

Auditor-General's Department

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (2020-2023)

Introduction from the Auditor-General



I am pleased to introduce our *Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2020-2023*.

To achieve our purpose of providing assurance to contribute to government services being transparent, trusted and valued by the community, we need our products – our reports of audits and reviews – to be accessible to the entire community. We are continuing to revise and improve our website – our main information channel – to accomplish this. This includes identifying and addressing accessibility issues, in addition to general ease of use.

The success of our Strategic Plan relies on recruiting and investing in existing staff to deliver outcomes in a rapidly changing environment. We need staff who live our values and have the capacity to perform our current, and future, tasks. To achieve our high performing workforce we need to ensure that we remove any barriers for people living with disability to accessing our jobs and performing the duties. I am committed to continuing improvements to our recruitment and staffing practices, including unconscious bias training for all staff and continuing our ergonomic assessment (and workplace modification) program.

I look forward to leading the implementation of the plan to progress towards an accessible and inclusive environment.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richardson". The signature is stylized and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Andrew Richardson

Acknowledgement of Country

The Auditor-General's Department acknowledges and respects Aboriginal people as the State's first people and nations, and recognises Aboriginal people as traditional owners and occupants of South Australian land and waters.

About the Auditor-General's Department

Our purpose

We contribute to state and local government services being transparent, trusted and valued.

We do this by performing a variety of audits and reviews. Reports of these are presented to Parliament and published, both on our website and in hard copy form.

Our strategic objectives

Our *Strategic Plan 2020-2023* aims to ensure relevance of our services, continue to improve their delivery, and provide a framework for change for the short and longer term.

Priorities are to:

- engage with clients in a way that results in a positive change to their practice and transparency for the public
- evolve the Department so that we deliver what Parliament and clients need
- make sure the way we lead gives us our best chance of achieving our future vision
- run our Department as a modern business.

What we value

Our values shape and influence the way we work and manage our business.

Integrity

We act fairly, honestly, impartially and independently

Accountability

We value and take responsibility for the trust and resources invested in our function. We hold ourselves and others accountable for achieving results

Responsiveness

We listen and respond to our clients and stakeholders within the constraints of our independence

Collaboration

We value and support teamwork that builds relationships and cooperation across the Department. We value our working relationships with our clients

Courage and tenacity

We persevere, listen attentively, question thoughtfully and challenge openly, and encourage others to do the same

Respect

We value and strive for respectful relationships between our staff and with our clients and external stakeholders

Innovation

We encourage and value ideas for improvement

Our staff

Our Department comprises 140 staff, most of whom are professional auditors. Most have a professional association membership, and we are a recognised employer partner with CPA.

Our workforce comprises people from varying cultural backgrounds and across a range of age brackets.

Staff living with disability

1.5% of our staff have identified as having a disability that requires a workplace modification.

Our plan includes better understanding our workforce. We recognise that our previous definition of “disability” was very narrow, by having it include the need for workplace modification. While there has not been obvious adverse impacts on inclusion of people living with disability in gaining employment or working effectively, there is the risk of inadvertent exclusion. Using the definition of disability from the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth) will both provide consistency with the whole of government strategy and should increase awareness and acceptance of people living with disability.

The *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth) defines disability as:

- *total or partial loss of the person’s bodily or mental functions*
- *total or partial loss of a part of the body*
- *the presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness*
- *the presence in the body of organisms capable of causing disease or illness*
- *the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person’s body*
- *a disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction*
- *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 disability that:

- *presently exists*
- *previously existed but no longer exists*
- *may exist in the future (including because of a genetic predisposition to that disability)*
- *is imputed to a person (meaning it is thought or implied that the person has disability but does not).*

Disability can take many forms:

- *it can result from accident, illness, congenital disorders or genetics*
- *it can be physical, intellectual or mental health-related*
- *it may be visible or hidden, permanent or temporary and may have a little or major impact on a person’s life*
- *it may affect mobility, ability to learn, or ability to communicate.*

Strategic context

The *South Australian Disability Inclusion Act 2018* (the Act) provides a legal framework to support equal access and inclusion for people living with disability in community activities and services.

The Act aligns with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the National Disability Strategy 2010–2020, and required the creation of *Inclusive SA: State Disability Inclusion Plan 2019–2023* (the State Plan). The first State Plan came into effect on 31 October 2019.

The Act also mandates the development of a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) for each State authority (Part 5 s 16).

As a state authority for the purposes of the Disability Inclusion Act, we have developed an initial 3 year Disability Access and Inclusion Plan. This allows us to align with our 2020-2023 Strategic Plan.

Our plan also aligns with the South Australian Public Sector Disability Employment Strategy 2020-2023 and the South Australian Public Sector Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2019-2021.

Our vision

Our intention with this plan is to highlight activities that align our strategic plan priorities with those of *Inclusive SA: State Disability Inclusion Plan 2019–2023*.

We have prioritised improving our engagement with clients and our service to them. Our assessments/assurance and subsequent reporting are provided to Parliament, and the audit clients – the public sector and local government institutions that we audit.

Our intention is to provide the South Australian community with assurance that their money is being spent wisely, via availability of the reports.

As part of the *Inclusive SA: State Disability Inclusion Plan 2019–2023* theme 'Inclusive communities for all', we intend to ensure that all community members can access our reports and information.

To fulfil our strategic objectives of running our Department as a modern business and strengthening our leadership, we require capability development, including sourcing staff externally from the agency to help provide a diverse range of experience and capabilities.

As part of the *Inclusive SA: State Disability Inclusion Plan 2019–2023* theme 'Learning and employment', we will focus on ensuring there are no artificial barriers to employment, and that employees living with disability are supported by us.

Actions

The **Auditor-General's Department** Disability Access and Inclusion Plan is structured around the themes and priority areas of the *Inclusive SA: State Disability Inclusion Plan 2019–2023*.

Theme 1: Inclusive communities for all

Social inclusion is a priority for people living with disability as it affects all aspects of their lives. It is our aim that the contributions and rights of people living with disability are valued and understood by all South Australians and that their rights are promoted, upheld and protected. We also want to ensure that people living with disability are supported to advocate for **their own rights**.

Priority 1: Involvement in the community

Action	State plan priority #	Responsibility	Time frame	Measurable target
1. Assess our website to ensure our reports and career information are accessible to people with disabilities.	1	ICT	By June 2021	Any accessibility issues to be addressed by Action #2
2. Revise website for better publishing of reports, including any fixes for accessibility where possible.	1	ICT	October 2021	Annual plan – yearly review and project allocation

Theme 4: Learning and employment

Workforce participation is fundamental to social inclusion. It provides economic independence and choice, social connections and friendships, value, identity and belonging. It is our aim that people living with disability have access to inclusive places of study and that education and training provides pathways to meaningful and inclusive employment and volunteering opportunities.

Priority 12: Improved access to employment opportunities and better support within workplaces

Action	State plan priority #	Lead	Time frame	Measurable target
1. Gain a better understanding of our workforce composition by encouraging staff to declare disability.	12	HR	Ongoing	Number of staff reporting living with disability
2. Conduct unconscious bias training for all staff.	12	HR	December 2020	All staff have completed training
3. Ensure hiring managers, delegates and selection panels have access to information and advice for identifying inherent requirements of roles, appropriate adjustments for the selection process, and reasonable adjustments for the role.	12	HR	Ongoing	Candidates living with disability progress through a selection process as expected for their demonstrated capabilities
4. Ensure the ergonomic assessment program is available to all staff.	12	HR (program) Corporate Support (equipment)	Ongoing	All new starters have assessment by ergonomist. Existing staff can access when requested

Disability access and inclusion plan development

Consultation

Consultation for staff was via all staff email alert with link to the draft plan on our website.

Public consultation was conducted at the same time via publication of the draft plan on our website and submissions being made via email or phone.

Consultation was conducted between 29th September to 12 October 2020

Relationship to other policies, strategies, frameworks

Auditor-General's Department *Strategic Plan 2020-2023*

Auditor-General's Department recruitment policy and guidelines

Auditor-General's Department flexible work arrangements policy and guidelines

South Australian Public Sector Disability Access and Inclusion Strategy and Employment Plan