DISABILITY AND INCLUSION

Disability Inclusion Action Plan

To December 2019
Cover photo: Cast members from the second series of ABC’s award-winning docuseries, Employable Me, which was financed with assistance from The NSW Department of Industry.
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Welcome

Welcome to the NSW Department of Industry’s Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

Our vision is to make NSW a place where people want to live and work and businesses choose to invest and grow.

This Disability Inclusion Action Plan builds on progress to date and we aim to maximise participation for people living with disability, to create wider opportunities for them, and help create a state that honours their worth and contribution.

The four areas of focus of the DIAP are:

1. Liveable communities
2. Inclusive employment
3. Attitudes and behaviours
4. Accessible systems and processes

On 1 July 2019, the Department of Industry will be merged with various organisations across the NSW Government to create the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE). This represents a significant opportunity to bring together great initiatives across multiple teams. Work has already begun on developing a plan to encompass all parts of our new organisation and is expected in late 2019.
Context and commitment

The NSW Department of Industry leads the state government’s contribution to making NSW a prosperous state recognised as a place of opportunity—a place where people want to live and work and businesses choose to invest and grow.

We’re proud to champion and celebrate diversity, and know from our own corporate experience that greater inclusion—from who we employ to how our buildings are designed, and how we treat each other in the workplace—equals better outcomes for all.

Research shows that inclusive cultures are high-performing cultures. According to a 2018 report from Deloitte, organisations with inclusive cultures are:

- twice as likely to meet or exceed financial targets
- three times as likely to be high-performing
- six times more likely to be innovative and agile
- eight times more likely to achieve better business outcomes.

Similarly, in their Words at Work report, the Diversity Council Australia states:

‘How we speak to and about each other influences how we treat each other, and so it also builds our workplace culture … Inclusive language is not about being “politically correct”—it is about using language which is respectful, accurate, and relevant to everyone.’

In NSW, around 1.3 million people have a disability. For more than a third of those people, their disability is severe or profound enough that it affects their ability to communicate, get around and care for themselves.

This Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) is part of the NSW Department of Industry’s commitment to leading the way to create a more caring, inclusive and innovative state, and make a positive difference for people living with disability.

Guiding principles

The DIAP aims to build awareness of, and trust in, the department’s disability inclusion initiatives. It also aims to promote advocacy, education and facilitation of these initiatives. Our goal is to create a more inclusive workplace culture where all employees feel safe, respected and valued.

Our guiding principles are underpinned by relevant state, national and international legislation, policies and conventions. Refer to the section ‘Legislation and policies’ for the full list.

All employees have:

- rights to privacy, confidentiality and individual choices about disclosure
- the right to work in environments free from all forms of discrimination and harassment, consistent with the relevant legislation.

In addition, the department will ensure that people with disability are:

- treated with dignity and respected as individuals, and make full use of their individual capabilities
- consulted to determine the individual level and type of adjustments they need.

The DIAP has been developed around the four key outcome areas in the NSW Disability Inclusion Plan, as shown in Figure 1.
Figure 1. Outcome areas identified in the NSW Disability Inclusion Plan

- **Liveable communities**
  - Identifying and removing barriers to services and facilities for people with a disability

- **Inclusive employment**
  - Increasing employment and inclusion in the workplace for people with a disability

- **Attitudes & behaviours**
  - Developing positive attitudes by increasing awareness and inclusion practices

- **Accessible systems & processes**
  - Identifying and removing barriers caused by our systems and processes
Consultation process

The DIAP has been developed in consultation with people with disability from across the department. This helps ensure the plan is focused on the needs of employees, customers and service users.

We sought input and feedback from a range of teams including:

- Disability Employee Network—Chair and members
- Diversity and Inclusion Council—Chair
- Corporate Service Partners—Finance/Corporate Services/Property/Operations
- People and Culture—Industrial Relations/Work Health and Safety/Recruitment/Health and Wellbeing/Leadership, Diversity and Inclusion and Employee Engagement/People Analytics and Learning.

‘If you understand each person’s situation, find ways to support them, give reassurance and have empathy, then you have a community where people with disability feel supported and they can also confidently support each other’

—Jenna Leo and Mathieu Bertrand, leaders and co-founders of Home Care Heroes, a company that provides companions for people requiring non-medical assistance, including people with disability. Home Care Heroes received funding via the department’s Youth Employment Innovation Challenge.
### Indicators of success

**Table 1. Success indicators that support the department’s interim disability inclusion action plan**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome area/s</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Liveable communities</strong></td>
<td>Ensure departmental buildings and facilities are accessible and inclusive for all people</td>
<td>• Improved accessibility for new and refurbished facilities &lt;br&gt; • Consultation with the disability sector and Disability Employee Network with regards to the design and planning of new and refurbished facilities &lt;br&gt; • Improved accessibility to internal and external services and training programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inclusive employment</strong></td>
<td>Be a champion for inclusive, accessible employment</td>
<td>• Increase in the proportion of employees who identify as having a disability &lt;br&gt; • Increase in engagement and satisfaction of employees with disability, as measured through the People Matter Employee Survey &lt;br&gt; • Increased memberships in the Disability Employee Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attitudes and behaviours</strong></td>
<td>Foster an inclusive workplace culture</td>
<td>• Improved disability confidence across the department &lt;br&gt; • Participation in disability training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accessible systems and processes</strong></td>
<td>Build accessibility into our business systems and processes</td>
<td>• Improved usability of products and services for all employees and visitors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘Thriving, vibrant places are the heart and soul of community and citizenship, where all people feel connected and included in all their diversity’  
—Design for Dignity Guidelines
Disability Inclusion Action Plan

Liveable communities

Ensure that our departmental buildings and facilities are accessible and inclusive for all people

This means that for all employees and customers of the department:

- agency buildings, facilities and/or services are accessible
- workplace adjustments are made to facilitate accessibility as required.

Table 2. Initiatives to create liveable communities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiatives</th>
<th>Accountability</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ensure agency buildings and facilities comply with the Building Code of</td>
<td>• Property Services</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia and Australian Standards for Access and Mobility</td>
<td>• Facilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Connected Workplace project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Infrastructure Services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct audit of premises to identify opportunities to improve disability</td>
<td>• Facilities</td>
<td>Review/audit sites by September 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>access in line with Design for Dignity Guidelines</td>
<td>• Connected Workplace project</td>
<td>Prioritise sites based on WHS information by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Work, Health &amp; Safety (WHS)</td>
<td>December 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEPs) are in place for</td>
<td>• Facilities</td>
<td>As required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>employees with disability</td>
<td>• WHS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consult with the disability sector and Disability Employment Network</td>
<td>• Facilities</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(DEN) on major sites design and planning of new and refurbished buildings,</td>
<td>• Connected Workplace project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with knowledge to be applied across smaller projects</td>
<td>• DEN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Success story: Connected Workplaces

In 2019, activity around the department’s Connected Workplaces Strategy ramped up. The strategy includes bringing our employees together in workplaces that support collaboration across the sector, and delivering the infrastructure needed now and in the future. Key sites are currently under construction or development in Dubbo, Newcastle, Orange and Parramatta.

An important component of the Connected Workplaces strategy is the move towards a new accommodation model which invests in workplaces that are designed to meet the specific needs of staff at each of our locations. Each office change and fit out will adopt a ‘flexible work place design’.

As part of this project (and prior projects of the Regional Office Accommodation Strategy and Metropolitan Accommodation Strategy), we have worked to ensure that agile workspace and office fitouts not only to meet, but exceed, where possible, the Designed for Dignity Guidelines. This includes toilets, entry, kitchens and break-out/social areas/collaboration tables. We have also included wayfinding (for people with vision impairment) and hearing loops in meeting rooms—a relatively recent addition.

The consolidation of sites has improved our ability to deliver improved amenities and compliance for disability access.

Fact sheets have been developed for front line staff on support available to accommodate the needs of customers with disability.
## Inclusive employment

**Be a champion for inclusive, accessible employment**

This means that potential or current employees with disability feel and think the following:

- I am aware of the roles advertised in the department
- I feel valued and supported by my manger and colleagues
- My career development reflects my abilities as an employee
- I can access funds for workplace adjustments and take advantage of flexible working arrangements.

### Table 3. Initiatives to build inclusive employment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiatives</th>
<th>Accountability</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment team complete ‘disability confident recruitment’ training</td>
<td>• Recruitment team</td>
<td>September 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment team outline opportunities for roles and areas of the business to employ people with a disability</td>
<td>• Recruitment team • People &amp; Culture • Workforce Planning • Human Resource Business Partners</td>
<td>December 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment team work with hiring managers to recruit to vacant roles</td>
<td>• Recruitment team • People &amp; Culture • Workforce Planning • Human Resource Business Partners</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connect with external employment providers who can assist with identifying a pool of talent</td>
<td>• Recruitment team</td>
<td>December 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure employees and hiring managers involved in recruitment are aware of disability recruitment, workplace adjustments and diversity strategies</td>
<td>• Recruitment team • People &amp; Culture</td>
<td>December 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review recruitment index findings and opportunities and work towards being an accredited recruiter</td>
<td>• Recruitment team</td>
<td>December 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audit on-boarding process to identify and remove barriers for people with a disability</td>
<td>• People Analytics &amp; Learning</td>
<td>September 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with employees with a disability to map their current and desired employee experience, and develop a strategy and timeline to bridge any gaps</td>
<td>• People Analytics &amp; Learning</td>
<td>December 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop checklists to ensure training venues are welcoming and inclusive of people with disability</td>
<td>• People Analytics &amp; Learning • Leadership &amp; Employee Engagement teams • Facilities</td>
<td>September 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure support and resources are available to resolve access and inclusion issues in a timely manner</td>
<td>• People &amp; Culture</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support employees with disability to contribute and provide input into projects</td>
<td>• People &amp; Culture</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Success story: Creating jobs for people with disability through social procurement

In 2018, the NSW Department of Industry’s Corporate Operations team won a prestigious Premier’s Award for their work creating real job opportunities for people with disability.

The procurement team signed a $12 million agreement with National Disability Services (NDS) to act as a commercial partner and broker of services with Disability Enterprises. The NDS acts as a broker and, for a small fee, its BuyAbility arm sources suppliers for the department and then manages sub-contracts, including billing and performance.

Today, the agreement is valued at $20 million and employs more than 200 supported workers and additional support staff. Services provided include cleaning, gardening, scanning and printing.

The agreement has delivered long-term sustainable contracts for disability enterprises and employment, with social benefits for carers and the NDE higher-needs clients.

The NSW Department of Industry, Corporate Operations team celebrate success at the 2018 Premier’s Award.
Attitudes and behaviours

Engage and educate employees to assist in creating an inclusive workplace culture

This means that all employees, managers and especially senior executives of the department:

- acknowledge and value diversity
- ensure the workplace is free from bullying and harassment
- ensure opportunities are created to attract people with disability to the department.

Table 4. Initiatives to develop positive attitudes and behaviours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiatives</th>
<th>Accountability</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promote the DIAP actions and outcomes</td>
<td>• Communications &amp; Engagement</td>
<td>Start July 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide disability awareness training to all employees</td>
<td>• People &amp; Culture</td>
<td>Start September 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consult regularly with the DEN to identify current and future barriers and potential solutions across the agency</td>
<td>• People &amp; Culture</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regularly promote the skills and experience of employees with a disability</td>
<td>• Communications &amp; Engagement</td>
<td>• People &amp; Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledge and celebrate key dates across the system including International Day of People with Disability</td>
<td>• Communications &amp; Engagement</td>
<td>• People &amp; Culture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Success story: Supporting people with disability in their search for meaningful employment

In April 2019 the second series of the ABC’s award-winning docuseries *Employable Me* was launched. Supported by a diversity of stakeholders including the NSW Department of Industry, the series follows nine people with disability. It explores each cast member’s personal and unique story, highlights the variety of employment options for people with disability, and challenges the audience to re-evaluate its attitudes.

The first episode featured 20-year-old Eric, who has cerebral palsy and dreams of working in the health sector. Eric is a popular and well-known local on the NSW Central Coast, where he volunteers for the Surf Life Saving Club, the fire brigade and with aged care groups.

‘I’m just like everyone else and don’t feel there should be any obstacle to achieving my dream job’, he says.

He wants people to see who he is before they see his disability. His heart-warming story also has a happy ending—ongoing employment as an Administration Officer at Central Coast Health.

Series two of *Employable Me* was available to view on ABC iView. Screenings were held for employees in regional and metro areas.

Cast member Eric from the second series of the ABC docuseries, *Employable Me*. 
Accessible systems and processes

**Build accessibility into our business systems and processes**

This means that as a customer and/or employee:
- products and services are accessible and inclusive.

### Table 5. Initiatives to build accessible systems and processes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiatives</th>
<th>Accountability</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Continue to undertake appropriate workplace adjustments for employees with disability | • Facilities  
• WHS                                         | As required                                 |
| Departmental websites, media, applications and publications are accessible and compliant with guidelines | • Communications & Engagement  
• People & Culture  
• Digital Solutions Group | Ongoing                                     |
Monitoring progress

The DIAP is a living plan with ongoing review, evaluation and monitoring to support its effective implementation. We will regularly review the plan to ensure it remains relevant and meaningful in an environment of change.

To monitor the progress of the DIAP we will ensure:

- each area of accountability sets up an implementation plan to support these actions
- all actions have timeframes
- all actions have an accountability area
- progress is reviewed, monitored and reported to the senior executive team on a monthly basis
- progress and achievements are documented in the annual report.
Achievements to date

Table 6. Actions NSW Department of Industry has taken to support people with disability in the workplace

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome areas</th>
<th>Achievements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liveable communities</td>
<td>• For the past five years, minor capital works funding has been set aside to invest in sites where there are disability access issues—typically doors, ramps and toilets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Connected Workplaces project—we have worked to ensure that agile workspace and office fitouts exceed, where possible, the Designed for Dignity Guidelines. We have also included wayfinding (for people with vision impairment) and hearing loops in meeting rooms—a relatively recent addition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The consolidation of sites has improved our ability to deliver improved amenities and compliance for disability access.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Fact sheets have been developed for front line staff on support available to accommodate the needs of customers with disability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusive Employment</td>
<td>• Disability Enterprise Engagement—The department buys a huge range of services from Disability Enterprises through a head agreement with the National Disability Service (NDS). A range of services are provided under the agreement, which is now valued at over $20 million. The agreement has delivered long-term sustainable contracts for disability enterprises and employment for over 200 people with a disability across the state, with social benefits for careers and the NDE higher-needs clients.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Participation in the Public Service Commission's job-sharing platform pilot launched March 2019—An important workforce strategy for attracting and retaining people with a disability, and supporting working carers to stay or re-enter the workforce after taking on caring responsibilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes and behaviours</td>
<td>• The department’s Disability Employee Network (DEN) was established to support advocates, carers and employees with disability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Regular consultation is held with the DEN to identify current and future barriers and potential solutions across the department.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Disability-confident online learning is available for employees and managers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Mentally Healthy Workplaces—A leader’s guide has been developed in consultation with the Centre for Corporate Health. It encourages people leaders to be aware of the range of resources and advice available to help create mentally healthy workplaces and support employees with mental ill health. The guide is supported by Q&amp;A video grabs that explore a range of workplace wellbeing and resilience issues, with a particular focus on supportive leadership and coping with change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The department provided financial assistance for the second season of the ABC’s award-winning docuseries Employable Me, launched on 9 April 2019. With the program promoted to employees; screenings have been held in regional and metro locations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessible Systems and Processes</td>
<td>• Beehive Industries based in Surry Hills provides work for people in that area who would otherwise be disconnected in life—the elderly, people with mental health issues and people with a disability. We predominantly use the company in projects that involve packaging items, for example drug test kits for racing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Accessible website, media, applications and publications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Investment in video conference systems to reduce the need for work-related travel. The widespread adoption of this technology has also seen a cultural shift to this tool’s use now being the norm.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Looking to the future

Following Machinery of Government changes, the NSW Department of Industry will be merged with a number of other agencies to form a new cluster—the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE).

A new DPIE Disability Inclusion Action Plan will be launched in late 2019 to serve the new cluster. We look forward to collaborating on this exciting opportunity over the coming months.

Aspirations for the DIAP 2019–23

The following sections outlines some of aspirational actions that will be discussed and considered for inclusion in the new cluster DPIE Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2019–23.

Inclusive employment

- Review our recruitment practices to support inclusion and increased employment of people with disability, and support our employees with disability to advance their careers within the department
- Develop targeted pathway programs such as traineeships, internships, mentorships and/or cadetships for people with a disability to create a talent pipeline that may result in employment
- Scope and implement a central budget process for workplace adjustments
- Audit current systems processes to ensure there are no barriers preventing employees with a disability from attending training events
- Design and implement a campaign to encourage sharing of information

Attitudes and behaviours

- Develop and implement a communication and engagement plan for the DIAP
- Develop opportunities for employees to engage with and/or volunteer with the disability sector

Accessible systems and processes

- Develop resources and guidelines on workplace adjustments for employees with disability
- Create processes and resources for employees with a disability so we can resolve access and inclusions issues in a timely manner
- Deliver enhanced services and build greater accountability by improving our data collection and reporting on disability inclusion.
Legislation and policies

This interim plan (ahead of a new Department of Planning, Industry and Environment DIAP) has been developed within the context of the following legislation, policies and conventions:

- *Disability Inclusion Act 2014* (NSW)
- *Government Sector Employment Act 2013* (NSW)
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Commonwealth)
- *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977* (NSW)
- National Disability Strategy 2010–20
- Jobs for People with Disability NSW