advertised on the Notice of Vacancies system on the basis of merit, in accordance with processes agreed to by the Commissioner for Public Employment.

The Strategy provides benefits for both participants and public sector organisations. Participants gain the benefits of temporary employment which can often lead to ongoing employment. Organisations gain a more diverse workforce which can help serve the South Australian community more effectively.

Since being introduced last year, the Strategy has proved to be outstanding success with 100 people with disabilities winning positions in public sector agencies. Importantly the positions won range from ASO 1 level to ASO 6 level, and cover a wide range of occupations.

In addition to the 100 positions won, there are 41 positions pending. The outstanding success of the Strategy is further evidenced by the following figures:

- Number of referrals to positions: 654
- Number of people receiving an interview: 272.

5.1.2 DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

The key strategy to achieve this outcome for the Department of Human Services is the development of the draft *Department of Human Services Disability Action Plan*. The draft plan aims to set

directions for human service providers to: redesign policies, programs and facilities to ensure that mainstream services are accessible for people with disabilities; to eliminate practices that are discriminatory; and to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities. There is a strong emphasis on addressing physical, communication and attitudinal barriers in these key areas.

The DHS Disability Action Plan policy states that *“benefits of an accessible service will be enjoyed by everyone including: older people; people with family responsibilities; people from diverse backgrounds; and people with temporary disabilities who have undergone recent trauma, surgery or illness”*. And

“The greatest overall improvement is likely to come from redesigning processes and systems both within and across the spectrum of service providers and DHS Central Office. A general commitment to eliminating discrimination is insufficient to promote real change. Tangible strategies and actions to make services accessible and to improve employment opportunities for people with disabilities must be built into all levels of the human services system”.

Under the strategy to ***Establish policies and protocols in relation to equitable access for people with disabilities to mainstream services***, the DHS Action plan has the following Actions:

- DHS Divisions and agencies will review policies and programs to identify changes required to ensure accessible, non-discriminatory services.
- DHS Divisions and agencies will promote flexibility and responsiveness and innovative models of service delivery which are tailored to meet the particular needs of people with disabilities.
- DHS Divisions and agencies will review funding programs eg HACC, PHCIP, community services etc to ensure equity for people with disabilities.
- Service providers will develop and implement policies to ensure equity of access to mainstream services for people with disabilities.
- DHS will initiate and promote training programs and resources for policy makers aimed at raising awareness of people with disabilities.

Under the strategy to ***Review and adapt services and programs to ensure that people with disabilities are not excluded and do not experience discrimination as either users of services, as service providers or as staff***, the DHS Action Plan has the following actions:

- Existing services and programs will determine whether they are being used and accessed by people with disabilities.
- Service providers will make recommendations regarding any proposed changes to improve access and develop actions for implementation.

- Service providers will ensure that appropriate consultations with people with disabilities occur as part of planning for new services and programs.

Building Access

Under the strategy to ***Establish policies and protocols in relation to equitable access to public buildings and facilities where Department of Human Services and programs are provided***, the DHS Action Plan has the following actions:

- DHS will review the Department for Administration and Information Services' (DAIS) 'Disability Access Guide' with the aim of adopting it as a disability access compliance policy for all public buildings and facilities.
- DAIS Building Management Division will provide a consultation service and ongoing advice to DHS Asset Services on disability access requirements and compliance with DDA in relation to buildings and facilities.
- All new buildings and major refurbishments to existing buildings used by DHS will need to satisfy the requirements as specified within the DAIS guide.

Under the strategy that states ***All new public buildings, building upgrades and refits of DHS properties and service providers' buildings shall comply with DAIS guides and the revised Building Code of Australia*** the DHS Action Plan has the following actions:

- DHS will ensure that the approval process for all new public buildings and major building refurbishments will include assessment of and compliance with disability access requirements.
- Service providers will ensure that all new buildings and major building refurbishments will include assessment of disability access requirements.
- All building design contracts need to satisfy the requirements as specified within the DAIS guides.

The DHS Asset services division in consultation with DAIS has recently completed a stage 1 review of metropolitan office accommodation and acute care facilities. This first stage has been to scope both the accommodation and the issues around it and then propose the pathway to improve outcomes. The accommodation falls into 2 categories – the first being that occupied by Departmental staff, mostly in the CBD and the second, that occupied by service provider agencies, usually in the metropolitan area.

In the CBD, 1,900 departmental staff occupy 40,000 m² of leased accommodation in 20 buildings at an annual cost of \$12.5 million. In metropolitan Adelaide there are some 26 service provider agencies who occupy 130,00 m² of accommodation on more than 350 sites on which 50% are owned and the balance leased. The leased accommodation alone costs \$10 million per year.

Key recommendations from this scoping review include that:

1. DHS office accommodation be managed strategically as a portfolio, to deliver planned, coordinated and commercial outcomes consistent with the DHS business;
2. A project be established to develop and implement a Strategic Accommodation Plan (SAP) as required by cabinet;
3. skills and knowledge from both DHS and DAIS be gathered in the SAP project team to drive the accommodation reform.

This accommodation reform will be assessing disability access requirements and therefore will result in substantial improvements in this area.

All divisions of the DHS have reported on initiatives to improve access to services and specifically the achievement of this outcome within their Disability Action Plans. There is a diverse range of achievements towards this outcome within the portfolio but the reporting process in itself has raised the profile of this work and set in place planning strategies to address an improved level of access.

5.1.3 DEPARTMENT OF THE PREMIER AND CABINET

People with disabilities had access to the Community Cabinet program and a case-by-case approach was adopted due to the changing venues of Community Cabinet. Means of access are pre-planned to ensure that guests with disabilities are made to feel welcome. Guests are asked to notify Cabinet Office of any disability through their invitation response form. Event management staff then liaise with guests to ensure their specific/special needs are met.

Access to people with disabilities was provided at all major protocol events. Eg. Ramps into buildings, lifts, 'drop-off' and 'pick-up' areas close to buildings and special reserved seating arranged.

The Office for the Commissioner for Public Employment installed wheelchair access for a staff member on the 12th floor of the State Administration Centre and the Department of Treasury and Finance are currently organising for the same access to be installed on the 3rd floor of the State Administration Centre. All other amenities for people with disabilities were provided for and maintained throughout the year and all accommodation moves / refurbishment met the relevant Australian Standards on Access to Premises eg *Building Code of Australia, the Development Act (Building Rules) (SA) 1993 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1992*.

DPC consulted with the Department of Administrative and Information Services to discuss possible disability access audit on DPC leased buildings. This project is planned to take place during 2002-03.

Emergency evacuation procedures for DPC leased buildings were reviewed during 2001-02 and are inclusive of people with disabilities.

5.1.4 DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY AND FINANCE

The Department of Treasury and Finance has limited contact with the broader community. Therefore, the Disability Action Plan developed for this Department primarily involves the two branches that deal directly with the community, Super SA and RevenueSA, and with the issues relating to employment of staff with disabilities.

Super SA has a client base comprising State Public Servants. There is very limited contact with people with disabilities. One Supervisor has key responsibility and has been especially trained to work with people with disabilities, and training of another person to provide back up is planned.

RevenueSA has a unique client base who are primarily brokers, for example from real estate companies (and not the general community), and with whom they deal regularly. There are no identified people with disabilities within this group. The other public interface occurs through the collection of the Emergency Services Levy. The majority of people pay this through the post office (90%) or by phone.

The Human Resources Branch provides advice, information and support on an ongoing basis regarding employment issues for people with disabilities.

This provides the context in which the Department of Treasury and Finance has formulated its Disability Action Plan. In response to your request for a progress report on this Plan, the following information is provided:

In Super SA, the customer service area counter has been adjusted to allow wheel chair access and the interview area has also been modified to allow wheel chair access.

All office accommodation moves and refurbishments carried out throughout the year have met the relevant Australian Standards on Access to Premises.

This Department is currently organising for wheelchair access to be installed to reception on the 3rd floor of the State Administration Centre.

Emergency evacuation procedures for this Department, as per the State Administration Centre Emergency Procedures, are inclusive of people with disabilities. Improvement of communication regarding the number and location of people with disabilities requiring assistance during evacuations, is currently being addressed.

5.1.5 JUSTICE PORTFOLIO

The Justice Portfolio has a written policy on inclusion of people with disabilities and access requirements and have this in all policy, planning, program plans and strategic plans.

The Justice Portfolio has asked that during 2002-03, managers will, in reviewing Strategic / Business Plans:

- conduct a gap analysis to identify potential customer and workforce diversity issues;
- conduct a risk analysis of the customer and workforce diversity issues; and

- incorporate priority diversity initiatives to address risks in relation to customer service provision.

A checklist has been developed to assist managers in this task. Not all agencies would have completed this as yet.

The Courts Admin Authority is becoming more strategic in tackling the issues faced by its diverse client base. Initially, an audit has been done to identify all the strategies / committees etc in place across the Authority, in relation to diverse customers. Research is also being carried out into the most effective means of profiling the courts' client base. The first stage is an examination of the current means by which data is gathered (by the Authority and other agencies/systems eg JURIS, Bureau of Statistics).

The Courts Admin Authority has recently included information on its web-site about the current accessibility of its locations. AGD will address this through its disability action plan. Being progressed - not consistent across the Portfolio.

The Attorney-General's Department and the Legal Services Commission engaged Disability Access Consultants to conduct a review of the physical accessibility of their Adelaide CBD buildings, in early 2002. A report has been provided, and the Strategic Capital Assets Unit is currently developing an action plan in response.

Other Justice agencies are progressing this issue, and some audits have already been undertaken. Such a program will take several years, considering the number of buildings located throughout the State for ambulance, fire and police stations. Priority focus will be on buildings with a high level of public contact.

SA Ambulance services are accessible to people with most disabilities because the personnel come to the patient. Ambulance vehicles are designed for people with a wide range of disabilities and are stocked with equipment for this purpose. Similarly, building design policies also ensure that people with physical disabilities are able to access public SAAS areas.

In terms of allocating a budget assessing./auditing of buildings, this is being progressed for AGD. The Strategic Capital Assets Unit is developing an action plan and budget proposal for the Chief Executive's consideration later in 2002.

SA Police has conducted a risk audit of its physical assets in 1996-98, in accordance with standards set by DAIS, and part of the audit covered disability issues. This informs the access program for maintenance and development of SAPOL's physical assets. Cost of works to comply with DDA requirements was stated as over \$850,000. Approximately \$500,000 related to access matters. New buildings are undertaken according to current Building Standards, which incorporate access standards.

The Department for Correctional Services is endeavouring to ensure that all Community Correctional Centres and prisons are

physically accessible for people with disabilities. This includes the provision of ramps and wheelchair access. In some areas this effort conflicts with other duty of care considerations. For example, a bathroom handrail to assist a disabled person may also be a potential hanging point for a suicidal person.

A major issue for the Department is not in fact access, but rather egress. The risk of fires in prisons is acute and this risk is exacerbated by an increasingly volatile prisoner population marked by growing numbers of remandees and people with behavioural problems or mental illnesses. To mitigate the Department's risks in this area, an audit of the Department's fire safety systems has been carried out by the SA Metropolitan Fire Service. It is anticipated that this SAMFS audit will form the basis of a budget submission for 2002-2003.

The transfer of fire stations from local government to the Minister presents the SA Country Fire Service with the new challenge of asset management. Over 50% of fire stations require maintenance or replacement.

All polling booths were evaluated prior to the State election against criteria specified in the Australian Standards Design for Access and Mobility Part 1 General Requirements for Access AS 1428.1 1998. 480 polling booths (70%) met the specifications.

Participation Rates of people with disabilities

Correctional Services

The services provided by the Department for Correctional Services tend to be accessed by the most disadvantaged groups in the community, including Aboriginal people, women, the unemployed, the addicted, and those with mental health problems. The major demand for services and interventions comes from prisoners and offenders who have mental health issues and those on remand.

Magistrates Court Diversion Program

The Magistrates Court Diversion program has been designed to meet the needs of those individuals appearing in the Magistrates Court of South Australia who have committed certain minor indictable and summary offences and who have impaired intellectual or mental functioning. There have been a total of 668 referrals to July 2002. During the last financial year, program staff assessed 248 new referrals which is a 25% increase on the previous year, however, the referral rates since the increased court session represent a 41% increase over the last six months of the year.

There were 132 participants who successfully completed the program during that time. Program staff are working with an average of 110 participants at any one time. Most participants are involved with the program for an average of seven months. During the last year, 85 of those referred did not enter or complete the program, the main reasons being that individuals did not attend their assessment; that no functional impairment was detected at assessment; or defendants chose to have their matters heard

within the normal court process. Some were non-compliant with the program during their involvement and returned to the normal court process.

The 5 major diagnostic issues presented to the program staff included:

schizophrenia	19%
major depressive disorder	over 12 %
bipolar disorder	over 10%
psychotic disorder	10%
intellectual disability	9%

However, it should be stated that approximately 75% of those accepted for participation on the program have more than one diagnosis. This reflects the complexity of the issues that defendants present with and include a high percentage of drug and alcohol issues for these individuals.

Legal Aid

The Legal Services Commission endeavours to collect information on disability in its nationally mandated Legal Aid database LAOFFICE. These statistics do not record every client who has a disability as self-identification and sensibilities preclude the gathering of detailed data. The data identifies clients based on the receipt of a disability support allowance, or receiving advice on a disability specific legal problem e.g. disability discrimination.

Clients on a disability allowance accessed the following services:

Grants of Aid	1563 (or 11.6 %)
Advice Appointments	1853 (or 6.7%)
Duty Solicitor Services	926 (or 8.8%)

Legal Aid Telephone Advice Line Project

Following an analysis of the statistics of this service the Legal Services Commission resolved to extend the hours of operation of the line and increase staffing levels for a period of twelve months. The project has been a great success with the calls answered increasing by 20% during the reporting period.

Election Voting

At the time of the State election 1 614 electors were registered to receive ballot papers automatically by post for reasons of physical disability. Legislation introduced in 1997 allows polling booth managers to provide ill or disabled electors with ballot material outside the polling booth. Print enlargers for the vision impaired were placed in six polling booths and one pre-poll centre identified following analysis of the client postcode data supplied by the Royal Society for the Blind.

Workforce

During 2001-02, eleven people with a declared disability were successfully placed through the SA Government's Disability Recruitment Program in Attorney-General's Department, SA Police and Emergency Services Administrative Unit.

In the Courts Admin Authority, Divisional heads were surveyed to determine the numbers of employees with disabilities (as defined by the *Disability Discrimination Act, 1992*). It was found that 2 employees have sensory disabilities (deafness) and 5 have physical disabilities. Data was collected directly from senior managers, because of the highly sensitive nature of this data.

Attorney-General's Department has again attempted to collect disability data from new employees, through the induction kit. Response is entirely voluntary, and is not recorded on their personal HR/payroll record.

5.1.6 DEPARTMENT FOR ADMINISTRATIVE AND INFORMATION SERVICES

DAIS does not have a separate policy dealing with the inclusion of people with disabilities and associated access issues. However, it is a requirement that all policy and planning processes are cognisant of relevant legislation. Strategic and business planning take account of the provisions of both the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the *Equal Opportunity Act 1984*. The DAIS policy *Freedom from harassment* identifies harassment towards people with disabilities as an issue to be addressed.

The direct service provision areas in DAIS are aware of accessibility and inclusiveness issues but at this stage, approaches are more responsive than proactive.

Access audits have been completed in some DAIS premises. The Real Estate Management Unit (REM) has developed an action plan to structure an audit program of all government owned premises as part of their responsibility for government accommodation.

Expenditure on modifications required as a result of audit findings is planned for within prioritised capital works programs that take into account what services and functions individual buildings are used for.

Percentage figures for DAIS buildings audited are not readily available. It is routine that all areas that have been refurbished or are in the design phase for refurbishment are audited to address access deficiencies in line with legislative and building code provisions. REM has completed access audits on parts of Wakefield House, DAIS premises at 12 Victoria Street, Ayers House (where DAIS managed the recent major refurbishment project) and the new Service SA Contact Centre at Port Lincoln. As a general rule, physical access issues have been dealt with in the design stage of the new Service SA contact centres.

The requirement that all DAIS managed web sites are 'Bobby compliant' contributes to accessibility of services provided online. The Government Information and Communication Services Unit (GovICS) checks web sites for compliance and has surveyed users of the major government web site South Australia Central (SA Central) for ease of use (see also Outcome 4).

5.1.7 DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT, URBAN PLANNING AND THE ARTS

The Department for Transport, Urban Planning and the Arts (DTUPA) ensures access to services by people with disabilities through implementation of its Disability Action Plan. The Action Plan ensures that the needs of people with disabilities are considered at all levels of service development, implementation and provision.

This approach recognises the skills and expertise that people with disabilities can contribute to the identification of barriers and their removal within the transport portfolio's responsibilities.

The contribution of people with disabilities in planning, implementation and provision of services is reflected in their active participation in policy development, planning and their involvement on a range of committees

Programs administered by the Passenger Transport Board (PTB) that assist people with disabilities to access a range of services are:

- South Australian Transport Subsidy Scheme (SATSS) and its sub-programs
- Journey to Work (JTW) and Tertiary Education Assistance Scheme (TEAS)
- Transport concessions – mobility pass, vision impaired pass, Incapacitated Ex-Service Personnel.

Employment strategies within the portfolio are designed to further enhance opportunities for people with disabilities to gain employment. Examples of efforts being made in this area are modification to workstations, accommodation of flexible work hours, consultation with DAIS Accommodation Unit to ensure that buildings, lifts and entry/exit points meet DDA requirements. In addition, fire evacuation procedures have been reviewed and tested to accommodate the needs of people with disabilities.

The contribution of people with disabilities is encouraged at all levels. The Accessible Transport Advisory Panel (ATAP) is a key advisory committee within the PTB, which provides policy advice is made up of representatives from a range of key disability areas, nominees from local government and relevant government agencies, as well as users of public transport.

DTUPA facilitates cross-agency involvement in the delivery of services to ensure that there is no doubling up and that available resources are effectively and efficiently used, eg extending use of school buses in regional areas for the broader use of the community.

Access Cabs is a government funded initiative providing door to door taxi service to people with disabilities. A committee has been developed in the last twelve months known as Access Cabs Advisory Committee (ACAC), comprising representatives from the

disability sector, drivers of accessible taxis and users of the service. ACAC provides advice and recommendations to ATAP.

Transport SA has established a Steering committee under its Disability Action Plan with sections required to undertake a gap analysis against the Plan.

DTUPA officers are members of national Accessible Transport Standards Consultative Committee (ATSCC) with TSA being the convenor of the Marine Modal Group. The need to comply with DDA requirements is actively promoted within the agency through training programs and form the basis of contracts which are regularly monitored against performance standards.

There is commitment to the creation, promotion and funding of community transport within rural South Australia, with the provision of an integrated transport service responsive to those most in need within the community.

5.1.8 DEPARTMENT FOR ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE

The key strategy for the Department for Environment and Heritage (DEH) has been to develop a Draft Disability Action Plan. Endorsement from Executive is currently being sought on this plan.

One of the main aims of the Plan is to increase awareness of the needs of our staff and clients with disabilities. It is also intended that Divisions within the Agency should become aware of their responsibilities under the *Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (DDA) and the South Australian *Equal Employment Act 1984* (EEO). The recognition of Departmental responsibilities will be aided by a questionnaire designed for the purpose. In assessing current practices, gaps found in the provision of our services will be noted. Managers will be encouraged to make provision in future Strategic Plans and Budgets to address these needs.

National Parks and Wildlife SA (NPWSA) ensures access and availability to its Parks as part of its planning and budgetary strategy, and requires all capital works developments to undergo an assessment in order to comply with current legislation. Capital Investment funds have been allocated in order to maintain and/or improve access to these services. In National Parks, internationally recognised symbol signage is utilised to aid people with disabilities.

Within the last year some alterations have been made to some of our regional offices to improve access for both staff and clients. In two of our offices where there is currently no access to aboveground floors, plans are in place to provide access within the next twelve months.

The Adelaide Botanic Gardens and Mount Lofty Gardens are currently undertaking a Disability Audit. This is due for completion in September 2002.

5.1.9 DEPARTMENT OF WATER, LAND AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

Accommodation planning and refurbishment at Mt. Gambier and at Grenfell Street, Adelaide, ensured DWLBC met the relevant Australian standards on access to premises eg *Building Code of Australia*, the *Development Act (Building Rules) (SA) 1993*.

Agency procurement policy requires and our processes ensure new capital works meet standards for access and equity.

Staff selection processes are completed in accordance with the Public Sector Management Act and the 'merit principle'. All vacant positions over 6 months are advertised internally within the public sector and comply with mandated EEO programs including the 'disability recruitment program' as part of the whole of government approach to enhance participation of people with disabilities in the State public sector.

New (non public sector) employees shortlisted for interview are required to complete the OCPE 'Employment Declaration Form' which includes references to disability information. This provides the opportunity to discuss specific needs with the applicant prior to the interview and if selected for the position – plan for specific needs in the workplace.

The Department of Water Resources Workforce Profiling Survey carried out in September 2001 found that 9.3% of respondents reported a physical or non-physical impairment.

Agency policies and training on emergency evacuation procedures recognise the needs of and make arrangements for disabled staff or clients on DWLBC premises.

5.1.10 DEPARTMENT OF PRIMARY INDUSTRIES & RESOURCES SA

The Department of Primary Industries reports that there is no formal "stand alone" policy on access to services and employment opportunities for disabled persons.

Policies on recruitment and selection, harassment, discrimination and bullying and ethical behaviour have been reviewed and updated to include disability awareness and promote positive practices.

Accommodation and access requirements for people with disabilities have been incorporated in the Executive endorsed "Landlord/lessee model" for all PIRSA property and facilities. A full legislative audit of all PIRSA accommodation is planned and budgeted for in 2002/03.

General consultation has occurred with Disability Service Agencies in respect to proposed legislative audit and funds have been included in the 2002/03 Corporate Capital Budget for legislative audit and accommodation upgrade. A formal evaluation program has not been undertaken at this time. *Achievement Level (2)*

5.1.11 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Policy Development

DECS has a policy on promoting equitable outcomes⁵ for all groups of students and is set out in *Equity Statement; a commitment by the Department of Education, Training and Employment, 2001*. This Statement refers specifically to targeting people with disabilities.

The agency has a specific policy on inclusion of students with disabilities: *Students with Disabilities: Policy Statement, 1991*. This is being updated. The current draft is: *The Education of Children and Students with Disabilities and /or Learning Difficulties in Preschools and Schools: Policy Draft 10, May 2002*.

Any new building or major modification is carried out in accordance with *the Building Code of Australia*. In addition the agency has developed joint guidelines with the Department of Administrative and Information Services called *Disability Access: Design Guidelines, 1998*.

A policy on inclusion and access for students with disabilities has been included, specifically, in the following major agency policies and plans:

- *Equity Statement; a commitment by the Department of Education, Training and Employment, 2001*
- *South Australian Curriculum Standards and Accountability Framework, 2001*
- *Services for children with special needs – policy statement, 1987.*

Specific references to ensuring early identification of learning difficulties have been included in:

- *A flying start: the Early years strategy, 1999.*

Another example of a publication, endorsed by the agency, that provides information on inclusion and access is:

Including children with disabilities and/or developmental delay: guidelines for successful practice, 1999.

Strategy for Auditing Services

The agency does not audit all sites and services for accessibility and inclusion for students with disabilities because the wide range of disabilities and needs of individual students make it impossible to define an absolute level of adequacy in relation to accessibility and inclusion.

However, Asset Management Advisers and Managers, Disability and Hearing Impairment Services, located in each group of

⁵ By seeking 'equitable outcomes' the agency aims for a situation where members of all groups in the community gain access to and participate in the full range of programs and services and their achievements reflect those of the population at large.

education districts, have a role to monitor local needs in improving access to sites, as required.

The agency has a process for responding to any local needs for modifications to existing buildings required to meet particular needs of students with disabilities. The process is based on a 'just in time' principle. This process is described in the document *Provision for children/students with special needs* that is available on the Agency web site, under Site Property Services.

Also, the agency has developed Standards for Disability Services. These relate to such things as efficiency of procedures in managing requests and timeliness and quality of response. They also relate to assessment processes and coordination of service delivery. These standards are to be implemented later this year. Currently, procedures for auditing and reviewing their effectiveness are being planned.

Action Plan Development and Consultation

The agency has developed a Negotiated Education Plan process that is compulsory for each individual student with a disability. The Plan is prepared in consultation with families, students and teachers to ensure that all students with disabilities have access to an appropriate curriculum based on the South Australian Curriculum Standards and Accountability Framework and on the needs of the learner.

The Negotiated Education Plan addresses such issues as physical access to buildings, the provision of special measures (like access to a special unit within a neighbourhood school), and transport arrangements. It also addresses changes to methodology to ensure equitable outcomes, changes to assessment procedures to allow students to demonstrate achievement and specific training for teachers and school services officers in addressing particular needs of students with disabilities.

Promotion of Inclusion

In each group of school districts, the agency has established disability manager and coordinator positions that have major responsibilities in promoting access and inclusion for students with disabilities.

The agency has developed material to promote the implementation of the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act. This is titled *Fair and Reasonable: Disability Discrimination Act Implementation kit, 2000*.

The kit has been distributed to all schools and promoted through a variety of means including workshops and conferences.

The Special Education Resource Unit promotes access and inclusion by providing a state wide professional service for teachers as well as other professionals, parents/care givers who support students with disabilities and learning difficulties. It provides a range of resources for curriculum access through information

technology and specialised equipment and approves transport assistance for students with disabilities.

Guidelines have been developed to support Preschool teams in delivering quality preschool programs for children with disabilities and/or developmental delay. These are called *'Including children with disabilities and/or developmental delay in preschools. Guidelines for successful practice'* (1999).

There are a number of current initiatives by the agency to promote inclusion and access. For example, the agency is developing and trialing an Education Needs Framework to support the effective inclusion of students with disabilities by ensuring that resources provided to schools are based on actual student needs.

The agency offers Vacation Literacy Courses as a literacy initiative targeting middle years students experiencing learning difficulties and at risk of not successfully making the transition from primary to secondary school.

Budget for Access Modifications

In regards to a budget for access modifications, DECS has established a Risk Fund to meet any requirements for building modifications. Currently, approximately \$ 1.5 million per annum is used from this fund for access modifications, carried out under the agency's 'Just in time' principle.

Audits of Buildings

DECS does not audit all sites and services for accessibility and inclusion for students with disabilities because the wide range of disabilities and needs of individual students make it impossible to define absolute levels of adequacy in relation to accessibility and inclusion.

It is not practical to make all facilities equally accessible for students with a wide range of disabilities because the needs of different students vary widely across the community. Instead, the agency's 'Just in time' principle ensures that any building access modifications are made, as required. Other curriculum access issues are addressed as the need arises.

The Special Education Resource Unit maintains an extensive supply of resources that are available for loan to students with disabilities. For example, the Unit would arrange for a student to obtain a lap top computer, if this was required for access to classroom learning activities.

Participation Rates

Each year, via an annual census collection, the agency obtains data on enrolment of students with disabilities and monitors changes that are occurring in the proportion of students in special versus year level settings.

Within this agency approximately 6.5% of the whole student population has been targeted for additional support under its Students with Disabilities policy. It is not useful to compare this %

of students to the % of young people with disabilities in the general population (which is how a measure of participation would normally be stated) because Australian Bureau of Statistics population data is based on different categories of disability.

What is monitored is retention rate data that gives a measure of the change in participation of students with disabilities over Reception to Year 12. For example, this data shows that over the period 1999-2001 there has been a continual increase in the apparent retention rate, beyond the age of 15, for students with disabilities.

Another way that the agency monitors participation is through a comprehensive snapshot (ie., information from all schools) taken in Term 2 of each year, of students suspended from school. An analysis has shown that students with disabilities are significantly over represented in students who are suspended from school. Currently, the agency is conducting a more detailed analysis of this data to determine if particular types of disability are associated with being suspended from school and what action may need to be taken as a result.

DECS rated themselves at level 2 for this outcome but commented that it does not necessarily indicate the degree of achievement of the outcome.

5.1.12 DEPARTMENT OF FURTHER EDUCATION , EMPLOYMENT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

DFEEST has a written policy on inclusion of people with disabilities and access requirements and includes this in all policy, planning, program plans and strategic plans.

The Agency is implementing the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) national strategy for increasing opportunities for people with a disability in vocational education and training (VET).

The Office of Vocational Education and Training (OVET) has a regulatory role in auditing Registered Training Organisations (RTOs), including TAFE Institutes, to ensure that the RTOs comply with the requirements under the Australian Quality Training Framework. The framework comprises twelve standards. While most of the standards require a demonstration of inclusivity (eg of people with a disability) and the implementation of equity principles. Standard 6.0: Access and Equity and Client Services, is explicit in its requirements that all legislation including the Disability Discrimination Act is adhered to.

OVET undertook a benchmark audit of the participation in VET by people with a disability in 2001. Progress in the implementation of the national strategy will be measured against this data.

Each TAFE Institute (8) has conducted an audit of services and physical access etc to prepare individual three year Disability Action Plans (DAPs), which have been submitted to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HEREOC).

The ANTA Bridging Pathways National Strategy is accompanied by a five-year plan of action against which States and Territories

report on a six monthly basis. The Strategy and Plan of Action was developed by the Disability Forum in consultation with people with a disability.

Through the development of their DAPs, the TAFE Institutes have identified and allocated funds for access modifications. OVET has allocated project funds to audit two national Training Packages for their accessibility (through both employment and VET) for people with a disability. All TAFE institutes have been audited for access.

Participation rates

An assessment of participation rates indicated that:

- the percentage of participation rates in VET by people with a disability is very low. People with a disability comprise approximately 3% of VET participants. (In SA approximately 19% of the population aged between 15 –64 have a disability)
- There is significant under reporting by people with a disability participating in Vet and undertaking contracts of training.

DFEEST rate themselves at a 4 for this Outcome and add that the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) has provided feedback to TAFE Institutes which indicates that the Institutes DAPs provide an 'impressive' model.

5.1.13 OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

OED has three office locations: North Terrace Adelaide, South Terrace Adelaide and Port Road Woodville. The South Terrace and Port Road sites operate as the Centre for Innovation, Business and Manufacturing. The three OED office locations are wheelchair accessible to members of the general public. These locations are also equipped with restrooms designed for people with physical disabilities.

Access to work sites

Regular quarterly hazard inspections include assessing the accessibility for all staff and visitors to the three OED work sites. Fire exits and evacuation procedures are reviewed on a regular basis.

Employment opportunities with OED

A statement is included in employment advertisements for positions advertised in the external press. The statement affirms that we are an equal opportunity employer.

Improvements to OED's computer network

The Agency's Windows 2000 rollout included the installation of Accessibility for special needs on every computer in the organisation. This feature is designed by Microsoft to increase the access for some vision, hearing or mobility impaired users by adjusting the appearance and behaviour of Windows 2000. These programs provide a minimum level of functionality for users with special needs.

Outcome 2

Portfolios and their agencies ensure information about their services and programs is inclusive of people with disabilities.

5.2.1 DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

The improved information provision and communication strategies have been identified as key priority areas for action in the draft *Disability Action Plan for the Department of Human Services*. The policy acknowledges that the DDA covers effective communication with people with disabilities, eligibility criteria that may restrict or prevent access, and requires reasonable modifications of policies and practices that may be discriminatory.

A guiding principle of the Action Plan is that:

“People with disabilities have the right to access a range of services, support and information that provide them with the level and form of assistance and support that is appropriate to their individual circumstances including place of residence, cultural and socio-economic settings;”

The Action Plan policy states that “when considering how to best communicate with, and disseminate information to, people with a range of disabilities it may be necessary to present the message in a number of different formats to take account of varying needs.

These formats include; audio cassette, Braille; diskette; large and illustrated print; plain English; internet (utilising non-discriminatory information technology); radio; video (including captions); free call telephone numbers; telephone typewriter (TTY); and National Relay Service.

Particular attention must be given to communication needs of people with disabilities from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and culturally diverse backgrounds.

Actions identified within the DHS Action to address information and communication strategies include:

- DHS Divisions and agencies will review the information and communication strategies to ensure that they are inclusive to people with a range of disabilities who require different formats or communications.
- DHS Divisions and agencies will ensure that funding and service agreements stipulate to service providers that information and communication strategies must be inclusive of the range of needs of people with a disability.
- DHS Divisions and agencies will ensure that the approval process for all publications will require appropriate consideration of alternative formats that can then be available upon request in audio-cassette, Braille; diskette; large print and plain English.
- DHS will develop an information and communication kit that provides a list of contacts for preparing alternative formats and distributing the information.
- That all promotional materials and communications regarding the specific publications will inform the public that alternative formats are available.

- That whenever a communication/promotional strategy occurs, a specific targeted disability strategy will be undertaken via the Disability Information and Resource Centre (DIRC); disability peak bodies, and the Disability Services Office.

Many of the divisions and agencies of DHS indicated within their progress reports that they have policies and procedures for providing alternative formats upon request.

5.2.2 DEPARTMENT OF THE PREMIER AND CABINET

Work undertaken by DPC during 2001-02 included assessing the DPC intranet and internet sites to ensure both attained bobby approval (a programme to help web page authors identify and repair barriers to access by individuals with disabilities). This work involved an extensive review of all areas of the site and continued over a few months. Both the DPC Intranet and Internet sites are now compliant

Appropriate communication facilities and equipment were provided to enable people with communication related disabilities to receive and transmit information and to also enable DPC staff to communicate effectively with them. One division conducted interviews with people with disabilities through organising assistance of Auslan (Australian Sign Language) interpreters and the TTY system (telephone typewriters).

5.2.3 DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY AND FINANCE

The Department's intranet and internet sites are currently being updated. The issues for visually impaired people are being taken into consideration through colour, font size and the introduction of a voice tool linked to mouse scrolling.

Super SA plan to train a second person to provide a back up for the Supervisor nominated to work with people with disabilities.

In RevenueSA, their circulars and magazine, "Perspectives", are screened and edited to ensure that they are inclusive of people with disabilities and the readability is suitable for the visually impaired.

Human Resources Branch provides advice, information and support on an ongoing basis in any selection process to ensure that there are no inappropriate practices that will impact on a person with disabilities. Ongoing education of managers occurs on a case by case basis and through circulation of information provided by the Office for the Commissioner of Public Employment.

5.2.4 JUSTICE PORTFOLIO

The Portfolio has not developed a policy regarding publications, information and communication being accessible to people with disabilities nor completed an audit of on publications.

Information is usually provided in a variety of written formats:

- brochures, booklets, pamphlets, forms, newsletters, print media
- internet public web-sites and staff intranets (large font options)

- electronically via email
- facsimile

Information is also provided using other technologies, such as:

- telephone, TTYs, help desks
- video-conferencing
- radio
- CD-ROM.

Agencies are becoming aware of the need to provide options, such as availability of information in Braille, or on audio-tape, if requested by clients.

Deaf people can access police and emergency services by calling the National 106 Relay Number, using a phone connected to a tele-typewriter (TTY). (The 106 service is an exact parallel of the 000 emergency service but for people with hearing impairments.) The National Relay Service receives 106 calls and links the caller to the nearest appropriate emergency service, becoming the voice for the caller.

SA Police is positioning itself as an 'on-line' organisation. Electronic enquiry terminals have been on trial at Adelaide and Netley police stations. This initiative has the potential to increase the range and quantity of information available for public access.

60 braille copies and 9 650 audio cassettes of EasyGuide to Voting were distributed by the State Electoral Office to clients listed on the Vision Australia Foundation database; copies and display posters were made available at all libraries, migrant resource centres, councils, electorate offices and disability service agencies; an audio file of the information was also available on the State Electoral Office's web site. All State Electoral Office advertisements were 'closed' captioned in compliance with current policy guidelines for the benefit of the deaf and hearing impaired, now estimated to be 7.4% of the population in South Australia. Auslan signing was included on the new election advertisement.

Promotion of the new emergency/Police Assistance 131 444 number involved consultation with a range of key organisations, covering the aged and people with disabilities. Their advice was incorporated into the promotion strategy, including collaboration with those organisational resources to promote the change.

18% of Australians suffer a degree of loss of vision, a figure anticipated to increase due to an ageing population. Others in the community have a print handicap due to literacy and/or linguistic difficulties. Vision Australia Foundation (VAF) personnel were consulted on how best to develop materials and a program to disseminate election related information to those with a print handicap.

Policies completed, publications available in alternative formats and accessible web sites.

Policies

The Justice Portfolio launched its Strategic Directions for 2001-03 in July 2001. This includes “responding appropriately to people with a mental illness or disability”. Priorities for action under this strategic direction include:

- establish the Magistrates Court Diversion Program on an ongoing basis and expand beyond the Adelaide Magistrates Court.
- Conduct a longitudinal study of the Magistrates Court Diversion Program to examine its effect on levels of recidivism, benefits to participants, and impact on legislative options for people with a mental impairment
- Prioritise and implement the recommendations of the Operational Review of the *Criminal Law Consolidation (Mental Impairment Provisions) Act 1995*

The Justice Portfolio has drafted a Strategic Disability Statement, which has undergone consultation with the State’s Disability Advisory Council, the Disability Information Resource Centre, and Disability Action Inc. The Statement aims to outline the Portfolio’s intent in relation to service delivery for clients with a disability, and will guide Justice agencies in the development of their Disability Action Plans. The Statement should be finalised by October 2002.

Accessible Web-Sites:

Justice agency web-site administrators have been made aware of the Government’s guidelines on accessibility, and agencies are currently including the need to review their web-sites for accessibility as part of the disability action plans.

The Equal Opportunity Commission’s web-site has been Bobby approved. The Legal Services Commission has revamped its web-site during 2001-02. The Justice Portfolio launched its public web-site in June 2002, which provides a text-only version.

5.2.5 DEPARTMENT FOR ADMINISTRATIVE AND INFORMATION SERVICES

WebWorks the web site maintained by GovICS provides guidelines on the development of web sites including information on how to make web sites accessible for people with disabilities.

There is no general communications policy on accessibility for people with disabilities.

With respect to assessing barriers to communication and information that might confront people with disabilities, the Information Economy Office used a Commonwealth grant through the Networking the Nation Program to research Internet access needs of people with disabilities in rural areas. Recommendations in the research report include the establishment of a business case for improvements in online service provision.

DAIS' information technology expertise means that there has been a focus on electronic delivery via web sites as a means of providing information and communication opportunities to people with disabilities. GovICS ensures web site standards meet the needs of those with vision impairment. SA Central is available in both graphic and text version with a 'change text size option'. The text version is suitable for people using low-end technology or specialist reader technology.

The Service SA Customer Contact Centre has a TTY (teletypewriter) number for those with hearing or speech difficulties.

The Department of State Aboriginal Affairs (DOSAA) maintains a Digital Library web site which makes an important information resource for Indigenous materials available particularly to those with mobility difficulties as well as those in regional and remote locations.

There is an emphasis on online publishing of information which must meet basic criteria for access. Electronic delivery is the only alternative communication format provided.

5.2.6 DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT, URBAN PLANNING AND THE ARTS

DTUPA ensures information about services and programs are inclusive of people with disabilities through a range of mechanisms.

Provision of a Telephone Typewriter (TTY) service within the transport area for people with hearing impairment is listed in the White and Yellow pages and is formally registered with the National relay service. In addition the TTY service is advertised on all PTB publications.

Customers requiring information in alternative print formats are accommodated on an "as needs basis" and documents are provided where possible, in required format.

Translation and interpretation services have been promoted across the portfolio utilising existing staff resources, in addition to promoting access to translation/interpreter services through OMIA, to assist customers in their dealings with the agency.

Promotional material is designed to reflect the diversity of customers. Bobby standards have been applied to ensure the Adelaide Metro web-site conforms with requirements for access for people with disabilities.

Large information units which incorporate back lighting for easy text viewing, audio information and brail have been developed specifically in conjunction with people with disabilities. These units contain detailed information related to services provided across the Adelaide Metro service.

Opportunities are taken to consult with interested groups before new contracts for development of buses is undertaken. This approach ensures the needs of all passengers are considered, including those with disabilities.

DTUPA is investigating the installation of a public address system, supported with hearing loops, when significant upgrades are planned for railway stations.

Within the Registration and Licensing Section, a range of initiatives have been developed to support people with disabilities. Oral testing facilities are provided on a regular basis to cater for the intellectually disadvantaged or literacy challenged clients while tapes are available covering road rules. Pamphlets associated with the use of motorised wheelchairs have also been developed. In addition the use of touch screens with audio features is promoted

The use of dedicated phone numbers for booking of Access Cab services and SATSS enquiries continues to ensure that customers on these lines are given special consideration.

Information on transport services is disseminated widely across the disability sector and its success is reflected in the absence of complaints related to communication strategies.

5.2.7 DEPARTMENT FOR ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE

The DEH website is designed to meet the "Web Content Accessibility Guidelines" including alternatives to auditory and visual content to enable the use of screen readers and text only browsers.

5.2.8 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

DECS provides information to parents/care givers in print format with Braille versions and audio tape copies available, as required. Information is also provided in any of 9 community languages. Examples of these publications that specifically address disability issues are *Preschool support program: Information for families* and *Playing fair: Teaching young children to resist bias (2001)*.

Student and Professional Services, that has responsibility within the agency for the development of policy and information documents in relation to disabilities, is developing a publications management strategy that will help to ensure that families will benefit through access to information delivered in a strategic and customer friendly manner.

Audits of Publications

While no overall audit of agency publications has been undertaken, a number of activities, relevant to providing information about services and programs were undertaken, recently.

Over the period 2001-2002, Student and Professional Services worked closely with the Special Needs Education Network – a group representing disability organisations and disability advocates. The agency provided project officer time to support the group and to promote two way communication between the agency and the represented disability organisations. This resulted in 3 main outcomes:

- Discussion about questions frequently asked by parents/care givers led to the establishment of a parent help line that will soon be available to take calls. A system to monitor customer satisfaction is also being established. The frequently asked questions' material was incorporated into the agency's web site. Also, a parent information sheet on accessing information about disability services is being prepared for distribution to all school communities.
- Considerable input and feedback was obtained, from a disability perspective, for a wide range of agency publications. Also, the standardised format for publications and the publications management strategy, referred to in section 2.1, above, arose in part from work by the agency with the Special Needs Education Network.
- Improved links were developed between disability organisations and disability advocates and agency decision making groups. This has allowed more effective input, from a disability perspective, into agency policy making. The agency has also facilitated the linking of the Special Needs Education network with the Multicultural Education Committee to foster their joint interest in training and development for school governing councils on how to incorporate the views of minority groups in schools' decision making processes.

Consultation

During 2002, a total of 5 separate consultations were held with representatives from non government and government organisations responsible for providing disability services and with representatives from disability advocate organisations. The purpose of the consultations was to identify barriers for people with disabilities accessing services provided by the Department of Education, Training and Employment (name now changed to the Department of Education and Children's Services). The results of the consultations are being used in policy development and in the formulation of the agency's disability action plan. All 5 consultations provided information about ways to improve the agency's communication strategies for people with disabilities.

Information Provision

The directory *Your guide to Children's Services in South Australia, 2001* contains specific information about services for children with disabilities.

The Special Education Resource Unit has a regular monthly publication *SERUpdate* that is available in print format and on line through the Unit web site.

The pamphlets *The Learning Difficulties Support Team: Making a difference for children and students with learning difficulties and learning disabilities, 2002* and *Negotiated Education Plan (NEP):*

Information for families (2002) are available for schools and for families. The *Negotiated Education Plan: CD ROM (2002)* is available at local libraries.

The Townsend School for Vision Impaired Children has a Braille production centre. Any school across the agency can arrange, through Townsend School, for learning materials or parent/care giver information to be supplied in Braille format.

Demand for Alternative Formats

In relation to Braille, the Townsend School Braille production unit receives occasional requests for the conversion of parent/care giver information into Braille format. The majority of work in the unit involves conversion of learning materials for students into Braille format. Currently, a total of 2.5 Full Time Equivalent staff are allocated to this area of work.

The agency obtains any required translating and interpreting services through private companies such as ABC International Pty Ltd, but does not collect information on the level of demand for interpreter services for people with disabilities.

There is no specific budget allowance for individual publications, although agency policy ensures that all publications are converted to alternative formats, as required. Resources are allocated through specialist facilities such as Townsend School.

The agency does not keep statistics on the % of publications available in alternative formats. This is because agency policy is to make publications available in different formats, on request. In relation to web sites, as with publications, there are many different possible access issues that may arise, depending on the disability concerned. Schools are responsible for ensuring that students and parent/care givers can access all required educational material.

DECS rated itself at a level 2 overall for this outcome area.

5.2.9 DEPARTMENT OF FURTHER EDUCATION , EMPLOYMENT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Regulatory requirements (eg under the Australian Qualifications Training Framework, and the Accreditation and Registration Council) require that Registered Training Organisations provide all information in an accessible format.

TAFE Institutes when developing their DAPs undertook a survey of all students and staff to identify barriers to access.

Students are asked to identify their needs at enrolment (post acceptance into a program). Negotiations are then undertaken with individual students, in consultation with the State Disability Liaison Officer, Student Services Officers and/or appropriate lecturers. Information format are customised to meet individual need once identified.

Information is also provided through the TAFE SA web-site to accommodate a variety of students' and prospective students' information needs.

Student diaries, orientation materials etc contain information about services and the names of contacts for information/clarification etc.

Information is also provided about vocational education and training and specific services to potential students and/or carers at expos such as the Options Expo, ARLEX, Royal Adelaide Show etc etc

A Bridging Pathways (the ANTA national strategy) State Implementation Committee has been established to provide advice to the Office of Vocational Education and Training and the Office of Employment about a range of issues, including services, communication strategies etc. The Committee comprises representation from disability agencies in South Australia as well as relevant government agencies. An example of the advice is that the committee has identified a need to develop a resource that simplifies the 'language of VET' for people with a disability.

Demand for Alternative Formats

In terms of demand for alternative formats DFEEST reports that this is difficult to ascertain at this time. The Office of Vocational Education and Training negotiates a purchase agreement with TAFE Institutes that includes funding for disability support. TAFE Institutes manage the provision of supports etc through the State Disability Liaison Officer and their individual student services. OVET does not have access at this time to a record of that provision.

Generally publications are available through the web site to allow wide accessibility.

Graphics, design issues and the displaying of the Departmental web content is predicated on the web site passing two levels of testing:

- the Bobby testing process
- actual user testing and sign-off by the technology arm of the Royal Society for the Blind..

TAFESTudents.com is a portal accessed by all TAFE Institute students. The original portal was designed in line with the Bobby requirements. The portal is currently being redesigned in line with the Australian National Training Authority's (ANTA) Access One project guidelines for accessibility.

DFEEST rate themselves at a 3 for this outcome area.

5.2.10 DEPARTMENT OF WATER, LAND AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

DWLBC strategies recognise the need for inclusive formats for our corporate and public communications. It is also recognised that improved information provision will need to be included as an area for action in the Disability Action Plan.

DWLBC is establishing Intranet and Internet sites for the new agency. Once the content of the sites has been established there will be the opportunity to address barriers to access by individuals with disabilities during the development phase. Website development is carried out in accordance with all relevant government standards including accessibility and inclusiveness.

An important means of communication for the agency is information displays at public events, particularly in regional and remote areas. These are provided only on ground level sites and are staffed by personnel to ensure requests for access to information are accommodated.

5.2.11 OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Marketing materials produced by the OED Marketing Unit for Invest SA are primarily aimed at overseas and interstate businesses that may be attracted to invest in South Australia. These companies are selectively targeted and information packages are tailored for the senior level people (CEO, CFO, etc) of each organisation, as appropriate. This material is not intended for general distribution to members of the general public.

An extensive range of fact sheets and information promoting the benefits of conducting business in South Australia; key industry sectors etc is available on the business website. Any of this information can be emailed on request. A compact disk containing similar information is also available.

Fact and information sheets are also available for electronic distribution from CIBM offices. Distribution by this method allows information to be distributed to people with disabilities through internet access.

5.2.12 DEPARTMENT OF PRIMARY INDUSTRIES & RESOURCES SA

PIRSA has successfully implemented web based information systems that ensure ready access to information for its key client group of farmers, industry and the broader community.

Content on the intranet and internet sites is continuously reviewed for relevance and currency. The consultation process on the upgrade of the intranet/internet sites commenced in April 2002. Current reliance is on web based communication, information brochures and publications.

Individual requests not accommodated within existing approaches met on an individual needs basis. Consultation on the upgrade of the intranet/internet sites included internal & external customer focus groups & disability stakeholders. Feedback from disability stakeholders was included in design upgrade.

Data collection mechanism to be considered for introduction in 2003. Primary industries rated itself at level 2 for this Outcome.

Outcome 3

Portfolios and their agencies deliver advice or services to people with disabilities with awareness and understanding of issues affecting people with disabilities.

5.3 Outcome 3 – Disability Awareness

5.3.1 DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Demonstrated awareness and understanding by staff and volunteers of their obligations under the DDA as well as the needs of people with disabilities has been identified as one of the key priority areas for action in the draft *Disability Action Plan for the Department of Human Services*. One of the key strategies to achieve this outcome will be the development of a training and resource framework for the provision of education and training to equip staff and volunteers in targeted areas of responsibility with the necessary skills and awareness.

The DHS Action Plan commits to “develop a training and resource framework for the provision of education and training to equip staff and volunteers with the skills and awareness necessary to ensure there are inclusive services for people with disabilities across DHS.”

Specified actions under this strategy include that the framework will aim to:

1. review existing information and training resources to identify and promote the use of effective materials and eliminate duplication;
2. establish a set of guidelines which will underpin the development and implementation of training programs covering a range of areas such as DDA obligations, training needs analysis and understanding of the range of disabilities;
3. ensure the guidelines identify core competencies that should be addressed within the training programs.

Many of the divisions and agencies state within their progress reports that they have developed and implemented disability awareness training and incorporated elements of this within existing orientation and training programs.

5.3.2 DEPARTMENT OF THE PREMIER AND CABINET

All divisions discussed the 2001-02 Disability Action Plan in their staff management meetings throughout the year. Staff with disabilities and staff working with people with disabilities across DPC were encouraged to voice specific training needs to assist them in meeting the needs of people with disabilities.

The Office for the Commissioner for Public Employment (OCPE) sponsored two training sessions on the “*Recruitment and Selection of people with disabilities*”, facilitated by Business Enterprise Centre (BEC), for other agencies (eg Justice and Transport, Urban Planning and the Arts, to support the Disability Employment Strategy). DPC together with OCPE will consider organising one of these training sessions for its staff over the next year.

OCPE promotes the *Strategy for the Employment of People with Disabilities in the SA Public Sector* through ongoing contact with agencies through the BEC and Managing Diversity Network. Publication of the pamphlet and information sheets is ongoing. The policy “*Promoting Independence: Disability Action Plans for SA*” and the

brochure on "*Strategy for the Employment of People with Disabilities in the South Australian Public Sector*" were published on the DPC Intranet and is linked to DPC's Disability Action Plan.

Twelve staff across DPC attended the *Disability Discrimination Act Workshop* on 26 February 2002 which raised awareness on the purpose of implementing Disability Action Plans across Government agencies.

During 2001-02, a new area was created on the DPC Intranet on Disability Action Plans to assist in raising staff awareness across the Department. This site includes a direct link to DPC's Disability Action Plan, the *Strategy for the Employment of People with Disabilities in the SA Public Sector*, the Disability Employment Register and to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission website.

DPC's *Registration of Interest Recruitment Policy* was reviewed on 18 December 2001 to provide information /assistance in the employment of people with disabilities in DPC.

5.3.3 DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY AND FINANCE

Once the Department's Disability Plan has been restructured (refer to Outcome 5), this will be communicated throughout the agency and will increase awareness and understanding of the issues.

RevenueSA has conducted training as part of their managing diversity strategy which includes working with people with disabilities.

Regular meetings of this Department's Occupational Health and Safety Committee are held which includes addressing access to services by evaluating potential hazards to the Department's employees and clients.

5.3.4 JUSTICE PORTFOLIO

The Justice Portfolio has developed and implemented education and training programs in disability awareness and discrimination for staff. There has been consultation with people with disabilities about the training. Services within the Portfolio have changed in order to accommodate the needs of people with disabilities.

Consultations have taken place with disability organisations in the formulation and review of programs and services. The State Electoral Office consulted key agencies providing services to the disabled to identify areas where additional electoral services could be targeted to meet elector needs. Legal Services Commission attended Intellectually Disabled Services Council Ethics Meetings with Ethics Liaison Officers.

Access consultants and specialists in the field of technology and disability (all people with disabilities themselves) were consulted by SAPOL during the pilot program for the use of Touch screens in police stations.

Attorney-General's Department has piloted a Disability Awareness program with managers and front-line staff in OCBA. Following the success of the pilot, a ½ day program will be rolled out across

AGD over the next 2 years. A *Toolkit for Managers: Working with Diverse Customers* has been developed, which includes fact sheets on disability, information on how to develop disability action plans, and a guide to consulting with people with a disability.

Ambulance personnel are educated about people with special needs as part of their training.

In partnership with the Intellectual Disability Services Council, a training program has been developed for Correctional Services staff in dealing with offenders with intellectual disabilities. The program has primarily targeted trainee Correctional Officers. It has, however, also been incorporated in conflict management training and delivered to Community Corrections staff in the western region. Staff have also received training in working with offenders who suffer from psychiatric illnesses. Dr Ken O'Brien from James Nash House has provided this training.

Legal Services Commission staff attended a 1 day workshop on HIV/AIDS Issues, and an overview of Mental Health Issues was presented by staff from the Diversion Court.

Physical and intellectual disability have been covered in the development of SA Police's Equity and Diversity Employee Management Manual, GO 8330. Two-day training of managers and supervisors has been completed and rollout of training of all staff is currently in progress. In addition, equity and diversity principles are incorporated into recruit training. This awareness raising is the beginning of ensuring that staff are aware of their responsibilities in delivering services equitably to diverse groups of people, including those with disabilities.

Workplace Dignity training (encompassing discrimination, bullying and harassment) was provided for all paid employees across the Emergency Services. This training was also made available to volunteers. The program made individuals more conscious of their rights and responsibilities and can be considered a useful step in the process of shifting the organisational culture.

5.3.5 DEPARTMENT FOR ADMINISTRATIVE AND INFORMATION SERVICES

The Human Resources area began some work in 2000-2001 on developing awareness programs but was not satisfied with options available. Plans are underway to canvass training needs in the different parts of the portfolio and tailor programs accordingly. This initiative will be part of the Managing Diversity program.

5.3.6 DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT, URBAN PLANNING AND THE ARTS

Within DTUPA, training sessions and educational activities have included sessions presented by people with a range of disabilities – some of these sessions were also presented to staff in other agencies by the PTB.

PTB is currently developing further educational and awareness training programs for staff.; Office of Local Government (OLG) is

embarking on the development of a Disability Action Plan (DAP) which will address this matter and Transport SA has developed its DAP with sections being encouraged to consult with their staff and develop a gap analysis.

Training for Customer Service Officers within the PTB, includes an emphasis on the special needs of clients with reading, learning, hearing, mobility, speech and language problems - the development of training programs have been achieved with input from people with these disabilities as well as feedback from the various advisory committees.

A condition of contracts let by the PTB is that successful contractors comply with all requirements associated with DDA.

5.3.7 DEPARTMENT FOR ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE

One of the critical areas identified by DEH for further consideration, is the need to improve awareness throughout DEH of the needs of people with disabilities. An initial approach to this will be a communication strategy to introduce the Disability Action Plan to our workforce and to include it on our Intranet for reference.

5.3.8 DEPARTMENT OF WATER, LAND AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

A staff member attended a Disability Discrimination Act Workshop on February 2002 that raised awareness on planning and implementing Disability Action Plans across Government agencies. This information will now be used in the development of a DWLBC Disability Action Plan.

The Department is aware of the *Strategy for the Employment of People with Disabilities in the SA Public Sector* and has incorporated information on the Strategy into its personnel policies.

5.3.9 DEPARTMENT OF PRIMARY INDUSTRIES & RESOURCES SA

Disability awareness is included in relevant internal programs eg recruitment and selection training and HR practitioners forum. Develop of recruitment and selection training included consultation with disability stakeholders.

A major focus has been on access and facilities at PIRSA sites and awareness raising on disability issues. Consultation with disability stakeholders has occurred on facilities and access issues and a recruitment and selection training program.

Primary industries rated themselves at level 2 for this outcome.

5.3.10 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

The agency has produced the professional development resource *Fair and Reasonable: Disability Discrimination Act Implementation*

kit, 2000 to promote the implementation of the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act. The material has been distributed to all agency sites and a series of workshops and conferences held to promote and support its use.

The kit is a self-paced learning program that will assist staff in leadership positions to manage whole school change, to improve service provision and to continue to develop collaborative relationships with the school community. It encourages them to look critically at the current policies and practices of their site and, if necessary, to develop new frameworks and structures for promoting equitable outcomes for all children and students.

Student and Professional Services administers a retraining Support Scheme to provide opportunities for teachers to retrain in particular areas related to students with disabilities. Also, since 1998, the agency has also collaborated with Flinders University to develop a series of graduate certificate teacher training courses. These include:

- Graduate Certificate in Disability Studies: Positive Behaviour Management
- Graduate Certificate in Disability Studies: Autism Spectrum Disorders
- Graduate Certificate in Disability Studies: Augmentative Communication
- Graduate Certificate in Disability Studies: Down Syndrome
- Graduate Certificate in Disability Studies: Learning Difficulties
- Graduate Certificate in Disability Studies: International Studies.

Three additional courses are being developed for semester 1 of 2003. These are:

- Graduate Certificate in Disability studies: Technology and Disability
- Graduate Certificate in Disability studies: Autism Spectrum Disorders
- Graduate Certificate in Disability studies: Transition from School to Adult Life for Students with Disabilities.

The agency is supporting school services officers to undertake training and development at TAFE in support for students with disabilities. Officers can undertake modules and gain accreditation towards Certificate 3 level in the Education Stream or Certificate 3 level in the Government Disability and Health Support Stream.

An Inclusion training and development package, used for disability in service of preschool staff, is being reviewed and developed to incorporate the new South Australian Curriculum Standards and Accountability Framework.

The agency conducts a number of training and development courses for staff at the group of districts level. Examples are:

- *Reach for the Stars: disability and behaviour management training package* – A training and development package on disability and behaviour management for teachers and school support officers working in special classes.

- *Training package related to the Universal New Born Hearing Screening program* – A training package for agency Hearing Impairment coordinators to improve services to families with children having a hearing loss diagnosed through the Universal New Born Hearing Screening program.

The Learning Difficulties Support Team provides training and development and advice to groups of parents, Learning Assistance Program volunteers, School Services Officers and groups of teachers. The team provides a responsive service, Preschool to Year 12, in country and metropolitan locations.

Training and development topics focus on areas such as the difference between learning difficulties and learning disabilities, inclusive methodology, catering for students experiencing difficulties in spelling, reading, written language, mathematics and numeracy. Also, training and development is provided to personnel working in the Vacation Literacy and Numeracy Programs, organised by the agency, prior to each holiday program, thus extending the network of educators with expertise in the area of learning difficulties.

The Equal Employment Opportunity unit within the agency conducts Selection Panel training and provides information on preventing discrimination on the grounds of disability, in relation to employment.

Consultation and Training

During 2002, a total of 5 separate consultations were held with representatives from non- government and government organisations responsible for providing disability services and with representatives from disability advocate organisations.. Each of the 5 consultations provided significant information about modifications needed in the training and development of agency staff. This is being used in the design of training packages and workshops.

The Special Education Resource Unit works with the Down's Syndrome Society, the Autism Association, the Intellectual Disability Services Council and the Crippled Children's Association in developing and reviewing services.

Officers from Student and Professional Services are working with the Specific Learning Difficulties association of South Australia and Learning Difficulties Australia in planning and delivering training and development courses for parents/care givers and a range of educators and other professionals. Student and Professional Services is also working with the Cora Barclay Centre to provide advice on professional development courses in hearing impairment.

DECS rated themselves at 2 for this outcome area.

5.3.11 DEPARTMENT OF FURTHER EDUCATION , EMPLOYMENT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

DFEEST has developed and implemented education and training programs in disability awareness and discrimination for staff. OVET and TAFE Institutes have requested input from individuals and agencies that service people with a disability. People with a disability may or may not be employed by those agencies.

TAFE Institutes surveyed the needs of staff and students in developing their DAPs. Service delivery has changed as a result of feedback.

In OVET, information is obtained from the Bridging Pathways State Implementation Committee, the Ministerial Advisory Committee: Students with a Disability VET in Schools Task Group, the Startright Project Task Group (all of which draw membership from disability agencies) and Abilympics SA.

In TAFE Institutes, information is obtained from organisations such as the Blind Welfare Association particularly in relation to developing the DAPs.

In TAFE Institutes information sessions are developed and delivered for staff eg, responsibilities under the DDA, working with students with mental illnesses.

In OVET:

- videos are developed/ purchased and used in training RTOs through the AQTF professional development program and in awareness raising activities for employers and RTOs
- resources have been written and disseminated to RTOs to build their capacity to increase the opportunity for people with a disability to achieve successful outcomes from VET.

DFEEST rated itself at a level 2 for this outcome.

5.3.12 OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

CIBM South Terrace provide advice and information to two groups of the small business community. The first group consists of people from established businesses who seek assistance in business or enterprise development. The second group is comprised of people who are interested in starting up a business.

Information and advice is provided through face to face or telephone interaction. Workshops are also conducted at the South Terrace office. OED consultants have had experience in providing information to people with hearing, sight or mobility problems through TTY communication; emails and the provision of data and information sheets electronically. People with disabilities have participated in workshops at the South Terrace site accompanied by carers.

Bizgate is a government initiated internet based project that is managed by CIBM. The Bizgate service allows members of the business community to access information from all three levels of government and carry out transactions directly with agencies from State and Local Governments utilising internet technology.

OED includes education and training in disability awareness and discrimination as part of the induction program for new employees.

The Human Resource Unit has produced a "Communicating with People who have a Disability" information brochure. This brochure has been promoted and distributed to all staff.

OED's IT Unit has prepared a proposal that is currently under consideration to standardise the organisation's websites. Adoption of W3C's Web Contents Accessibility Guidelines will lead to a reduction in accessibility barriers for people with many types of disabilities.

Outcome 4

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.

5.4.1 DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Consultation with people with disabilities is a key principle underpinning the draft Disability Action Plan for the Department of Human Services.

Included in the Action Plan are guidelines for portfolio agencies to work collaboratively with each other and in partnerships with all levels of government, service providers, professional groups, educational institutions and community organisations to ensure optimal levels of services appropriate to the needs of people with disabilities.

The development process for the *draft Action Plan* has included representation of people with disabilities on the Steering Committee. Broader consultation with people with disabilities is planned when the draft is released for comments.

Appropriate access for people with disabilities to complaint handling procedures within services as well as access to independent complaint authorities has been identified as a key priority area for action in the draft *Disability Action Plan*. Specific actions within the Action Plan include:

- DHS Divisions and Agencies to promote the use of accessible and participatory complaints procedures for people with disabilities as part of the broader complaints handling processes;
- Service providers will ensure that complaints personnel and key staff are informed of the relevant policies and will apply those policies to ensure appropriate redress for people with disabilities and their associates/advocates;
- Service providers will include a report on their complaints processes and outcomes as part of their annual reporting requirements;
- Complaints procedures will be incorporated into induction training for all new staff and will be widely communicated throughout their agency.
- Service providers to expand the function of complaints procedures to include a role for recommending improvements in the delivery of services.

Appropriate access for people with disabilities to complaint handling procedures within services as well as access to independent complaint authorities has been identified as a key priority area for action in the draft Disability Action Plan for the Department of Human Services.

5.4.2 DEPARTMENT OF THE PREMIER AND CABINET

DPC is aiming to ensure that the needs of people with disabilities are being addressed through policy development and as part of individual projects.

The Social Inclusion Unit was established with the requirement that it conduct community consultations, including consulting with people with disabilities – the unit is currently establishing links with peak groups assisting people with disabilities. The development of directions for Social Inclusion will include consideration of the needs of people with disabilities.

People applying for the Premier's Carnegie Technology Education scholarships were asked to voluntarily identify whether they have a disability for purpose of monitoring section criteria in Year 1 (2002) and future adjustment as necessary. Of the initial round of 67 applications, four people indicated that they have a disability. Further applications were sought in the January-March quarter.

The proposed SA Youth Policy Framework, which will provide a cross-government approach to youth policy and services, identifies young people with disabilities as a relevant area and proposes consultation with key stakeholders.

The weekly Cabinet Allocations meeting ensures that each submission on upcoming Cabinet agendas has had adequate consultation across all relevant government agencies and peak community organisations. Where appropriate, Cabinet submissions are forwarded to the Minister for Social Justice for comment. Cabinet Office summarises comments received on submissions in advice prepared for all Cabinet Ministers and the Premier. Cabinet office also ensures that people with disabilities have access to the Community Cabinet program. A case-by-case approach has been adopted due to the changing venues of Community Cabinet, and means of access are pre-planned to ensure that guests with disabilities are made to feel welcome.

The Centre for Lifelong Learning and Development identified disability matters regarding learning through community surveys about barriers to lifelong learning.

The Office for the Commissioner for Public Employment continued to work with peak organisations to support the Disability Employment Strategy through the Business Enterprise Centre (BEC)

During 2001-02, DPC promoted the use of accessible and participatory complaints procedures for people with disabilities through the *DPC Grievance Policy* which is available on the DPC Intranet.

5.4.3 DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY AND FINANCE

Super SA customers are surveyed regularly about a range of issues. There is also an established mechanism for customers to provide feedback to Super SA.

In RevenueSA, a feedback mechanism has been put into place with one person taking responsibility for handling this. A Client Liaison Forum has been established as a proactive measure to encourage interaction between client representatives and staff representatives to seek improvements to service delivery.

5.4.4 JUSTICE PORTFOLIO

Diversity of representation on boards/committees is highlighted on the Managing Diversity Intranet site, and through the Improving Customer Service project. This will be further addressed through Disability Action Plans, but needs to be done in conjunction with Department of Premier and Cabinet, which administers the guidelines for appointments, and the database of board and committee members.

The Legal Services Commission's Community Legal Education unit provides services targeted at groups in need of particular legal education and information-for example people with disabilities. Programs include law courses and training, publications and other community projects.

During 2001-02, it provided the following:

Disability Issues - Pt Lincoln (July 2001)

Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome - WCH (July 2001)

Legal Resources for disability workers in Baptist Community (Nov 2001)

Mental Health and Aged Care legal issues - Ceduna and Pt Lincoln (Nov 2001)

Telelink with mental health lawyers across Australia (Nov Dec 2001)

IDSC ethics meetings (Nov / Dec 2001)

Training for Parents of Children with an Intellectual Disability (March 2002)

Parents Wills and Anticipatory Directions - Intellectually Disabled Services Council (April 2002)

The Equal Opportunity Commission continues to make available a wide range of information and training resources on the rights of individuals, including those with a disability -videos, fact sheets, pamphlets and web-based information.

The Office of Consumer and Business Affairs gives advice to consumers and traders on their rights and obligations under the consumer laws; conducts consumer education; conciliate disputes between consumers and traders; monitor business activities to which the Fair Trading Act applies; and investigate practices that may adversely affect the interests of consumers. The Office has an Education and Information Services branch. Advice and information about consumer and client rights often includes

providing specific advice to consumers at risk, including consumers with a disability or mental impairment. This is done through community education programs, the OCBA website, information sheets and telephone advice lines.

Complaints

SA Ambulance Service ensures that, wherever possible, people who are disadvantaged in any way can still provide feedback. SAAS is flexible about the ways people can provide feedback. For example, managers can take statements from people who are blind or have literacy problems, or use the National Relay Service to communicate with a deaf person by telephone.

Complaints against SA Police are handled pursuant to the *Police (Complaints and Disciplinary Proceedings) Act 1985*. These are overseen by the Police Complaints Authority and reported in that agency's Annual Report. SAPOL's complaints and feedback procedures provide the opportunity for internal and external complaints to be raised on diversity issues including specific matters pertaining to Indigenous people, women, people with a disability and people from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

The EOC launched an on-line complaint form on the EOC website, and complaints have been received regularly in this manner.

The Equal Opportunity Commission's complaint handling process has been the focus of continuous improvement which has included closer scrutiny of complaints initially to determine fit with the legislation; review and standardisation of policies, procedures and practices to ensure a consistent, high quality approach; earlier conciliation conferences; and an upgraded complaint records management data base and upgrading of all templates.

In 2001-2002 individual complainants and respondents were asked to rate the service and provide comments/suggestions for improvement. As a result of streamlining the overall process, 95% of complaints were finalised within 12 months, and the average length of time to finalise complaints decreased significantly with complaints now taking six months on average to complete.

The Justice Portfolio administers complaint systems for the community:

South Australian Ombudsman, a completely independent official who has comprehensive power to investigate government departments and authorities, and local government councils.

The Commissioner for Equal Opportunity is responsible for the administration of the *Equal Opportunity Act 1984*. The Commission promotes equal opportunity principles to the community, responds to complaints of discrimination and provides information and training to encourage compliance with the *Equal Opportunity Act 1984*. The Commissioner also has statutory responsibilities in relation to the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia 1983 (as amended in 1990) and the *Whistleblowers Protection Act 1993*.

5.4.5 DEPARTMENT FOR ADMINISTRATIVE AND INFORMATION SERVICES

The DAIS Building Management Unit has continued to provide an advisory service on physical access issues to other agencies through the work of the Disability Access Adviser and associated staff. People with disabilities and access consultants work with the Unit and contribute to the process of developing disability standards for new building projects and to audits of existing premises.

The development of the text version of SA Central came about as a result of a survey designed to evaluate the accessibility of the web site to clients with both physical and mental disabilities and to assess how effectively it meet their needs.

The Office of Recreation and Sport (ORS) has an officer designated to work with the disability sector and has representation on various committees, mainly concerned with funding programs that expand opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in recreation and sporting activities. The Office funds the State Disability Sport Program with Sports SA. It is involved in a research committee to assess what organisations need to meet the particular needs of people with disabilities, works with SPARC Disability Foundation, SASRAPID, the South Australian Sport and Recreation Association for People with Integration Difficulties.

DOSAA consults with Aboriginal communities on transport and access issues. DOSAA has been actively involved on both the Working and Steering Groups preparing for the forthcoming State Indigenous Disability Conference to be held in Adelaide. It is also a member of the Mental Impairment Indigenous Reference Committee and the Mental Impairment Indigenous Reference Group which address the mental health problems experienced by Aboriginal people involved with the justice system.

Fleet SA consults and gives technical advice on vehicles sourced by organisations that provide services to people with disabilities. For example, Fleet SA assisted the Intellectual Disability Services Council get vehicles suitable for use with clients in wheel chairs.

ORS provides training seminars on the Disability Discrimination Act and the development of action plans to development officers in mainstream recreation and sporting agencies. It has continued to provide training in the *Willing and Able* Program which assists coaches and teachers integrate children with disabilities into mainstream sporting activities.

As mentioned previously, while there is some general training in customer service areas which refers to EEO provision, there are no specific training components that cover clients with disabilities specifically. Service delivery areas have general complaints processes in place but none deal specifically with complaints from people with disabilities.

5.4.6 DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT, URBAN PLANNING AND THE ARTS

Within DTUPA, representatives from relevant peak bodies and stakeholders are invited to participate across a wide range of committees. Members are encouraged to raise issues of concern and contribute to the deliberations and decisions. In addition, the importance of representatives providing feedback to their parent organisations is promoted.

Comments from the community are actively sought in relation to services provided by the portfolio across South Australia. Feedback received by agencies within DTUPA cover telephone calls to InfoLine, written correspondence, emails, or personal contact.

Guidelines for dealing with discrimination, harassment and bullying clearly outline the support mechanisms and options available to employees for dealing with complaints, is being developed. These policies will benefit from the contributions made by people with disabilities.

Internal complaint handling processes used by TSA have been developed in consultation with the SA Equal Opportunity Commission - they provide external contact details should employees wish to access independent support. There is follow-up of all complaints in accordance with Commissioner's Circular No. 64 "Guidelines for Ethical Conduct", which is also used for people with disabilities.

The adoption of the complaints procedures within the Australian Standard for Complaints Handling (AS 4269 – 1995) will also contribute to ensuring that all complaints are handled appropriately and are dealt with in a manner which is supportive of the individual, irrespective of their disability.

5.4.7 DEPARTMENT FOR ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE

The Disability Action Plan for DEH was drafted in consultation with people with disabilities. Following endorsement of this Draft, broader consultation will be sought as to the impact on DEH and its clients, and in regard to further improvement of the Plan. Consultation will also be sought in regard to the implementation of mechanisms for complaints and grievances.

The Management of Adelaide Botanic Gardens consulted with people with disabilities before embarking on a full audit of the Gardens for the purposes of assessing the areas that may require upgrading for a broader inclusion of people with disabilities.

5.4.8 DEPARTMENT OF WATER, LAND AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

DWLBC is aiming to ensure that the needs of people with disabilities are being addressed through policy development and as part of individual projects.

5.4.9 DEPARTMENT OF PRIMARY INDUSTRIES & RESOURCES SA

Grievance and Dispute Resolution, Harassment, Bullying and Discrimination, Recruitment and Recruitment and Selection Policies have been reviewed and updated. No Charter of Customer rights exists at this time. Issues are currently dealt with locally in accordance with general PIRSA policies and systems for complaint resolution.

In terms of staff/resources, established follow up procedures apply. PIRSA rates itself at a level 1 for this outcome area.

5.4.10 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Consultation

The agency has provided project officer support to the Special Needs Education Network – a group of representatives of a range of disability organisations and advocacy groups.

The development of the format of the current Negotiated Education Plan (available in CDROM format) was strongly influenced by focus group consultations with disability organisations. The organisations are also contributing to plans for a review of the Negotiated Education Plan.

The agency collaborates with disabilities consultants from the Autism Association and the Downs Syndrome Society who are employed to work in schools. Also, the agency has collaborated, recently, with the Autism Association to provide support for groups of secondary school students with Asperger's syndrome to improve the students' social skills and to facilitate their access to post school employment certificate courses.

In addition, a number of training and development courses for agency staff are conducted at the group of districts level. An example is *Sexuality and relationships for students with disabilities* – a set of workshops for teachers working in special classes or units, conducted in association with the Down's Syndrome Society and the Sexual Health Information Network.

The agency has collaborated with the MALSSA Advocacy, Disability Multiculturalism organisation over a number of years. This has allowed the group to contribute to the development of a number of information strategies and information sheets for families, thus helping the agency provide more effective services for families from non English speaking backgrounds.

The agency involves people with disabilities on project working groups, as required. For example, people with disabilities were involved in the development of the Negotiated Education Plan and they are involved in the development of facilities' education briefs for redesign of schools.

Client Rights

The agency provides information on the rights of customers and on complaints and grievance procedures for all agency clients,

including people with disabilities. Relevant information is provided in the following two documents:

- *Grievance procedures for employees in Children's Services and School Sector, including administrative and support services, 1998*
- *Responding to concerns from parents and care givers in DETE preschools and schools: A resource pack for managing complaints and challenging situations.* This comprehensive resource package provides school communities with information and strategies to help prevent the need for complaints, and to resolve them positively when they arise. This material includes pamphlets for parents/care givers giving specific information on how to access alternative sources of information and support.

The Negotiated Education Plan CDROM includes a section called *Problem resolution* that gives parents/care givers information on how to resolve issues that may arise in negotiating services for students with disabilities.

Complaints Handling

In addition to providing general information about resolving complaints, the agency has specific details of processes for resolving complaints for people with disabilities set out in the publication *Fair and Reasonable: Disability Discrimination Act Implementation kit, 2000*, distributed to all schools and agency sites. The kit deals with informal, as well as formal, complaint resolution and mediation.

The general approach of this agency is to have complaints or grievances resolved at the local service delivery level, wherever possible. The agency provides some mediation training to support this. If a grievance cannot be resolved locally, then it becomes a formal complaint and is resolved, on a case by case basis, within existing policy frameworks and legislature. In general, District superintendents are responsible for the resolution of formal complaints involving schools.

DECS rated themselves at a 2 for this outcome.

5.4.11 DEPARTMENT OF FURTHER EDUCATION , EMPLOYMENT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The Bridging Pathways State Implementation Committee (which includes some people with a disability as well as disability agencies) has been established to provide advice to the Office of Vocational Education and Training. As a representative on that committee, the Office of Employment also accesses that advice.

The TAFE Directors also have a representative on the State Implementation Committee. That representative is the Convenor of the TAFE SA Access and Equity committee, the committee which coordinates the development of the TAFE Institutes DAPs.

The TAFE SA Access and Equity committee is also managing a review of the grievance procedures which has been funded by the

Office of Vocational Education and Training. The review aims to simplify and synthesise the grievance procedures.

In a recent mid term review of the implementation of Bridging Pathways strategy in South Australia, the State Implementation committee invited students with a disability and representatives from a number of disability agencies to participate.

The Australian Disability Training Advisory Committee is a national group which monitors the implementation of the Bridging Pathways national strategy in States and Territories. The national committee comprises representatives from relevant government agencies and disability organisations. South Australia has four representatives on that committee, three of whom are also members of the State Implementation Committee. This ensures that OVET has good access to information from a range of State and national “peak” disability organisations.

TAFE Institutes also participate in the Tertiary Education Disability Council of Australia (TEDCA) and support the involvement of a student representative to participate in the national TEDCA Student Group.

TAFE Institutes and OVET also participate in the National Regional Disability Liaison Officer (NRDLO) Initiative steering group. This is a DEST funded initiative hosted by the University of SA.

Information on students’ rights, responsibilities etc is contained in all TAFE Institute student diaries and orientation materials and on the TAFE portal. Information is available for all RTOs via the OVET web-site and relevant publications.

Currently the TAFE SA grievance procedures are being reviewed. This process is being steered by the TAFE SA Access and Equity Committee and is funded by OVET on the understanding the grievance procedures will be available to all RTOs for use as a model.

Although the grievance procedures are being synthesised and simplified, it is intended that students with a disability will be provided with appropriate information about their rights, the grievance procedures and support that is available to them if they want to lodge a complaint.

TAFE Institutes have a range of mechanisms for student feedback/complaint. For example, Douglas Mawson Institute of Technology uses the Listening Post as a mechanism for receiving feedback from students. If a student with a disability makes a complaint and identifies themselves, they receive a personal explanation about how the issue has been managed.

If a student makes an informal complaint, the Access and Equity manager would deal with the complaint at the local level. For example, the Access and Equity manager would discuss the DDA requirements for making ‘reasonable adjustment’ etc with appropriate staff.

If the student makes a formal complaint, the complaint is investigated initially at a local level. Whenever possible, the

student is fully informed of their options for registering a complaint and the processes for each option.

DFEEST rated itself at level 4 for this outcome.

5.4.12 OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Advice and information was sought from various organisations in the preparation of the “Communicating with People who have a Disability” brochure.

Any complaints which are received regarding availability of information from OED are dealt with directly in the business unit concerned with the issue. Cases are reviewed on an individual basis and changes are made as necessary to accommodate any problems.

Outcome 5

Each Portfolio Chief Executive will ensure that their Portfolio has met the requirements of the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the *Equal Opportunity Act 1984*.

5.5.1 DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

To co-ordinate the implementation of *Promoting Independence* across Portfolios, the Department of Human Services has lead the establishment of the '*Promoting Independence: Disability Action Plans for SA*' Implementation Reference Group.

The Terms of Reference for this Implementation Reference Group which has representatives from all Portfolios are to:

- support the implementation of *Promoting Independence* with a particular focus on the development of disability action plans;
- develop a Whole of Government reporting framework to benchmark achievements and initiatives;
- promote awareness and systemic improvements in the accessibility of Government services to people with disabilities;
- identify issues related to the implementation of *Promoting Independence* e.g. barriers/opportunities/successes.

Development of the draft *Department of Human Services Disability Action Plan* requires service providers to develop their own action plans through service agreements with formal procedures for reporting and implementation.

Integration of Promoting Independence into Department of Human Services planning processes

The *Department of Human Services Disability Action Plan* is the key strategy to achieve the integration of *Promoting Independence* into the Department's planning processes.

5.5.2 DEPARTMENT OF THE PREMIER AND CABINET

The policy *Promoting Independence - Disability Action Plans for South Australia* has been implemented through the Department of the Premier and Cabinet Disability Action Plan. This plan has been integrated into the Departments Corporate Management Cycle and specific strategies were included in each Divisional Business Plan. During 2001-02 divisions reported quarterly on these strategies through the Senior Management Group.

DPC has recently formed a DPC Disability Action Plan Reference Group to undertake a review of the Disability Action Plan and will meet on a quarterly basis to discuss progress, developments and future directions. The 2002-03 Disability Action Plan is currently being reviewed in consultation with staff across DPC and with people with disabilities. Any gaps identified during the review process will be addressed and the plan will be updated accordingly.

DPC's Disability Action Plan 2001-02 was forwarded to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission on 22 June 2001 and was published on the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission's website on 1 July 2001. The Disability Discrimination Commissioner then presented DPC with a Certificate of Recognition for its commitment to ensuring equitable access to their services for people with disabilities by lodging the Disability Action Plan under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* with the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission. Once the 2002-03 Disability Action Plan is approved it will be forwarded to the Commissioner for re-publishing.

5.5.3 DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY AND FINANCE

This agency's Disability Action Plan is under review and will be restructured based upon the five outcomes format to facilitate future consistent reporting. A regular reporting framework will also be implemented to monitor the Plan's progress and also to facilitate annual reporting.

5.5.4 JUSTICE PORTFOLIO

The Portfolio's plan for Managing Diversity: Improving Customer Service was endorsed by the Chief Executive in March 2002. It requires all Justice agencies to have developed and documented their Disability Action Plans by June 2003. All agencies are on track to achieve this.

The Courts Admin Authority developed a Disability Action Plan in 1999, which is currently under review. Implementation and Evaluation timelines will be set by individual agencies.

Court Volunteer Service:

Volunteers continue to provide a service to clients at the Adelaide Magistrates Court, the Sir Samuel Way Building and the four suburban courts. During this financial year a Court Support service has been established to provide assistance to several groups of court users with special needs. Initially, the support has been offered to defendants appearing in the Magistrates Court Diversion Program which generally deals with offenders charged with minor offences who have impaired functioning as a result of a mental illness or intellectual disability. Volunteers have been trained to assist these clients by providing information about the court process and providing support before or after the matter is dealt with.

Magistrates Court Diversion Program (Mental Impairment):

This program has been in operation since 1999 initially as a pilot program and now is an ongoing feature of the Magistrates Court. Over the last year the program has expanded to provide a limited service to Christies Beach, Holden Hill and the Elizabeth courts. Circuits are also being conducted to Whyalla and Port Augusta. Staffing levels have increased to provide some expansion of the program.

Additional funding will be required to continue the expansion to other regional areas and to provide an increased level of service to the suburban courts.

Program staff continue to work with a range of government and non-government Agencies. Staff actively promote the program and provide information and training to a variety of service Agencies. A successful two-day workshop was conducted with SAPOL for the Northern Region Command which included Police personnel, lawyers and other interested parties to facilitate the expansion of the program to Whyalla and Port Augusta.

HASI Index:

The Department for Correctional Services has completed an evaluation of the Hayes Ability Screening Index (HASI), as a potential tool to assist in identifying intellectually disabled people at entry point into the correctional system. With the recruitment of a Principal Psychologist next year it is anticipated that the HASI will be given operational effect.

Business Licences

The Office of Consumer and Business Affairs has undertaken several initiatives to reduce the paperwork for business licence applicants and recognise the specific needs of those with poor reading and writing skills, indigenous people, the physically impaired, and those from overseas or from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Disability Action Plans support the Portfolio's strategic direction to "respond appropriately to people with a disability or mental illness".

Disability Action Plans are being aligned to the 5 major outcomes of the Government's policy, and to the seven principles within the Portfolio's *Charter of Public Service in a Diverse Society*. Agencies have been asked to either develop discrete Disability Action Plans by June 2003, or integrate disability issues into their Strategic Plans by June 2003. Long term, it is anticipated that Justice agencies will integrate disability issues into their Strategic Plans.

In terms of staff time and resources: All Justice agencies have assigned responsibility for the development of their disability action plans. Generally, this is part of the role of a Diversity or Human Resource consultant, (approx 0.2 - 0.4 each agency). SA Police has dedicated a senior officer from its Equity and Diversity Branch during the past financial year to the task of developing SAPOL's Disability Action Plan.

The Ambulance Board has endorsed funding for an access and equity manager for SA Ambulance Service in 2002-03, and the appointed manager will develop a disability action plan.

Some agencies and divisions have already established committees or working groups to oversee the development, usually consisting of middle to senior managers. Resource allocation for the implementation and review of plans has not yet been determined, and will vary from agency to agency.

5.5.5 DEPARTMENT FOR ADMINISTRATIVE AND INFORMATION SERVICES

The DAIS Disability Action Plan was approved by senior management in May 2000. Implementation has occurred mainly in relation to physical access issues with REM developing a specific

action plan to deal with the progressive auditing of government owned premises. DAIS buildings are included in this process.

The Disability Action Plan is one of a suite of documents which support strategic and other planning processes. Initial planning is underway to review, amend and integrate the DAIS Disability Action Plan with a clearer profile in agency operations.

5.5.6 DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT, URBAN PLANNING AND THE ARTS

The DTUPA Executive Officers are actively promoting and supporting the objectives and requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and the Equal Opportunity Act 1984.

The PTB lodged a Disability Action Plan with HREOC in October 1995. It has since provided significant reports to HREOC on progress made in relation to its Action Plan which is regularly updated.

The PTB and TSA actively support staff to contribute to the development of national Disability Transport Standards which have been promulgated under the DDA.

The OLG Chief Executive is ensuring that the agency meets its requirements under the DDA and the Equal Opportunity Act 1994 by embarking on the development of a Disabilities Action Plan.

TSA directorates have been asked to embrace and ensure that their Disability Action Plan meets TSA business requirements, with a gap analysis of their section's operations against the plan, inclusive of their internal and external customers, contractors and employees. As Convenor of the Marine Modal Group, TSA is responsible for addressing the technical issues relating to the standards. TSA infrastructure projects are developed with particular emphasis on needs of people with disabilities, especially those relating to pedestrian and platform areas.

DTUPA Directors/Managers of each unit have responsibility for ensuring awareness and training of their staff, the safety of the work environment, the adherence to DDA and OHWS requirements and promulgation of the agency information to clients, with special attention paid to people with disabilities. They identify any deficiencies in their area and allocate appropriate resources to address the issues.

5.5.7 DEPARTMENT FOR ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE

A Disability Action Plan has been developed in order to demonstrate DEH's commitment to achieving the outcomes of the *Promoting Independence – Disability Action Plans for South Australia* strategy, meeting the requirements of the DDA, managing diversity, and increasing staff awareness of the needs of people with disabilities. This is demonstrated in the contracting of an organisation employing a workforce of people with disabilities for some property maintenance projects within the Department.

Further demonstration of DEH's commitment to achieving a diverse workforce, includes the engagement of an Auslan interpreter on a regular basis to allow the full inclusion of a member of our staff at meetings. The services of this interpreter are also utilised as and when required for other meetings. Our staff member also has full use of a TTY system.

DEH is also committed, as part of our Policy development, to updating DEH's current Diversity policy to be inclusive of people with Disabilities.

5.5.8 DEPARTMENT OF WATER, LAND AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

DWLBC participates in the *'Promoting Independence: Disability Action Plans for SA' Implementation Reference Group* and will work towards preparing a Disability Action Plan based on best practice recommendations of the Group.

The policy *Promoting Independence - Disability Action Plans for South Australia* will be implemented through the agency by integration into the Department's corporate planning cycle.

5.5.9 DEPARTMENT OF PRIMARY INDUSTRIES & RESOURCES SA

- PIRSA's disability action plan has been ratified by Executive. Progress is regularly reviewed and progress reported.
- Most significant impact has been legislative audit of facilities.
- Information to employees and customers has been updated in consultation with disability stakeholders relatively.
- Action Plan has a low profile compared to other major HR initiatives. Options to raise interest and awareness to be further explored and options presented to Executive.
- Recruitment & selection has specific information on the Disability Employment Strategy.
- Information on the PIRSA Intranet has been reviewed and updated.
- Review of Strategic Plan has commenced and new plan will be developed in 2003
- HR Staff time (.2 FTE) allocated to implementing requirements of the Disability Action Plan
- Capital works funds for facilities review.

PIRSA rates itself at a level 2 for this outcome area.

5.5.10 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

DECS is currently involved in developing its disability action plan. Earlier in 2002, consultations were held with a range of disability organisations to identify barriers to accessing services. It is intended to implement the disability action plan in 2003.

The *Fair and Reasonable* kit, developed by the agency includes a process for schools to develop their own disability action plan.

Each of the 5 consultations held with disability service providers showed that the highest priority area for action by the agency is training and development of staff, in the provision of services for people with disabilities.

Other issues arising in all 5 consultations were: the need for the agency to improve its communication strategies and inappropriate use by schools of the School Discipline policy.

Currently, Student and Professional Services is reviewing its disability services and the results of these consultations are being used in this review.

Disability and Professional Services is supplying key workers for development of a Disability Action Plan, in conjunction with the whole of the agency.

DECS rated themselves at a 2 for this outcome.

5.5.11 DEPARTMENT OF FURTHER EDUCATION , EMPLOYMENT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

As mentioned previously, all TAFE Institutes have developed three year DAPs which have been written in line with the national strategy Bridging Pathways.

Until recently, OVET and Office of Employment (OE) were part of the Department of Education Training and Employment (DETE). During this year, DETE conducted a series of consultations to identify barriers to access etc. It was intended that this information would inform the DETE DAP.

OVET and OE are currently undergoing a major restructure. However, it is anticipated that information collected by DETE will be used to inform the new portfolio's DAP when it is established.

However, it is reasonable to restate that the national Bridging Pathways strategy does provide a five year plan of action for ensuring that VET services and programs in SA are accessible and inclusive of people with a disability.

In all TAFE Institutes, the DAP is used by program areas in the development of their strategic plans, which in turn inform each Institute's plan.

In some Institutes, Access and Equity managers are also responsible for the development of strategic plans and the implementation of the quality system. So responsibility is for a cluster of complementary functions.

The recent SA VET Sector planning process included strategies based on consultation with the BP State Implementation Committee

As a result of the Bridging Pathways national strategy, a review of two national Training Packages (Community Services and IT) is being undertaken to assess the impediments for people with a disability in relation to successfully completing VET and participating in employment.

A review of funding policies is being undertaken and a model is being developed to inform the purchasing negotiations in the provision of VET for people with a disability. Capacity building for RTOs is being undertaken by OVET and all TAFE Institutes.

Staff and Resources

A DAP Implementation project Officer was employed one day per week for six months by each TAFE Institute to develop the 8 DAPs. Access and Equity managers in each Institute will oversight the implementation of the plans during the ensuing three years. In OVET, a Principal Policy Officer is employed full time on the implementation of the Bridging Pathways national strategy.

DFEEST rated itself at level 4 for this outcome.

5.5.12 OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The abovementioned outcomes and achievements, together with OED's Disability Action Plan form a major component of the organisation's endeavour to ensure the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and the Equal Opportunity Act 1994 are met. Through ongoing monitoring and action, OED will continue to work toward meeting the requirements of the above Acts.

6 HIGHLIGHTS

A highlight for the Promoting Independence strategy was the forum held in February on refining Disability Action Plans. The feedback from the 90 people who attended from all government portfolios was very positive. In particular, the presentation by Deputy Commissioner, Graeme Innes was very well received.

The Department for Further Education, Employment Science and Technology (DFEEST) reports that the Office of Vocational Education contributed significant support to the successful organisation of the inaugural State Abilympics vocational skill competitions for people with a disability in May 2002. The competitions were integrated with WorldSkills Australia Adelaide Region's competitions.

Abilympics is an international organisation comprising some 87 countries, which was started in Japan thirty years ago. Every four years, an international competition is held.

7 BARRIERS

Barriers identified within progress reports have included concerns about resources for agencies, particularly for building modifications.

DFEEST reported that it is extremely difficult to access information about the full range of services and supports available to people with a disability. Under these circumstances it is almost impossible to provide good advice to people with a disability about the range

of services available to them which could support their successful participation in VET.

Under these circumstances, it is also frustrating and challenging for VET providers to use the existing resources creatively to maximise opportunities for people with a disability in VET.

8 SUMMARY

All Portfolios have developed progress reports against the 5 specific outcomes targeted within the *Promoting Independence* strategy. In this reporting period, there has been an attempt to measure the incremental change that occurs through the implementation of the policy.

The pilot of a questionnaire and a more detailed reporting framework does appear to have increased the consistency of reporting across Portfolios. Feedback has also indicated that the questionnaire was a useful prompt for the preparation of progress reports.

This report builds upon the first progress report and provides a snapshot across Portfolios reflecting the current level of activity and achievement to date. It is hoped that some of the very good examples and good practices being set by Portfolios described within this report will both encourage and guide others as they progress their own work-plans in the forthcoming reporting period.

There continues to be a considerable amount of work undertaken by Government Portfolios under Outcome 1, ('Portfolios and their agencies ensure accessibility to their services to people with disabilities'). It is also evident that an increasing number of Portfolios and their agencies have established their own reference groups who are developing and refining their respective Disability Action Plans.

It has also been evident that some of the Portfolios had difficulties achieving the reporting requirement within the designated time-frame due, in some instances, to restructuring. An earlier timeframe for the next reporting cycle that coincides with Portfolios' annual reporting process, may assist in the objective of Senior Management Council reporting to the Minister by the end of September.

Members of the Reference Group have supported a timeframe that includes workshops and forums in the earlier part of 2003 to increase knowledge, skills and awareness in the areas of disability and inclusion.

The revised reporting timeframe will result in the following actions:

- Progress Reports from Portfolios required by August 15;
- Draft Whole of Government (WoG) report back to committee by August 30;
- WoG consolidated Progress report tabled at SMC for Portfolio comment by September 15;

- Final Report to the Minister by SMC by Sept 30;
- Minister releases Progress Report on Dec 3 (International Day of Disability).

Barriers have included issues regarding the lack of available resources particularly for building modifications. Therefore at the time of building refurbishment or change of lease arrangements, agencies should consider the access requirements for people with disabilities and the associated costs. This is also to ensure compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act (1992).

Other costs associated with implementation include such things as:

- staff training and disability awareness resources; and
- communication strategies and information provision where alternate formats are required.

As we complete this 2nd progress report, the 1st is about to be circulated for public comment. The feedback from the community will be of great value in ascertaining the communities' expectations for progressing the Promoting Independence strategy.