

Emergency Services Sector Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2020-2024

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Acknowledgement of Country

The Emergency Services Sector (Sector) acknowledges and respects Aboriginal people as the State's first people and recognises their traditional relationship with Country. The Sector acknowledges the spiritual, social, cultural and economic practices of Aboriginal people which come from their traditional lands and waters. The Sector also acknowledges that their cultural and heritage beliefs, languages and laws are still of importance today.

Statement from Emergency Services Sector Executive Committee

We are pleased to deliver the Sector's first Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP/Plan) and we look forward to leading the implementation of this Plan to improve outcomes for people living with disability, our staff and the community we serve.

As the Leaders of the Sector we are collectively committed to inclusion and promoting the principle that people living with disability have the same fundamental rights as the rest of the community.

By delivering the actions contained in our DAIP 2020-2024 we will collectively work towards addressing the barriers that people living with disability face in accessing our services and supports, and to improve the inclusion and engagement of our employees and volunteers in the important work they undertake.

Our Plan's vision to be respectful and inclusive of people of all abilities acknowledges that people of all abilities want the same opportunities as everyone else, to feel connected to other people, to be involved in activities which provide meaning and purpose, to earn a living and to pursue the things they are interested in.

Over the next four years this Plan will play an integral role in guiding the Sector to embed this vision for its workforce and in the services that it provides for the people of South Australia.



Dom Lane
Chief Executive
SAFECOM



Michael Morgan
Chief Officer/ Chief Executive
SA Metropolitan Fire Service



Mark Jones
Chief Officer
SA Country Fire Service



Chris Beattie
Chief Officer
SA State Emergency Service

The Emergency Services Sector

The Sector comprises of the following Agencies established under the Fire and Emergency Services Act 2005:

- South Australian Fire and Emergency Services Commission (SAFECOM)
- South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS)
- South Australian Country Fire Service (CFS)
- South Australian State Emergency Service (SES)

The Sector operates under the guidance of the SAFECOM Board, whose members include the Chief Officers of the CFS, MFS and SES and the Chief Executive, SAFECOM.

The activities of the Sector are funded by the Emergency Services Levy and each Agency reports to the Minister for Emergency Services.

Strategic Context

The Sector acknowledges all of the priority groups contained in the Disability Inclusion Act 2018 and the barriers they face to access and inclusion.

This DAIP sets out the strategies, actions and measures that the Sector will adopt to improve access and inclusion for people living with disability and to support South Australia achieve the vision and aims contained in its Disability Inclusion Plan 2019-2023 (Inclusive SA).

Each of the actions contained in this DAIP are aligned to the objects and principles of the Disability Inclusion Act 2018 and the four themes that underpin Inclusive SA. They are also aligned to the priority groups contained in the Disability Inclusion Act 2018 where those groups relate to the services and supports provided by the Sector.

Through the alignment of this DAIP to the Disability Inclusion Act 2018 and Inclusive SA the actions and measures contained in this Plan are consistent with those contained in the Australian National Disability Strategy and reflect Australia's obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Our Vision

To be respectful and inclusive of people of all abilities.

Consultation

In preparing this DAIP the Sector consulted and called for submissions from a range of persons and bodies representing the interests of people living with disability including:

- Sector employees and volunteers;
- Women, children, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons living with disability;
- Persons from a cultural and linguistically diverse background living with disability;
- People living with disability who access the information and services provided by the Sector;
- Organisations that have an interest in access and inclusion for people living with disability; and
- Families and carers of people living with disability.

The call for submissions was made through a range of communication channels including:

- MFS and SES Facebook and Twitter accounts;
- Internal All Staff distribution lists (MFS, SES and SAFECOM);
- Disability service provider networks and distribution lists;
- Disability Advocacy organisation networks and distribution lists;
- The South Australian Governments 'yourSAY' website;
- Tertiary student networks;
- Emergency Services staff that have identified as having a disability;
- Sector staff that have family members with a disability; and
- Sector staff that have connections in the disability sector.

To facilitate this process a draft of the DAIP was translated into a range of accessible formats and stakeholders were offered the opportunity to make submissions through the completion of an online or hard copy feedback form.

Based on the information obtained from those who participated in the consultation process:

- 78% were female
- 70% were in the age bracket 26 -65 years
- 20% were from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- 100% were from the Adelaide metropolitan area
- 45% had a family member living with disability
- 20% were from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- 22% were from Sector employees

- 70% provided general comments on the content of the DAIP

Overall the submissions received from the consultation process supported the inclusion of the actions contained in the draft DAIP with:

- 78% of respondents highly or somewhat agreeing that the actions contained in the DAIP upheld the rights of people living with disability;
- 87.5% of respondents highly or somewhat agreeing that the actions contained in the DAIP supported people living with disability to participate in decision making and leadership and raised the profile of how people living with disability are viewed;
- 87.5% of respondents highly or somewhat agreeing that the actions contained in the DAIP promoted accessible workplaces and increased the accessibility of the services provided by the Sector and information for people living with disability; and
- 62.5% of respondents highly or somewhat agreeing that the actions contained in the DAIP supported education and training pathways to meaningful and inclusive employment and volunteer opportunities for people living with disability.

The general comments provided by stakeholders reflected the following key themes:

- Enhancing networking and stakeholder engagement with the disability sector;
- Registering householders with a disability to assist the Sector in its emergency response;
- Implementing disability awareness training for emergency services staff;
- Ensuring public facing information, resources and programs produced by the Sector are available in a range of formats;
- Ensuring budget is provided to support the implementation of the DAIP.

Specifically, the general comments supported the inclusion of the following actions contained in the DAIP:

- The creation of the ESS Disability Advisory Committee to drive the monitoring, implementation, reporting and consultation requirements relating to this DAIP;
- The implementation of Disability Awareness training for all Sector employees;
- Public facing information and resources being provided in a range of alternate formats (upon request);
- Improved website design systems; and
- The embedding of accessible website solutions for Agency websites.

In response to the feedback provided the Disability Advisory Committee will play a key role in enhancing networking and stakeholder engagement related to the DAIP and supporting a consistent approach across the Sector relating to the provision of Agency information and resources in a range of alternate formats.

Relationship to Other Policies, Strategies, Frameworks

This Plan has been developed within the following legislative and policy framework:

State

[Disability Inclusion Act 2018](#)

[State Disability Inclusion Plan 2019-2023](#)

[The South Australian Equal Opportunity Act 1984](#)

[Fire and Emergency Services Act 2005](#)

[Public Sector Act 2009](#)

[Code of Ethics for South Australian Public Sector Employees](#)

Commonwealth

[The Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#)

[National Disability Strategy 2010–2020](#)

[Disability \(Access to Premises - Buildings\) Standards 2010](#)

International

[United Nations World Report on Disability 2011](#)

[United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2007](#)

Implementation Process

Each Sector Agency will take practical measures to ensure that this DAIP is positively promoted and implemented within their Agency.

These measures include implementing the DAIP through the following methods:

- The establishment of a Sector wide Disability Advisory Committee responsible for managing the monitoring, implementation, reporting and consultation requirements relating to this DAIP;
- The delivery and implementation of actions contained in this DAIP being incorporated into the business plans of relevant functional units;
- Progress updates and reports on the implementation of the DAIP being provided to the Disability Advisory Committee and the Sector's Executive Committee; and
- Progress reports on the implementation of this DAIP being submitted to the Chief Executive of the Department of Human Services on a 12-monthly basis.

To support the implementation of the DAIP each Sector Agency will promote the Plan through a range of internal and external communication methods including:

- Publishing the DAIP on their external and internal websites in a range of accessible formats such as Easy Read;
- Promoting the DAIP through the Sector's external and internal communication channels including social media, e-mail, station bulletins, internal newsletters;
- Referring to the DAIP in new employee induction processes; and
- Incorporating the DAIP into its Disability Awareness Training.

Glossary and Definitions

Access	Access in this context refers to an individual's physical ability to get to, into, and around facilities and services. Access is created by removing structural barriers and including mechanisms to enable structural access.
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Best practice	A method or technique that has been generally accepted as superior to any alternatives because it produces results that are better to those achieved by other means or because it has become a standard way of doing things.
Built environs	Artificial structures, features, and facilities viewed collectively as an environment in which people live and work.
Co-design	A range of activities and processes used in the design of services and products that involve people who use or are affected by that service or product.
CFS - South Australian Country Fire Service	Delivers professional fire and rescue services to outer metropolitan, regional and rural South Australia by dedicated volunteers. The CFS is an all hazards agency responding to bushfire, building fire, road crash rescue and hazardous material spills.
Commonwealth	The Government of the Commonwealth of Australia – commonly referred to as the Australian Government or the Federal Government.
DAIP - Disability Access and Inclusion Plan.	A plan that is prepared by State Authorities for their own Agency, Department or Council Area in accordance with the requirements set out in the Disability Inclusion Act 2018.
Disability	<p>The Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) defines disability as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person’s body;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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; <p>and includes disability that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • presently exists; • previously existed but no longer exists; • may exist in the future; and/or • is imputed to a person (meaning it is thought or implied that the person has a disability but does not).
Discrimination	Discrimination is defined as treating people with a disability less favourably than people without a disability would be treated under the same circumstances.
Inclusion	Inclusion in this context refers to an individual's ability to participate as fully as possible in programs and services provided by organisations in an integrated and holistic manner that does not ostracise, embarrass or humiliate an individual.
MFS -The South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service	Is the primary provider of structural firefighting services to the State of South Australia and is also called to road crash rescues, gas leaks, chemical spills, rescues, structural collapses, animal rescues and more.
National Disability Strategy (NDS)	The National Disability Strategy is the national strategic plan (agreed upon by all Australian Governments) which aims to provide a ten-year national policy framework for improving the life of Australians living with disability, their families and carers.

<p>SAFECOM - South Australian Fire and Emergency Services Commission</p>	<p>Is responsible for ensuring that volunteers and employees within the fire and Emergency Services Sector which include The South Australian Metropolitan Fire Services, The South Australian State Emergency Service and The South Australian Country Fire Service are provided with the resources and support they need to perform their functions.</p>
<p>SAES - South Australian State Emergency Services</p>	<p>Is a volunteer-based emergency assistance and rescue service that provides emergency assistance to the people of South Australia 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. It responds to extreme weather events, floods, storms, heatwaves, Road crashes, Marine, swiftwater, vertical and confined space rescue. It also assists South Australia Police (SAPOL) in land search operations and traffic management and supports the Country Fire Service (CFS) during major bushfires.</p>
<p>State Authority</p>	<p>As defined in the Disability Inclusion Act 2018 (SA) is a reference that includes a Government Department, an Agency or Instrumentality of the Crown, a Local Council constituted under the Local Government Act 1999 (SA) or any other person or body declared by regulations under South Australian legislation to be included.</p>
<p>UNCRPD - United Nations Convention on the Rights</p>	<p>Is a human rights treaty that aims to change attitudes and approaches to people living with disability. It reaffirms that all people living with disability must enjoy human rights and fundamental freedoms.</p>
<p>Universal design</p>	<p>Universal design involves creating facilities, built environs, products and services that can be used by people of all abilities to create an inclusive environment.</p>

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.

Action 1 (All Agencies)

Ensure that all internal and external stakeholder related activities and events are accessible to all members of the community including people living with disability and support young people living with disability to actively participate in decision making.

Action 1: Measurable Target

Communication, community engagement, event management strategies and frameworks give due consideration to access and inclusion requirements.

The proportion of people living with disability who attend Agency events, meetings, conferences, workshops.

Action 2 (All Agencies)

Public facing information, publications and resources to be provided in a range of alternate formats wherever possible.

Action 2: Measurable Target

Public facing materials provided in a range of alternate formats upon request.

The number of requests met for information to be provided in alternate formats.

Action 3 (All Agencies)

Agency websites to contain information on how to request materials in alternate formats.

Action 3: Measurable Target

Agency websites to contain information on how to request information in alternate formats.

Action 4 (All Agencies)

Publish this Disability Access and Inclusion Plan in a format that is accessible for people living with disability on all Agency websites.

Action 4: Measurable Target

An accessible version of this Disability Access and Inclusion Plan contained on all Agency websites.

Action 5 (SAFECOM)

A central webpage to be created on the Sector's intranet containing disability information, resources and supports.

Action 5: Measurable Target

The creation of this web page.

Action 6 (All Agencies)

Implement the Office for the Commissioner of Public Sector Employment (OCPSE) Disability Awareness training for all Sector employees.

Action 6: Measurable Target

The number of new and existing employees that have completed this training.

Action 7 (All Agencies)

Agency complaint processes, procedures and feedback systems to be reviewed to ensure they are appropriate and accessible for people with a disability.

Action 7: Measurable Target

Agency complaint and feedback processes written in simple everyday language.

The number of requests met for information to be provided in alternate formats.

Action 8 (All Agencies)

Agency induction processes for new employees include information about working with people living with disability.

Action 8: Measurable Target

The number of new employees that have completed new starter induction processes.

Leadership and Collaboration

People living with disability want to have a greater role in leading and contributing to government and community decision-making. It is our aim that the perspectives of people living with disability are actively sought and that they are supported to participate meaningfully in government and community consultation and engagement activities.

Action 9 (All Agencies)

A Sector Disability Advisory Committee to be established to manage the monitoring, implementation, reporting and consultation requirements relating to this Disability Action and Inclusion Plan.

Action 9: Measurable Target

The establishment of a Sector Disability Advisory Committee.

Action 10 (All Agencies)

Where possible Agency's to utilise the www.YourSAy.sa.gov.au website to engage people living with disability regarding service improvement and/or Agency participation.

Action 10: Measurable Target

The proportion of people living with a disability that are engaged utilising this platform.

Action 11 (All Agencies)

This Disability Access and Inclusion Plan to be reviewed at least once every four years by each Agency.

Action 11: Measurable Target

A report on the outcome of this review to be provided to the Minister.

Action 12 (All Agencies)

Each Agency to monitor and report to the Sector's Executive Committee on the implementation status of this Disability Action and Inclusion Plan annually.

Action 12: Measurable Target

Agency reports submitted to the ESS Executive Committee.

Action 13 (All Agencies)

The Sector's Executive Committee to report annually to the Chief Executive of the Department of Human Services on the operation of this Disability Action and Inclusion Plan and include a summary reporting on the implementation of the Plan.

Action 13: Measurable Target

The Sector's Executive Committee report submitted to the Chief Executive of the Department of Human Services every 12 months.

Accessible Communities

The accessibility of the built environment, quality services and information is key to ensuring people living with disability are included and have the opportunity to equally participate in all aspects of community life. It is our aim to increase accessibility to public and community infrastructure, transport, services, information, sport and recreation and the greater community.

Action 14 (All Agencies)

Fit outs that change or alter access to existing buildings or sites owned, operated or leased by an Agency to give due consideration to universal design and to incorporate Disability Discrimination Act requirements to ensure accessibility.

Action 14: Measurable Target

The number of existing buildings/sites that are accessible.

The number of building fit outs conducted.

Action 15 (All Agencies)

New buildings or sites purchased, leased or operated by an Agency to meet the required Building Code of Australia accessibility standards.

Action 15: Measurable Target

The number of new buildings and, or, sites that meet these standards.

Action 16 (All Agencies)

Inclusion in building, infrastructure, maintenance and upgrade schedules to include the installation of appropriate signage at Agency owned, operated or leased buildings or sites indicating disability access such as parking.

Action 16: Measurable Target

The number of signage installations included in Agency building, infrastructure, maintenance and upgrade schedules.

Action 17 (All Agencies)

Agency evacuation procedures, emergency plans and associated building evacuation training to be reviewed to ensure the requirements of people with a range of abilities are adequately addressed.

Action 17: Measurable Target

The number of Agency emergency plans updated.

Action 18 (All Agencies)

The development and implementation of a clearly defined process to ensure that requests to access information in alternate formats are met in a timely manner.

Action 18: Measurable Target

Systems are in place to provide materials in alternate formats in a timely manner.

The number of requests met to provide information in alternate formats.

Action 19 (SAFECOM)

Information and published materials relating to the Sector's Employee Assistance Program and Stress Prevention and Management programs to be reviewed for accessibility and made available in a format that is accessible to employees and volunteers living with disability subject to funding.

Action 19: Measurable Target

Information and materials are published in an accessible format.

The number of employees and volunteers living with disability accessing these programs.

Action 20 (All Agencies)

Agency websites and intranets are assessed against Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) Standard 2.1.

Action 20: Measurable Target

Accessibility and compliance with Level A determined.

Accessibility and compliance with Level AA determined.

Action 21 (All Agencies)

The development of a Sector online accessibility policy to guide the accessibility of information contained on all Agency websites (external and intranet).

Action 21: Measurable Target

The development and promotion of a Sector online accessibility policy.

Action 22 (All Agencies)

Determine the feasibility of adopting the Website Design System that is offered to all South Australian Government Agencies as an accessible website solution through the Office for Digital Government.

Or

Update templates in existing content management systems.

Action 22: Measurable Target

Discussions held with the Office for Digital Government and an approach established relating to the adoption of the Website Design System.

Or

The identification of template upgrades.

Action 23 (All Agencies)

Agency employees that are responsible for performing web publishing duties complete formal training in web accessibility or demonstrate an appropriate level of understanding relating to the principals of web accessibility.

Action 23: Measurable Target

The number of employees that have completed this training.

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.

Action 24 (SAFECOM)

Mechanisms put in place to request disability and diversity related information from employees every 12 months to maximise the currency of the Sector's workforce profile.

Action 24: Measurable Target

The number of employees that identify as living with a disability.

Action 25 (SAFECOM)

A review of the Sector's inhouse recruitment and selection information, processes and practices to be conducted to ensure that these resources better target job opportunities for people living with disability:

- Contain information and advice on the recruitment of people with disability.
- Contain information about engagement using public sector employment opportunity programs.
- Promote the Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment Disability Employment toolkit and resources.
- Promote public sector employment pathways including consideration of eligible candidates on the Disability Employment Service provider register.

Action 25: Measurable Target

The number of candidates being considered for employment from the Disability Employment Service provider register or identify as living with disability.

The number of recruiting managers that have knowledge of SA Public Sector Disability Employment programs pathway for people living with disability.

Action 26 (SAFECOM)

Advertising procedures and standard advertising templates to be updated for Agency's to include a diversity statement that encourages the receipt of applications from people living with disability for applicable roles.

Action 26: Measurable Target

The number of candidates that identify as living with a disability.

Action 27 (All Agencies)

Agencies to facilitate meaningful volunteering opportunities for people living with a disability.

Action 27: Measurable Target

The number of volunteers that identify as living with disability.

Action 28 (All Agencies)

The Sector's Executive Committee to provide adequate funding and resources to implement the actions contained in this Disability Action and Inclusion Plan.

Action 28: Measurable Target

The actions contained in this Disability Action Plan being implemented.