

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

2019-2024



Acknowledgements

Horizon Power acknowledges the valuable contribution from the various community groups and individuals during the development of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP).

Special thanks to the Department of Communities, Horizon Power employees and members of the Western Australian community.

This document is available in alternative formats on request such as hard copy, standard and large print, electronic, audio, by email, and on Horizon Power's website and intranet.

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1. Who we are

Horizon Power is a State Government-owned, commercially-focused corporation that provides high quality, safe and reliable power more than 48,000 customers across regional and remote Western Australia.

We are responsible for generating, procuring, distributing and retailing electricity supplies for our customers who live within a vast service area covering more than 2.3 million square kilometres from Kalumburu in the north and Denham in the west, across to Laverton in the east, down to Esperance in the south, and everything in between.

We are committed to being actively engaged in local communities and our services to customers are led by our local offices in Karratha (Head Office), Port Hedland, Broome, Kununurra, Carnarvon and Esperance. This local focus offers real benefits to communities through an ability to manage services at a local level, and contributes to the access and inclusivity planning and procedures across our organisation.

This Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) outlines our commitment to provide the information, services and public facilities for all community members to access, regardless of their ability.

Horizon Power operates under the *Electricity Corporations Act 2005* and is led by a Board of Directors accountable to the Minister for Energy, representing all Western Australians.

2. Access and Inclusion Policy Statement

Horizon Power is committed to:

- ensuring that people with disability, their families and carers are able to fully access the range of Horizon Power services and facilities.
- ensuring that people with disability are given the opportunity to participate in shaping the development of their community through consultative processes with local communities.
- consulting with people with disability, 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.
- achieving the seven desired outcomes of its DAIP (listed in section 6).
- providing access for employees with a disability as reflected in our diversity and Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan.

3. Planning for better access

Most recent statistics indicate 18.3 per cent of Australians¹ – almost one in five people – identify themselves as having some form of disability.

Access to employment, information and services must be provided for everyone member of our community.

Up to one third of the people surveyed who are living with disability report that their customer needs are often unmet. Staff awareness of the barriers that people with disability encounter is the most important factor in creating accessible and inclusive services.

Inclusive recruitment practices are also an important part of workforce planning, with more than half of those with disability (aged between 15 and 64 years) participating in the workforce. Some 34 per cent of these workers with disability are professionals and managers.

It is a requirement of the *Disability Services Act 1993* that all public authorities develop and implement a DAIP outlining how the organisation ensures equal access to its facilities and services for people with disability.

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

3.1 Review of progress

Horizon Power is committed to developing an accessible and inclusive community by providing information, services and public facilities that are easy for all community members to access.

This commitment was formalised in our inaugural DAIP, developed and registered with the Disability Services Commission in 2008.

Since then, we have implemented a number of initiatives to facilitate access and inclusion for people with a disability. These include the below actions:

- Our Customer Call Centre provides a TTY number for hearing or speech impaired customers who use telephone typewriter (TTY), and this number is advertised on every customer bill.
- Our Customer Call Centre provides customers with interpreter and translator services. This service is provided through a dedicated TIS number which is published on every customer bill.
- Customers can request to receive their bills in large print, or alternate formats, such as plain text files.
- Information is available in a variety of formats, including electronic, fax or hard copy, which can be provided in other languages, large print, or audio on request.
- Horizon Power's website meets minimum Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA accessibility standards wherever possible across the site, with continuous review and improvements undertaken to maintain this level and enhance accessibility.

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (2015)

- We have launched a new mobile application, as well as online account management functionality (My Account), which provides customers with the ability to access bills, notices, and usage data from their home or mobile in a way that suits them. This is optimising accessibility for all customers.
- A register of people with life support services is maintained to ensure the appropriate level of service is provided to meet their specialised needs, as well as restrict any disconnection of power.
- Horizon Power's Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan addresses potential barriers for people with disability to be employed by Horizon Power.
- Any refurbishments of Horizon Power's facilities are undertaken under the guidance of an Access Consultant to ensure they meet current building access obligations.
- Regularly reviewing our corporate writing, style guide, and branding to better meet the needs of people with disability and ensure our information is accessible to all customers.
- Established a dedicated email address to encourage feedback and contributions on the implementation of Horizon Power's DAIP and suggestions for improving accessibility, regardless of the respondent's abilities.

4. Development of the DAIP

4.1 Responsibility for the planning process

Horizon Power's DAIP 2019 – 2024 was developed with assistance from a cross-divisional working group representing the areas of the business responsible for the seven outcomes of the DAIP.

The working group's role is to ensure Horizon Power is continuing to plan and implement improvements to access and inclusion for people with disabilities and their carers, as well as encourage employees in all areas across the business to consider and identify ways to improve access and inclusivity.

4.2 Consultation process

Horizon Power is committed to continuously improving accessibility of its services. Consultation with people within and outside the organisation is a critical part of establishing whether Horizon Power's information and services are inclusive and easy to access and areas for improvement.

Feedback received from employees, customers, stakeholders, and members of the public is helped to identify potential strategies to be incorporated in the development of the DAIP 2019-2024.

Horizon Power's proposed DAIP 2019-2024 was advertised and promoted for public consultation using the following methods:

- in the regional newspapers that cover Horizon Power's service area;
- in The West Australian newspaper;
- on Horizon Power's website;
- on Horizon Power's social media channels, including Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn;
- on Horizon Power's intranet; and,
- through various internal channels, such as internal briefings, meetings and emails.

A dedicated email address was established to encourage contributions to Horizon Power's DAIP 2019 – 2024, regardless of the respondent's abilities, with alternative formats of the document available on request for this engagement.

4.3 Responsibility for implementing the DAIP

It is a requirement of the Disability Services Act 1993 that public authorities must take all practical measures to ensure that the DAIP is implemented by its officers, employees, agents and contractors.

Horizon Power has established a cross-divisional working group representing the areas of the business responsible for the seven outcomes of the DAIP. Each member of the working group holds responsibilities for ensuring the specific strategies outlined in this document are executed.

The DAIP forms part of Horizon Power's broader Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan.

4.4 Communicating the plan

Horizon Power sent copies of the draft plan to all those who contributed to the planning process, including employees, external stakeholders and community members.

The finalised DAIP 2019-2024 was formally endorsed by Horizon Power on 4 February 2019, and registered with the Department of Communities.

Horizon Power advertised the availability of the DAIP, including availability in alternative formats such as hard copy, standard and large print, electronic format, by email, and on Horizon Power's website and intranet.

Employees and members of the community will be advised of any future amendments to the DAIP using similar methods.

The finalised DAIP will be advertised in The West Australian, in the regional newspapers covering Horizon Power's service area, and on the Horizon Power website at horizonpower.com.au as per the legislation.

Horizon Power contractors who provide services to the public on our behalf will be provided with a copy of the DAIP, and are required to provide these services in a manner consistent with our DAIP.

4.5 Reviewing and monitoring

Horizon Power will review its DAIP at least once every five years. Whenever the DAIP is amended, a copy of the amended plan will be lodged with the Department of Communities after the appropriate consultation.

Horizon Power has established a DAIP working group to oversee the implementation of the plan, with representatives from areas of the business responsible for the outcomes of the DAIP.

Stakeholders involved in implementing particular strategies identified in the plan will report progress quarterly through the Horizon Power's DAIP working group, who will report to the Department of Communities annually as required.

Horizon Power will undertake a complete review of the DAIP, incorporating employee and community consultation, and submit the revised plan to Department of Communities by the end of 2024.

5. Reporting of the DAIP

The Disability Services Act sets out the minimum reporting requirements for public authorities in relation to DAIPs.

Horizon Power will report on the implementation of its DAIP through its annual reporting requirements to the Department of Communities by the date set by the Department of Communities each year, usually at the start of the July. In accordance with the Department of Communities reporting requirements, Horizon Power will outline:

- progress towards the desired outcomes of its DAIP;
- progress of its agents and contractors towards meeting the desired outcomes will be collated in accordance with Horizon Power's contract management framework; and
- strategies it used to inform its agents and contractors of the DAIP.

In addition, Horizon Power will include a report on progress of implementation of the DAIP in its annual report in accordance with requirements under the *Disability Services Act 1993*.

6. Strategies to improve access and inclusion

As a result of the review and consultation process, the following strategies have been identified to ensure Horizon Power achieves the seven desired outcomes of the DAIP, which provide a framework for improving access and inclusion to services, facilities and information for people with disability. Horizon Power will implement these strategies from 2019-2024.

Outcome 1: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by Horizon Power.

Strategy	Timeline
1.1 Ensure all events organised by Horizon Power are planned using the 'Creating Accessible Events Checklist developed and published by the Department of Communities'	Ongoing
1.2 Ensure that people with disability and their carers are provided with the opportunity to comment on access to services.	Ongoing
1.3 Ensure all employees and contractors are aware of, and comply with, the requirements of the DAIP.	Ongoing

Outcome 2: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of Horizon Power.

Strategy	Timeline
2.1 Conduct an access audit of the major public Horizon Power buildings and facilities, including emergency access, using the Department of Communities Access Resource Kit Checklist and schedule any required access improvements.	June 2019
2.2 Ensure that the standards are met where required when planning and designing any facilities or undertaking major refurbishments.	As required
2.3 Ensure internal human resources and facilities management teams are timely and efficient in responding to the needs of new or existing employees who may have a disability.	Ongoing

Outcome 3: People with disability receive information from Horizon Power in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it.

Strategy	Timeline
3.1 Ensure that all public documents include a statement that the document is available in alternative formats on request.	Ongoing
3.2 Provide agents and contractors with information on Horizon Power’s DAIP and the requirements for compliance and reporting.	Ongoing
3.3 Ensure key information, such as how to arrange an interpreter or translator and convert information into an alternative format, is readily available to customer service employees.	Ongoing
3.4 Conduct regular reviews of writing, style, and brand guidelines to ensure compliance with the State Government Access Guidelines for Information, Services and Facilities.	Annually
3.5 Conduct regular reviews of accessibility of the Horizon Power website against World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) accessibility guidelines, with the aim of achieving Level AA, and implement improvements where required.	Ongoing
3.6 Ensure all Horizon Power’s information is easily accessible for people with disability.	Ongoing
3.7 Provide web based documents and application forms in alternate formats on Horizon Power’s public website.	Ongoing

Outcome 4: People with disability receive the same level and quality of service from Horizon Power staff as other people receive from the staff of Horizon Power.

Strategy	Timeline
4.1 Ensure employees, agents and contractors are aware of disability and access issues and have access to information about meeting the needs of customers with disability.	Ongoing
4.2 Investigate provision of interpreters for the deaf (Auslan interpreters) on request or offer alternative options when interpreters are not accessible.	January 2019
4.3 Ensure frontline employees and call centre contractors are aware of our Disability Access and Inclusion Plan.	Ongoing
4.5 Ensure key information, such as how to arrange an interpreter or translator and convert information into an alternative format, is readily available to customer service employees.	Ongoing
4.6 Conduct accessibility training specific to the call centre environment for Customer Service Centre employees.	Annually

Outcome 5: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to Horizon Power.

Strategy	Timeline
5.1 Ensure alternative contact details for complaints are published, including the TTY and TIS number, and alternative options for making complaints e.g. fax, email, webforms and SMS.	Ongoing
5.2 Ensure customer services employees receive appropriate training for managing complaints received from customers with disability.	Annually
5.3 Ensure documentation and information regarding Horizon Power's complaints management process is accessible for customers with a disability.	June 2019

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

Strategy	Timeline
6.1 Ensure all stakeholder engagement and public consultation forums organised by Horizon Power are planned using the 'Creating Accessible Events Checklist' developed and published by the Department of Communities.	Ongoing
6.2 Ensure information regarding the consultation process or documentation for consultation is available in alternative formats for customers with disability.	Ongoing
6.4 Ensure Horizon Power employees work with customers with a disability who wish to be involved in the consultation process to remove any barrier to participation and access.	As required

Outcome 7: People with disability have the same employment opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment with Horizon Power.

Strategy	Timeline
7.1 Ensure people with disability have the same access to employment opportunities as other people and that their disability is not a disadvantage in their pursuit of employment opportunities at Horizon Power.	Ongoing
7.2 Ensure all documentation and information is available in alternative formats.	Ongoing
7.3 Ensure internal human resources and facilities management teams are timely and efficient in responding to the needs of new or existing employees who may have a disability.	Ongoing

7. Contact us

Horizon Power welcomes your feedback. If you would like to comment on our Disability Access and Inclusion Plan or make a suggestion to improve access, please contact us by one of the following methods:

Phone: **(08) 6310 1000**

TTY: **1800 461 499**
(for customers with hearing or speech difficulties)

TIS: **13 14 50**
(translating service for customers who don't speak English)

Email: **daip@horizonpower.com.au**

Mail: **Horizon Power**
PO Box 1066
Bentley DC WA 6983

Website: **www.horizonpower.com.au**

