



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA  
DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY SERVICES



# **Accessibility and Inclusion Action Plan 2020-2023**

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# Secretary's foreword

I am delighted to present the Department of Parliamentary Services' (DPS) first Accessibility and Inclusion Action Plan (AIAP) 2020-2023. Our plan details how we will continue to improve access and inclusion across Australian Parliament House (APH) for clients, visitors, building occupants and employees with disability.

In the 32 years since APH opened, access and mobility standards, as well as building code requirements have changed significantly. As we view access and inclusion through a 21st century lens, we will continue to focus on a range of access and inclusion solutions and enhancements. We acknowledge the challenges posed in ensuring APH remains an open and accessible building meeting contemporary building code standards while maintaining the design integrity of the building.

In the past five years we have achieved significant access and inclusion improvements, including:

- modifying parliamentarian's suites and the Senate Chamber to meet identified needs
- retrofitting actuators to doors in the private car parks and within the building
- installing automatically opening doors and suitable screening equipment at security entry points
- installing additional call buttons (with braille), 'floor level' speech advice and lift controls at a lower height in all elevators
- improving access ramps in the public car park and increasing the width of disabled car parks throughout the public and private car parks
- upgrading the existing hearing loops and installing additional loops, and
- continuous improvements made on the Watch, Read, Listen section of APH website to provide a consolidated landing page where parliamentary proceedings are more accessible, in video, transcript and audio formats.

The purpose of our AIAP is to set out the Department's continued commitment and approach to achieving better outcomes for people with disability by improving access and inclusion across five key areas:

1. Relationships
2. Our work environment – digital
3. Our work environment – physical
4. Employment
5. Governance – monitoring

We are an organisation focussed on providing outstanding service to parliamentarians, our clients, visitors and building occupants. Ensuring our services, practices and policies are accessible and inclusive demonstrates our commitment to constantly improving the experience for people with disability across all aspects of the services we provide. By respecting and embracing the varying needs, skills and capabilities of our employees, we will create a more productive and enjoyable environment for all people that work in and visit APH.

Our plan has been developed in line with the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* requirements and follows consultation with stakeholders and DPS employees. I would particularly like to thank the expert contributions made by the Australian Network on Disability, the DPS AIAP Project Working Group and the AIAP Employee Consultation Group in the development of this plan.



**Rob Stefanic**  
Secretary  
Department of Parliamentary Services

25 November 2020



AUSTRALIAN  
NETWORK  
ON DISABILITY

# Our Vision and Commitment

DPS supports the work of the Australian Parliament by providing effective, high quality and sustainable services to parliamentarians and building occupants. As custodians of APH we are responsible for delivering a broad range of services and experiences that enable engagement with the parliamentary process. DPS supports Australia's Parliament and parliamentarians through innovative, unified and client-focused services. We are proud to be custodians for Parliament House as the pre-eminent symbol of Australian parliamentary democracy. We welcome around 750,000 visitors each year and are a significant destination for our citizens and international visitors alike.

The plan sets out our commitment to provide better opportunities and outcomes for people with disability. During the life of our first plan our focus will be on:

- improving our understanding the needs of our clients, visitors, building occupants and employees in order to provide services, products and policies that are more accessible and inclusive
- raising awareness across DPS of the barriers to full inclusion that are faced by people with disability and develop a plan to improve equitable outcomes for people with disability
- opportunities for employment and career development for people with disability.

As at 1 November 2020, the Department's self-reported disability representation rate was 2.3% of the workforce. Approximately 10% of Australians of working age (15 – 64 years) have disability. We aspire to create a workplace that is more disability confident and to achieving a higher representation rate of people with disability. We are committed to attracting and recruiting more Australians with disability to our workforce and to removing barriers to employment so our workforce reflects the diversity of the community we serve. To achieve this, we are conscious that we need a disability confident workforce that continues to work to improve the experiences of our clients, visitors, building occupants and employees. This is reflected in our planned actions to; value the perspectives of people with disability; embed accessibility in our digital communications; maintain a safe, secure and accessible building; and ensure from a governance perspective that accessibility and inclusion is embedded in the operations of every part of our business.

# Planned Actions in Five Target Areas

## 1. Relationships

We value the perspectives of people with disability and work in partnership to build a culture of inclusion and a disability confident workplace.

Action	Responsible	Timeframe	Measure of success
<b>1.1</b> DPS will participate in International Day of People with Disability (IDPWD)	Secretary Diversity Champion	Annually	DPS actively supports the positive contributions that people with disability make to our workforce
<b>1.2</b> Initiate a new Secretary's Award category that recognises the contribution of employees who champion diversity and foster an inclusive workplace	Secretary	November 2021	Award category added to the Secretary Awards nomination process
<b>1.3</b> Establish a Disability and Carers Employee Network (DEN) terms of reference for the operation of the Network	Diversity Champion Corporate Operations	March 2021	Calendar of Network meetings established for each financial year Terms of reference developed
<b>1.4</b> DPS will encourage employees to self-report their disability status on SAP and other employee surveys	Corporate Operations	Ongoing	Increase in the number of DPS employees self-reporting
<b>1.5</b> Capture feedback from APH visitors on accessibility	Parliamentary Engagement	July 2021	Visitor feedback forms include access related questions

## 2. Our Work Environment – Digital

Our digital environment is innovative, future focused and accessible to our clients, customers, stakeholders and employees.

Action	Responsible	Timeframe	Measure of success
<b>2.1</b> Digital information, communication technologies and live parliamentary proceedings streaming complies with WCAG 2.1 at a Conformance Level of AA	Digital Recording Services	Ongoing	Closed captioning is provided for all live streams
<b>2.2</b> Digital roadmaps embed accessibility consistent with WCAG 2.1 at AA level	Digital Business Services	Ongoing	The Digital Strategy 2019-2022 delivers WCAG 2.1 at an AA level
<b>2.3</b> Closed captioning to be provided for all live streams of parliamentary proceedings	Digital Recording Services	Ongoing	Closed captioning is provided for all live streams
<b>2.4</b> Closed captioning to be provided for on-demand streams of parliamentary proceedings	Digital Recording Services	2022	Live captions are retained for on-demand streams

### 3. Our Work Environment – Physical

DPS supports the functions of the Australian Parliament and the work of parliamentarians and keeps the building safe, secure and accessible to the public. We are proud custodians of Australian Parliament House and work respectfully in partnership with its designers.

Action	Responsible	Timeframe	Measure of success
<b>3.1</b> Implement an updated APH Building Certification Guidelines to further enhance new building work alignment with the Disability Discrimination Act	Property Services	Ongoing	APH Building Certification Guidelines implemented
<b>3.2</b> Automate doors where appropriate, and within available budget, in line with the APH Building Certification Guidelines	Property Services	Rolling program	Door automation in line with the APH Building Certification Guidelines
<b>3.3</b> Accessible bathroom upgrades completed where appropriate and within available budget, in line with the APH Building Certification Guidelines	Property Services	Rolling program	The upgrade of accessible bathrooms is completed as scheduled in the work program for Property Services
<b>3.4</b> Review and improve wayfinding signage for people with disability, within budget and consistent with design intent of Australian Parliament House	Design Integrity	Rolling program	New signage that facilitates wayfinding for people with disability
<b>3.5</b> Create an accessible facilities guide for visitors and guests	Parliamentary Engagement	July 2021	Guide produced and available in accessible formats
<b>3.6</b> Develop accessibility tour, including accessibility checklist for exhibitions and events	Parliamentary Engagement	July 2021	Tour and checklist developed and launched
<b>3.7</b> Deliver 'Welcoming Customers with a Disability' training for Parliamentary Security Service and Visitor Services Team Leaders	Security Parliamentary Engagement Corporate Operations	Ongoing	Parliamentary Security and Visitor Services Team Leaders receive training within six months of commencement

## 4. Employment

We reduce barriers to employment and build a workforce which better reflects the diversity of the community we serve.

Action	Responsible	Timeframe	Measure of success	
4.1	Implement relevant recommendations from the recruitment review conducted by the Australian Network on Disability	Corporate Operations	Rolling program	Relevant recommendations from the review are implemented
4.2	Increase the recruitment of people with disability across the department: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop guidance material on RecruitAbility and utilise on bulk recruitment rounds and the graduate program</li> <li>Establish entry level employment opportunities for people with disability</li> </ul>	Corporate Operations All Divisions	Ongoing	RecruitAbility scheme adopted where appropriate  Participation in Stepping Into Internship program and other placement programs
4.3	Include an accessibility and inclusion statement on all job advertisements, encouraging people with disability to apply	Corporate Operations	February 2021	Statement included in all job advertisements
4.4	Implement a new DPS Workplace Adjustment Policy and Procedure	Corporate Operations	July 2021	DPS Workplace Adjustment Policy and Procedure is implemented and managers are clear on the process
4.5	Personal Emergency and Evacuation Plans (PEEP) available to all employees if required	Security	Ongoing	Process in place and employees and Fire Wardens are aware of the PEEPs
4.6	Incorporate accessibility, PEEPs and requests for Workplace Adjustments in the New Starter Induction Packs and Welcome to DPS Induction training	Corporate Operations	Rolling program	Information incorporated into induction documents and training
4.7	Build capability of recruiting managers and teams members to support employees with disability: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confident Conversations for Mentally Healthy Teams training</li> <li>Welcoming Customers with Disability training</li> <li>Disability Confidence in the Workplace training</li> </ul>	Corporate Operations	Ongoing	Training programs implemented



## 5. Governance – Monitoring and Review

We are accountable for our commitments under this plan and ensure that accessibility and inclusion is embedded in the operations of every part of our business.

Action	Responsible	Timeframe	Measure of success
<b>5.1</b> DPS reports on the implementation of the AIAP through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual planning in the DPS Corporate Plan</li> <li>• Annual reporting in the DPS Annual Report</li> <li>• Bi-annual monitoring to the Executive Committee</li> </ul>	Corporate Operations	Ongoing	AIAP actions completed within allocated timeframes
<b>5.2</b> Participate in the AND Access and Inclusion Index	Corporate Operations	September to December 2021	AND Access and Inclusion Index completed
<b>5.3</b> The AIAP will be completed by November 2023. The AIAP will be reviewed in 2023 to enable a new plan for the following three-year period. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An audit of all actions under the AIAP will be conducted</li> <li>• External and internal consultations with people with a disability to inform on progress and areas for improvement</li> </ul>	Diversity Champion Corporate Operation	June to November 2023	New plan developed and implemented for 2023 -2026