



Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2014-2019

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The Forest Products Commission acknowledges the input received from staff and other stakeholders which has been invaluable in the preparation of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan.

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



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Agency overview

The Forest Products Commission (FPC) was established in November 2000 as a Statutory Authority. Its role is to sustainably manage and develop the State's renewable timber resources for the people of Western Australia. The FPC works with the forest industry to deliver economic and social benefits in regional communities.

The FPC is governed by the *Forest Products Act 2000*. This enables the agency to engage in commercial forestry activities in State-owned native forests and plantations.

The principles of sustainable forest management are imbedded in the culture of the FPC. It is our aim to ensure that future generations are endowed with a healthy, productive and valuable forest estate. Our sustainable forest management of South West native forests and State-owned plantations has been recognised in achieving internationally recognised Australian Forestry Standard AS 4708:2007 (AFS) and Environmental Management Systems ISO 14001 (EMS) accreditation. These accreditations are based on rigorous independent auditing and are in recognition of the FPC's ongoing continuous improvement of sustainable forest practices.

The FPC has developed a Workforce and Diversity Plan that identifies strategies that will be developed and implemented to meet workforce opportunities. The FPC proudly exceeds the public sector average for the number of employees with a disability and employees who are culturally and linguistically diverse. Strategies to address the other areas of diversity will be established.

Our stakeholders

The FPC has grouped its stakeholders into the following categories:

- Contractors
- Customers
- Community groups
- Aboriginal organisations
- Industry organisations
- Government
- Research institutions
- Media
- Suppliers

People with disability

Our challenge

A disability is any continuing condition that restricts everyday activities. Disability affects one in five of the Western Australian population.

People with disability often experience difficulty accessing information, facilities and services. Research has also shown that access and inclusion barriers are not exclusive to people with disability, and can be attributed to factors such as:

- living in rural or remote areas;
- low literacy levels;
- low socio-economic status;
- age; and
- discrimination in relation to gender, race and culture.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (2009), four million people (18.5 per cent) of Australians identify themselves as having some form of disability. In Western Australia, this figure is 17.4 per cent of the total population.

The survey also found that approximately 12 per cent of Australians are involved in caring for a person with a disability or an older person. In Western Australia, this figure is 11.5 per cent.

Our challenge is to minimise the effect of disability and disadvantage, by ensuring that our business is accessible, and inclusive of all diversities representative within our stakeholder groups.

With the assistance of appropriate aids and services, the restrictions experienced by many people with a disability may be overcome.

Identifying and removing the barriers that exclude people from accessing information, services, facilities and events will minimise the effect of disability.

Planning for better access

The FPC is committed to ensuring that stakeholders with disability, their families and carers are able to access all of our services and facilities.

The FPC aims to provide people with disability opportunities for access and participation consistent with that provided to other community members. To achieve this outcome, the FPC will consult with its stakeholders and employees with disability, and disability organisations, to ensure that barriers to access and inclusion are appropriately addressed.

The FPC requires employees and contractors to adhere to the principles of substantive equality and respect for diversity in the provision of their services and in their dealings with people with disability.

Progress

This is the FPC's first Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) which has been developed to take a proactive approach towards meeting the needs of all of our stakeholders. Research and consultation with employees, stakeholders, and disability service providers has contributed to the development of the DAIP.

Our plan provides a framework for the identification of access and inclusion barriers and for the implementation of strategies to overcome these barriers.

Looking ahead

We are committed to a balanced approach to meeting our social, environmental and economic responsibilities, and will strive to meet our stakeholders' needs by making our information, facilities, and services more accessible.

Desired state

It is a requirement of the Western Australian *Disability Services Act 1993* (hereinafter referred to as the Act) that all public authorities develop and implement a DAIP that outlines the way in which the agency will ensure that people with disability have equal access to its facilities and services. Other legislation underpinning access and inclusion includes the Western Australian *Equal Opportunity Act 1984* and the Commonwealth *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*.

The development and implementation of our Plan meets our legislative requirements, makes provision for forecast increases in the number of people with disability, and continues our proactive approach to addressing the access and inclusion barriers faced by all members of our community.

While we recognise and strive to meet the needs of people with disability, it is our aim that our information, facilities, services and events are accessible and inclusive to the whole community regardless of ability, ethnicity, gender, age or any other perceived difference.

This approach is consistent with our commitment to sustainability in all that we do for the benefit of present and future generations.

Consultation

The *Disability Services Regulations 2004* outline the minimum requirements for public consultation when developing a DAIP.

Internal staff members were consulted to gain feedback and input into the Plan and strategies that could be used to achieve the outcomes, where practicable.

The consultative process in developing the Plan included making the information available in alternate formats such as Braille, large print or audio on request.

Notice of the draft Plan was published in the *West Australian* newspaper and on the FPC's intranet and internet for wider consultation for a period of three weeks.

Development of our DAIP

The DAIP provides a framework for the identification of barriers to access and inclusion and for the development of strategies to improve access and inclusion. These strategies work towards a number of access and inclusion outcomes, which are defined in the Act.

The seven access and inclusion outcomes are:

- 1) People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by, the relevant public authority.
- 2) People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of the relevant public authority.
- 3) People with disability receive information from the relevant public authority in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people have to access it.
- 4) People with disability receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of the relevant public authority.
- 5) People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the relevant public authority.
- 6) People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by the relevant public authority.
- 7) People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment with a public authority.

To achieve these outcomes, we will develop and maintain an annual implementation plan aligned to a number of core strategies. Progress will be measured by the mitigation or elimination of the barriers that have been identified through the consultation process.

Strategies to improve access and inclusion

The following overarching strategies will guide tasks, reflected in the Implementation Plan that the Commission will undertake from 2014 to 2019 to improve access to its services, buildings and information. The seven desired outcomes provide a framework for improving access and inclusion for people with disability.

Outcome 1

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

Strategies
Regularly monitor the DAIP to ensure it supports equitable access to services by people with disability.
Ensure that employees and contractors are aware of, and comply with, their requirements of the DAIP.
Ensure that events and activities organised and promoted so that they are accessible as possible to people with disability.

Outcome 2

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of the FPC.

Strategies
Conduct an initial audit of FPC office buildings to determine accessibility by people with disability to client access areas.
Prioritise and prepare timeframes accordingly for progressive upgrading of office buildings where access might be required by people with disability.
Ensure all future premises leased by the FPC are accessible and take into account the needs of people with disability.
Ensure any feedback about access to FPC buildings and facilities from employees or visitors with disability is acted on in a timely and appropriate manner.

Outcome 3

People with disability receive information from the FPC in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people have to access it.

Strategies
Ensure that the FPC's website is compliant with the State Government's website accessibility guidelines.
Ensure publications and relevant documentation is available in alternative formats and accessible to people with disability.

Outcome 4

People with disability receive the same level and quality of service from FPC employees.

Strategies
Ensure the awareness of new staff about disability and access issues.
Ensure that the FPC's employees and contractors, as appropriate, are aware of disability and access issues.
Ensure that information provided in the course of delivering services is able to be provided in alternative formats upon request in a timely manner.

Outcome 5

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the FPC.

Strategies
Ensure FPC's complaints and feedback system is accessible for people with disability and reviewed periodically.
Ensure our complaints management procedure is made available in flexible and accessible formats.

Outcome 6

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

Strategies
Ensure that public consultations are held in an accessible manner and inclusive of people with disability.
Ensure information detailing the nature of the consultation is available in accessible formats for people with a disability.
Provide sufficient notice of meetings and an appropriate level of support to people with a disability who are directly involved in any consultation process.

Outcome 7

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

Strategies
Ensure that the job application process is accessible to all people.
Ensure all documents and information requests relating to employment from people with disability are promptly made available in alternative formats upon request.

Review, implement and report

The Act sets out the minimum reporting requirements for public authorities in relation to DAIPs. The FPC will report on the implementation of its DAIP through its Annual Report and prescribed progress report template to the Disability Services Commission by 4 July each year, outlining:

- its progress towards the desired outcomes of its DAIP;
- progress of employees and contractors towards meeting the desired outcomes; and
- strategies used to inform employees and contractors of the DAIP.

Our DAIP will be reviewed at least every five years, in accordance with the Act. Following each review, we will lodge an updated version of our DAIP with the Disability Services Commission.

In accordance with the Act, the FPC will take all practical measures to ensure that the DAIP is implemented by its employees and contractors.

Our DAIP implementation plan, which assigns responsibility for actions and initiatives, may be amended on a more regular basis to reflect progress and any access and inclusion issues that may arise. In instances where the DAIP is amended, a copy of the amended plan will be lodged with the Disability Services Commission.

We will take all practical measures to ensure that our stakeholders are aware of any changes to our DAIP.

Responsibility for implementation

We have appointed a DAIP Coordinator, who will monitor the progress of agreed actions and provide an annual report of our performance to the Disability Services Commission.

This report will include an assessment of how the completed actions have helped us progress towards achieving our seven desired outcomes.

The DAIP Coordinator will also provide:

- information about the progress of implementation for our Annual Report; and
- a briefing at the beginning of each financial year, to our Executive, summarising progress in the previous year and detailing activities for the coming year.

Communicate

Raising awareness and understanding of this plan is vital to achieve our desired outcomes. To ensure effective communication we will implement the following strategies.

- Include Access and Inclusion Awareness in our employee and contractor induction packages.
- The DAIP Coordinator will facilitate access and inclusion outcomes.

- Subsequent to public consultation, the final version of the DAIP will be reviewed and endorsed by the FPC's Board of Commissioners.
- The endorsed DAIP will then be submitted to the Disability Services Commission and made available on our internal and external websites.
- Copies of our DAIP will be communicated through:
 - a notice placed in the West Australian newspaper;
 - a notice on our internet homepage; and
 - a broadcast to employees and contractors.
 - Copies of our DAIP will be available in alternative formats upon request.

The FPC takes pride in its social responsibility and sees the service levels required by legislation as the minimum standards to which we should aspire.

Contact us

If you would like to comment or provide feedback on our Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) please use the feedback form on the following page.

Alternatively you are welcome to contact us by one of the following methods.

Phone:	(08) 9363 4600 Please ask for the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan Coordinator.
Fax:	(08) 9363 4601
Postal address:	Locked Bag 888 PERTH BUSINESS CENTRE WA 6849
Email:	info@fpc.wa.gov.au
Web:	www.fpc.wa.gov.au The Plan is available in alternative formats upon request and includes electronic format, in standard or large print, in audio format on compact disc or by email.

Feedback form

The Forest Products Commission (FPC) values your feedback and comments regarding its Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) which will be treated in the strictest of confidence.

You can return this form via:

- Email – info@fpc.wa.gov.au or Fax – (08) 9363 4601
- Post – Forest Products Commission, Locked Bag 888, Perth Business Centre WA 6849
- Alternatively you can also speak to us on the phone by calling (08) 9363 4600.

Please indicate below how we can communicate with you:

Name: _____

Organisation: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____ Mobile: _____

Have you experienced any barriers to access that the FPC has not identified in the DIAP?

Do you have any other comments or suggestions on how the FPC can improve access to its services, information or facilities?

To help us analyse your comments please tick which category best describes your interest in our Disability Access and Inclusion Plan.

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Customer with a disability | <input type="checkbox"/> Carer | <input type="checkbox"/> FPC customer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Member of the public | <input type="checkbox"/> FPC employee | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disability Services Provider | <input type="checkbox"/> FPC contractor | |

Appendix A

Principles applicable to people with disability

- 1) People with disability have the inherent right to respect for their human worth and dignity.
- 2) People with disability, whatever the origin, nature, type or degree of disability, have the same basic human rights as other members of society and should be enabled to exercise those basic human rights.
- 3) People with disability have the same rights as other members of society to realise their individual capacities for physical, social, emotional, intellectual and spiritual development.
- 4) People with disability have the same right as other members of society to services, which will support their attaining a reasonable quality of life in a way that also recognises the role and needs of their families and carers.
- 5) People with disability have the same right as other members of society to participate in, direct and implement the decisions, which affect their lives.
- 6) People with disability have the same right as other members of society to receive services in a manner that results in the least restriction of their rights and opportunities.
- 7) People with disability have the same right as other members of society to pursue any grievance concerning services.
- 8) People with disability have the right to access the type of services and supports that they believe are most appropriate to meet their needs.
- 9) People with disability who reside in rural and regional areas have a right, as far as is reasonable to expect, to have access to similar services provided to people with disability who reside in the metropolitan area.
- 10) People with disability have a right to an environment free from neglect, abuse, intimidation and exploitation.