

Chemistry Centre of WA

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP)
2008 -2013

Draft CCWA DIAP

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

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Background

The Chemistry Centre

The Chemistry Centre provides a range of chemistry-based services. These services which are summarised in Section 5 of this manual and, for the most part, fall between the pure research of Universities and high volume analytical work typically undertaken by the private sector analytical laboratories.

The Chemistry Centre tends to focus on advanced analytical work, one-off requests, problem solving, investigations and sponsored research. Many of these services are critical to government for the management of chemistry-based risk and are also important to industry, providing capabilities that are not readily available in the market. The scientific information and advice is provided by professionally and technically qualified scientists working with sophisticated equipment using an extensive range of tests accredited by the National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA). This scientific expertise ensures clients are provided with accurate analytical and scientific information. The multi-disciplinary scientific and professional team provide interpretative and expert advice, solutions to problems, investigative assistance and a rapid scientific response to emergencies.

The comprehensive range of scientific capabilities and associated quality systems are continually upgraded and respond to client needs and new opportunities. These increased capabilities are achieved by undertaking complex investigations, developing and validating new procedures and by commissioning new equipment.

The specialist analytical and characterisation skills and scientific expertise of the Chemistry Centre are also provided to tertiary institutions and CSIRO in collaborative projects which strengthen the scientific infrastructure in Western Australia.

Planning for better access

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (2003), 20.6% of Australians or more than one in five people, identify themselves as having some form of disability.

It is a requirement of the Disability Services Act 1993 that public authorities develop and implement a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) that outlines the ways in which the Centre will ensure that people with disabilities have equal access to its facilities and services.

Other legislation underpinning access and inclusion includes the WA Equal Opportunity Act 1984 and the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA).

Access and inclusion policy statement for people with disabilities, their families and carers

In accordance with the Disability Service Act, the Chemistry Centre (WA) has adopted a Disability Access and Inclusion Policy (DAIP) to ensure people with disabilities have the same opportunity as other people to access our services and information, wherever applicable.

This will be achieved through the Chemistry Centre (WA)'s commitment to achieving the six desired Disability Access and Inclusion Plan outcomes, namely that:

1. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of the Chemistry Centre (WA);
2. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of the Chemistry Centre (WA);
3. People with disabilities receive information from the Chemistry Centre (WA) in a format that will enable them to access the information, as readily as other people are able to access it;
4. People with disabilities receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of a public authority as other people receive from the staff of the Chemistry Centre (WA);
5. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the Chemistry Centre (WA);
6. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultations by the Chemistry Centre (WA).

This requirement is aligned with the following legislation, standards or other reference sources:

- Disability Services Act 1993 (Western Australia, amended 2004)
- Access Resource Kit – www.dsc.wa.gov.au
- Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act (1992)
- Equal Opportunity Act (Western Australia, amended 1988)

The Chemistry Centre is committed to:

- ensuring that people with disabilities, their families and carers are able to fully access the range of Centre services and facilities (both in-house and contracted), providing them with the same opportunities, rights and responsibilities enjoyed by all other people in the community;
- consulting with people with disabilities, their families and carers and where required, disability organisations to ensure that barriers to access and inclusion are addressed appropriately;
- ensuring that its agents and contractors work towards the desired access and inclusion outcomes in the DAIP; and
- achieving the six desired outcomes of its DAIP.

Development of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

Responsibility for the planning process

A Disability Access and Inclusion Planning Committee of the Chemistry Centre was established in October 2008 comprising two laboratory representatives and one administration representative, to oversee the development, implementation, review and evaluation of the plan.

Community consultation process

In 2008, the Centre undertook to consult with key stakeholders and draft a DAIP to guide access and inclusion improvements.

The process included:

- examination of relevant Centre documents and strategies;
- investigation of contemporary trends and good practice in access and inclusion;
- consultation with key staff; and
- consultation with the community. As CCWA occupies a niche market in the Western Australian economy, it is anticipated that advertising our DIAP on our web page (<http://www.ccwa.wa.gov.au/>) will be sufficient notification for those that are interested in participating in any public consultation.

The Disability Services Act Regulations set out the minimum consultation requirements for public authorities in relation to DAIPs.

State Government authorities must call for submissions (either general or specific) by notice in a statewide newspaper or on any website maintained by or on behalf of the State Government authority. Other mechanisms may also be used.

The Centre used the following strategies in the consultation:

- In **November 2008** the community was informed through the Chemistry Centre's website that the Centre had developed a DAIP to address the barriers that people with disabilities and their families experience in accessing Centre functions, facilities and services.

The community was advised through the website that they could provide input into the plan.

Findings of the consultation

The consultation identified a variety of barriers to access and inclusion, to be addressed in the DAIP.

Access barriers

Access barriers identified through this process include the following needs:

- Enable access to the services of the Chemistry Centre (WA) to be organised telephonically and electronically (email) as well as in person. Similarly samples for analysis will be received by post and courier. The new building (see item below) will include ACROD parking in the visitor's car park which is in easy access to the building.
- The building is over 60 years old and there have been plans to vacate the building for the last 20 years, hence no effort has been made to make the building more accessible to people with disabilities. A new building is under construction with a completion date of April 2009 – public access in this building will be greatly improved.
- a) Documents produced in the Chemistry Centre (WA) will be made available electronically or by post. By special request documents will be printed in a large format.
b) The Website will be reviewed during the 2008/09 year and the accessibility guidelines developed by W3C will be implemented where possible.
- The Chemistry Centre (WA) maintains the same quality of service regardless of the client. To achieve this goal with respect to the Disability and Access Plan, two presentations will be made to staff relating to disability awareness. Staff who routinely deal with the public will attend disability awareness training course as time and costs allow.
- Complaints received by post, in person and electronically receive the same treatment. A Continuous Improvement Form is generated, documenting the complaint which is then investigated. Suggested

improvements are implemented and a reply is sent to the complainant. The Freedom of Information Officer will also accept request for information by post, in person and electronically.

- Elements of the Centre's website may require improvement to best meet the needs of people with disabilities.
- Staff may be uninformed or lacking in confidence to provide the same level of service to people with disabilities.

The identification of these barriers informed the development of strategies in the DAIP. The barriers have been prioritised in order of importance, which assists in setting timeframes to complete strategies to overcome those access barriers.

Responsibility for implementing the DAIP

It is a requirement of the Disability Services Act that public authorities must take all practical measures to ensure that the DAIP is implemented by its officers, employees, agents and contractors.

Implementation of the DAIP is the responsibility of all areas of the Centre. Some actions in the Implementation Plan will apply to all areas of the Centre while others will apply only to a specific area. The Implementation Plan sets out who is responsible for each action. The DAIP planning committee will guide the overall implementation of the plan.

Communicating the plan to staff and people with disabilities

In **November 2008** the Centre sent copies of the draft DAIP to all those who contributed to the planning process (staff, people with disabilities, their families, carers, disability organisations and relevant community groups) for feedback. In **Late November 2008** the plan was finalised and formally endorsed by the Centre's Executive.

The Centre has advised, via a notice placed in The West Australian newspaper, people with disabilities that the Chemistry Centre's DAIP is available online and in alternative formats upon request.

As plans are amended both staff and the community will be advised of the availability of updated plans, using the same methods.

Review and evaluation mechanisms

The Disability Services Act sets out the minimum review requirements for public authorities in relation to DAIPs. The Centre's DAIP will be reviewed at least every five years, in accordance with the Act.

The DAIP Implementation Plan may be amended on a more regular basis to reflect progress and any access and inclusion issues which may arise. Whenever the DAIP is amended, a copy of the amended plan will be lodged with the Disability Services Commission.

Review and monitoring

- The Disability Access and Inclusion Planning Committee will meet every six months in the first year, and as required thereafter, to review progress on the implementation of the strategies identified in the DAIP.
- The review of the Centre's DAIP will be included in the DAIP 2013-2018 which will be submitted to the Disability Services Commission in 2013. The report will outline what has been achieved under the Centre's DAIP 2008-2013.
- The committee will prepare a report each year on the implementation of the DAIP. A status report will be provided to the Centre's Executive for formal endorsement.

Evaluation

- The Executive will endorse any reports on the disability access and inclusion implementation process annually.
- Once a year, prior to 31 July, the Centre will provide a DAIP progress report to the Disability Services Commission, which will inform the report that the Minister for Disability Services tables in Parliament each year.
- In seeking feedback the committee will also seek to identify any additional barriers that were not identified in the initial consultation.
- The committee will use some of the consultation processes used during the initial consultations including: questionnaires, meetings with people with disabilities and disability organisation phone-ins.
- Centre staff will also be requested to provide feedback on how well they believe the strategies are working and to make suggestions for improvement.
- Implementation Plans will be amended based on the feedback received. Copies of the amended Implementation Plan, once endorsed by the Centre, will be available to the community in alternative formats.

Reporting on the DAIP

The Disability Services Act sets out the minimum reporting requirements for public authorities in relation to DAIPs. The Centre will report on the implementation of its DAIP through its Annual Report and the prescribed progress report template to the Disability Services Commission by 31 July each year, outlining:

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

Strategies to improve access and inclusion

As a result of the consultation process the following overarching strategies will guide tasks, reflected in the Implementation Plan, that the Centre will undertake from 2008-2013 to improve access to its services, buildings and information. The six desired outcomes provide a framework for improving access and inclusion for people with disabilities.

Outcome 1: People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by, the Chemistry Centre.

Strategy	Timeline
Provide opportunities for people with disabilities to comment on access to services and advice provided by the Centre.	December 2008
Monitor the Centre's Access and Inclusion policy to ensure it supports equitable access to services by people with disabilities throughout the various functions of the Centre.	May 2009
Incorporate the objectives of the DAIP into the Centre's strategic business planning, budgeting processes and other relevant plans and strategies.	September 2009
Ensure that agents and contractors, particularly publishers and events/promotional service providers, of the Centre are aware of their requirements under the DAIP.	November 2008

Outcome 2: People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of the Chemistry Centre.

Strategy	Timeline
Ensure all buildings and facilities are physically accessible to people with disabilities.	June 2009
Ensure adequate ACROD parking to meet the needs of people with disabilities in terms of quantity and location.	July 2009
Ensure all future premises leased by the Centre are accessible.	August 2009

Outcome 3: People with disabilities can access information from the Chemistry Centre as readily as other people are able to access it.

Strategy	Timeline
Improve community awareness that Centre information can be made available in alternative formats upon request.	January 2009
Improve staff awareness of accessible information needs and how to obtain information in other formats.	November 2008
Improve the awareness of staff about information needs of people that are hearing impaired, hard of hearing, deaf, and people with speech impediments.	June 2009

Strategy	Timeline
Ensure that the Centre's website meets contemporary good practice, with an emphasis upon using text to actively describe the trends displayed in charts.	June 2009
Provide documentation regarding services, facilities and customer	December

feedback in an appropriate format and using clear and concise language.	2009
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Outcome 4: People with disabilities receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of the Chemistry Centre as other people receive.

Strategy	Timeline
Improve general staff awareness of disability and access issues and improve skills to provide a good service to people with disabilities.	June 2009
Improve the awareness of 'direct service' staff, about disability and access issues.	June 2010
Improve the awareness of new staff about disability and access issues.	June 2009
Ensure that Centre staff are aware of the relevant requirements of the Disability Services Act in service provision.	January 2009
Further generate and sustain staff awareness of disability and access issues.	June 2009

Outcome 5: People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the Chemistry Centre.

Strategy	Timeline
Ensure that current grievance mechanisms are accessible for people with disabilities.	June 2009
Improve staff knowledge so they can facilitate the receipt of complaints from people with a disability.	June 2009
Ensure that grievance mechanism processes and outcome satisfaction survey forms are available in formats to meet the needs of people with disabilities.	August 2009

Outcome 6: People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by the Chemistry Centre.

Strategy	Timeline
Improve access for people with disabilities to the established consultative processes of the Centre, including the capacity to accept verbal complaints.	March 2009

Chemistry Centre of WA

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

Implementation Plan 2008 - 2011

Draft CCWA DIAP

Implementation Plan

The Implementation Plan itemises what the Centre will be undertaking in 2008-2009 to improve access to its services, information and facilities for people with disabilities.

The Implementation Plan is presented using a table to outline the:

- broad strategy that the individual tasks are supporting;
- individual tasks being undertaken;
- timeline for completion of the individual tasks; and
- the officer position or part of the Centre with responsibility for completing the individual tasks.

As outlined in the Centre's DAIP, many of the broad strategies will not be completed in 2008-2009, however individual tasks to support the achievement of those strategies may well be undertaken in part or whole in 2008-2009 through the Implementation Plan.

Broad strategies that will not be achieved in 2008-2009 will be supported by tasks outlined in future Implementation Plans.

Outcome 1: People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised, by the Chemistry Centre.

Strategy	Task	Task Timeline	Responsibility
Provide opportunities for people with disabilities to comment on access to services and advice provided by the Centre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate if existing feedback mechanisms can facilitate feedback from people with disabilities. • If necessary, amend existing feedback mechanisms, ensuring that good practice standards for information are used. • Circulate a memo throughout the Centre informing staff of the requirement to include the form in publications. 	<p>December 2008</p> <p>January 2009</p>	Chief Operations Officer
Monitor the Centre's Access and Inclusion policy to ensure it supports equitable access to services by people with disabilities throughout the various functions of the Centre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research, and adopt into the policy, the State Government Guidelines for Information, Services and Facilities. • Policy will be drafted and forwarded to the Centre for endorsement. • Research and adopt into the policy the Australian Language Services Policy. 	<p>October 2008</p> <p>November 2008</p> <p>March 2009</p>	DIAP Committee

Strategy	Task	Task Timeline	Responsibility
<p>Ensure that agents and contractors, particularly publishers and events/ promotional service providers, of the Centre are aware of their requirements under the DAIP.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a copy of the DAIP to agents and contractors as part of the contract documentation. • Respond to queries from agents and contractors as required. 	<p>January 2009</p>	<p>Chief Financial Officer</p>

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Outcome 3: People with disabilities receive information from the Chemistry Centre in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people.

Strategy	Task	Task Timeline	Responsibility
Improve community awareness that Centre information can be made available in alternative formats upon request.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all documents carry a notation regarding availability in alternative formats. 	January 2009	All managers
Improve staff awareness of accessible information needs and how to obtain information in other formats.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an Accessible Information policy. • Make State Government Access Guidelines for Information, Services and Facilities available on the Intranet. • Conduct Accessible Information training and include as part of the induction of new staff. 	March 2009 June 2009 June 2009	DIAP Committee Manager, Human Resources
Improve the Centre staff about information needs of people who are hearing impaired, hard of hearing, deaf, and people with speech impediments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training in the benefits and application of TTY and the Australian Communication Exchange. • Investigate the use of people with disabilities sending the Centre an SMS message that is received via email. (If appropriate, establish system by June 2011). 	June 2010 June 2010	Manager, Corporate Services

Strategy	Task	Task Timeline	Responsibility
<p>Ensure that the Centre's website meets contemporary good practice, with an emphasis upon using text to actively describe the trends displayed in charts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that forms and applications are available electronically. • Review current accessibility of the website, including ensuring that appropriate descriptive text is provided with images and charts, and determine if additional work is required to offer a meaningful and informative alternative to charts. • Complete redevelopment of the website according to the W3C Web Content Accessibility guidelines as outlined in the State Government Access Guidelines. 	<p>June 2009</p> <p>June 2009</p> <p>June 2009</p>	<p>Manager, IT Services</p>
<p>Provide documentation regarding services, facilities and customer feedback in an appropriate format and using clear and concise language.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advise Centre staff of the minimum requirements. • Develop an audit plan (to guide an audit to be undertaken in December 2007), to identify resident and business related information for people with disabilities who live and/or work in the Centre. • Adopt State Government Access Guidelines for Information, Services and Facilities, and incorporate into general practice. 	<p>November 2008</p> <p>February 2009</p> <p>June 2009</p>	<p>DIAP Committee</p>

Outcome 4: People with disabilities receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of the Chemistry Centre as other people.

Strategy	Task	Task Timeline	Responsibility
Improve general staff awareness of disability and access issues and improve skills to provide a good service to people with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct survey of all staff to determine training needs (training to be undertaken by June 2010). 	November 2009	Manager, Human Resources
Improve the awareness of direct service staff about disability and access issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using the staff survey, focus on the training needs of direct service staff as priority providers of services to the public (training to be undertaken by June 2008). • Develop action plan to refresh the disability and access knowledge of inspection, registration and call centre staff. 	January 2010 March 2011	Manager, Human Resources
Improve the awareness of new staff of the Centre about disability and access issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare information and plan the establishment of training in the induction for new staff (for rollout by June 2008). • Obtain the 'You Can Make a Difference to Customer Relations for People with Disabilities' training package from the Disability Services Commission. 	January 2009	Manager, Human Resources

Strategy	Task	Task Timeline	Responsibility
Further generate and sustain staff awareness of disability and access issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide regular information on access and inclusion in the staff newsletter. • Develop a staff recognition program for good practice in access and inclusion (for rollout by June 2008). 	December 2008 June 2009	Chief Operations Officer
Ensure that Centre staff are aware of the relevant requirements of the Disability Services Act in service provision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the Centre's DAIP and policy statement of commitment through the newsletter and include in the induction process for new staff 	January 2009	Manager, Corporate Services and all

Outcome 5: People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the Chemistry Centre.

Strategy	Task	Task Timeline	Responsibility
Ensure that current grievance mechanisms are accessible for people with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review current mechanisms for access. Consult with people with disabilities and other experts for advice. • Develop other methods of making complaints such as web-based forms. • Promote accessible complaints mechanisms to the community. 	<p>March 2009</p> <p>May 2009</p> <p>June 2009</p>	<p>Manager, Corporate Services</p>
Ensure that grievance mechanism process and outcome satisfaction survey forms are available in formats to meet the needs of people with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide grievance mechanism process and outcome satisfaction survey forms in alternative formats upon request. • Undertake research to identify alternative means of providing grievance feedback (for full implementation by August 2008). 	<p>June 2009</p> <p>June 2009</p>	<p>Manager, Corporate Services</p>

Outcome 6: People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by the Centre.

Strategy	Task	Task Timeline	Responsibility
<p>Improve community awareness about consultation processes in place.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the existence, role and activities of the Centre's Disability Access Committee to the community. • Disability Access Committee to meet regularly (as per proposal in Outcome 1) to provide strategic advice to the Centre, with support from Centre staff. • Conduct a review of the Centre's community consultation processes regarding issues of disability, access and inclusion. • Ensure that media releases are promoted on the website. 	<p>December 2008 & ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>June 2009</p> <p>June 2009</p>	<p>Chief Operations Officer</p>