Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2007–2011

This plan is available upon request in alternative formats such as large print, electronic format (disk or emailed), audio or Braille.
Main Roads is committed to achieving the State Government’s vision for a better quality of life for all Western Australians. We play a key role in ensuring the road network links communities and provides efficient access to other modes of transport.

This commitment extends to all users, not only motorists, but pedestrians, cyclists and those with special needs.

The Main Roads Disability Access and Inclusion Plan has been produced in recognition that people with disabilities, their families and carers, have the same rights to access our products and services as any other member of the community.

The Main Roads Disability Access and Inclusion Plan will add further emphasis to the significant progress that we have already made in addressing the needs of people with disabilities since the initial plan’s inception in 1995.

I have great pleasure in releasing the Main Roads Disability Access and Inclusion Plan which will continue to build on the exciting program of customer service initiatives that builds on our service based culture and ensures that customer focus is reflected in everything we do.

Menno Henneveld
Commissioner of Main Roads
Introduction

Main Roads Western Australia is one of the largest geographically spread road agencies in the world, covering 2.5 million square kilometres, with a matching diversity in climate and road user needs. The organisation is responsible for Western Australia’s highways and main roads under the State Government’s Planning & Infrastructure portfolio.

Main Roads Western Australia aims to achieve a safe and efficient road network as part of an integrated transport system for all road users. This includes pedestrians, cyclists and people with disabilities.

Main Roads is responsible for the management of:

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<th>Construction &amp; Maintenance</th>
<th>Traffic</th>
<th>Environmental</th>
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<td>• Freeways</td>
<td>• Traffic signals</td>
<td>• Roadside vegetation</td>
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<td>• Major roads</td>
<td>• Road signs</td>
<td>• Construction impacts</td>
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<td>• Bridges</td>
<td>• School zones</td>
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<td>• Roadside rest areas</td>
<td>• Road markings</td>
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<td>• Principal shared paths</td>
<td>• Speed zoning</td>
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<td>• Graffiti</td>
<td>• HEROs (Highway Emergency Response Operations)</td>
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<td>• Litter</td>
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IMPROVING SERVICE TO CUSTOMERS

Everyone who relies on or uses the road network in some way is by definition a customer of Main Roads. Examples of customers include Main Roads employees, motorists, cyclists, pedestrians, people with disabilities, adjacent landowners, professional road users such as truck drivers, couriers, taxi and ambulance drivers.

To meet the needs of all these groups, Main Roads recognises the importance of integrating the ‘excellence in customer service’ philosophy throughout the organisation. To achieve this, the Excellence Inroads Customer Service Strategy 2004–2007 was developed to provide a clear path to achieve the Main Roads Vision, which is “to be recognised for excellence in customer service and world class road access”.

The introduction of a 24 hour, 365 day a year in-house Customer Contact Centre in July 2005, was one action identified in the Strategy to provide a single point of contact for customers.

The disability awareness training sessions, introduced in 2000 continue today to provide new Main Roads employees with an awareness of customers with special needs and to ensure these needs are considered in every part of the business.
Main Roads Disability Access Policy

Main Roads wants to:

1. Make changes to what we do, to better meet the needs of people with disabilities, their families and carers.

WE WILL:

• Make sure that Main Roads follows the Disability Access Policy.
• Ensure that agents and contractors doing work on behalf of Main Roads follow the Main Roads Disability Access Policy.
• Plan and conduct any events according to the State Government Access Guidelines on accessible events.

2. Make changes to Main Roads buildings so more people with disabilities can use the buildings more easily.

WE WILL:

• Have all our public buildings checked using Australian Standards on Access to see if people with disabilities can easily use them.
• Talk with people with disabilities about which buildings we should work on first.
• Consider the needs of people with disabilities who apply to become tenants of buildings purchased by Main Roads.
3. Make sure people with disabilities are aware of what Main Roads does.

WE WILL:

• Develop all our public information to be in line with State Government Access Guidelines.

• Provide information about what Main Roads is doing or planning in ways that as many people as possible can understand. We will let people know that we will give them information in other ways if they ask. Examples of other formats are large print, audio cassette, Braille and computer disk.

• Ensure that what Main Roads wants to say can be seen or heard by everyone including people with disabilities.

• Use radio, newspapers, our website, newsletters sent out by disability organisations and other ways to get our messages across.

• Ensure that the Main Roads website meets web access guidelines so that people can easily access information about Main Roads.

4. Make sure that Main Roads employees take the needs of people with disabilities into account.

WE WILL:

• Ensure Main Roads employees undertake disability awareness training to make them aware of the needs of people with disabilities.

• Ensure employees who do the planning and design of roads know that just following certain standards is often not good enough for people with disabilities. We will give them a real understanding of what is needed.

• Ensure employees who develop policy understand the needs of people with disabilities.

• Ensure employees who meet the public or send out information to the public, are aware of the needs of people with disabilities.

• Ensure agents and contractors who do paid work for us follow the Main Roads Disability Access Policy and meet the requirements of the legislation.
Main Roads Disability Access Policy

5. Make sure people with disabilities can make complaints.
WE WILL:
• Provide complaints mechanisms which are customer friendly and flexible to meet the needs of all customers.
• Provide information about how to make complaints in a range of ways and formats so that as many people as possible can understand.
• Make sure that people with disabilities, their families and carers get any support they need to help them make a complaint.

6. Make sure people with disabilities can have their say regarding Main Roads services, buildings, facilities and information.
WE WILL:
• Ensure we include people with disabilities when we try to find out what people think about plans for new roads or how Main Roads is doing its job e.g. customer surveys, public meetings. We will make sure that people with disabilities, their families and carers who want to have a say get the help they need to be involved.
• Aim for at least one person with a disability, a carer or person with professional knowledge of disability on appropriate customer service councils and consultative groups.
• Ensure that the Main Roads Disability Advisory Group and other people with disabilities, their families and carers can have a say about standards of roads and other designs that will affect them.
Why do we have a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP)?

The Disability Services Act (1993, amended in 2004), requires all State and Local Government authorities to develop and implement a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP). This is so people with disabilities can access services provided by West Australian public authorities in ways that increase independence and opportunities for inclusion within the community.
How will we monitor our progress in implementing the DAIP?

**Review**
Main Roads will be reviewing the DAIP every five (5) years and will report to the Disability Services Commission by 31 July each year about its progress in achieving the six (6) desired outcomes.

In addition, the Main Roads Annual Report will detail the implementation of the Plan.

**Monitoring**
The Main Roads Disability Action Plan Steering Group will meet regularly to ensure that Main Roads delivers on its commitment to the DAIP. The Group consists of employees representing various business areas that are directly responsible for the strategies in the DAIP and that are required to report on an as required basis.

Terms of Reference have also been developed to guide the Group through the Plan and ensure each strategy is actioned according to the DAIP’s internal Communication and Implementation Plan.

The Main Roads Disability Advisory Group, consisting of external community members, will also be involved in ensuring the DAIP is meeting its commitment within the set timeframes.
Main Roads will make the DAIP available to its employees and the community including people with disabilities, their families and carers. The plan will be available in alternative formats on request either at Main Roads offices or by email and will also be available on the Main Roads website. Availability of the DAIP will be promoted in the following ways:

- A notice in The West Australian newspaper;
- Information on the Main Roads website;
- Broadcast via Information Radio;
- Copies mailed to key organisations and Main Roads stakeholders; and
- It will be presented to Corporate Executive and will be available to Main Roads employees on the Main Roads intranet as well as being promoted via internal communication channels.

How will we communicate the DAIP to our employees and the community?
How was this DAIP developed?

The issues and strategies that are included in this Plan were determined through an extensive internal and external consultation process.

E-QUAL disability consultants were engaged to undertake the consultation process and received a substantial response from employees. All Main Roads employees were encouraged to contribute to this Plan and were emailed a confidential survey to identify their level of awareness and understanding of access issues and encourage feedback. The internal Disability Action Plan Steering Committee and Main Roads Disability Advisory Group (comprising external members), were also consulted and identified a number of issues for inclusion in the DAIP.

The public consultation process included a range of alternative ways that people could provide feedback including:

- a survey which was available on the Main Roads website;
- the option of face to face or phone interviews; and
- public consultation sessions in Esperance, Kalgoorlie and Karratha.
The consultations were promoted as widely as possible and included:

- An advertisement in The West Australian newspaper seeking feedback;
- A notice on the Main Roads website;
- An ABC Radio broadcast about the Kalgoorlie consultation session;
- Local newspaper advertisements in the Pilbara News and Kalgoorlie Miner newspapers;
- Notification of Local Government authorities;
- Promotion to regional Disability Services Commission Local Area Coordinators who distributed information to their networks; and
- Contact with several regional disability service providers.
The consultation found that Main Roads has been steadily working to improve access for people with disabilities, and also identified some remaining issues including:

- The need for more audible and tactile signals;
- The need for more tactile ground surface indicators;
- Difficult road crossings at specific locations;
- The need for large clear signage;
- The need for Main Roads to maintain good relationships with disability agencies;
- The need to promote information about the availability and location of accessible facilities;
- The need for further upgrading of the website to make it easier to use and ensure access;
- The need for important community information such as travel information to be promoted in ways that reach more people;
- Reviewing traffic management for events to enable increased participation by people with disabilities;
- Identifying ways of improving employment opportunities and support for employees with disabilities;
- Ensuring all offices are accessible;
- The need to continue raising the awareness and skills of staff regarding access and inclusion, as well as identifying and utilising existing skills;
- The need for youth and regional representation on the Disability Advisory Group;
- The need to ensure contractors ensure access and safety during construction;
- Ways of meeting the legislative requirements regarding agents and contractors;
- The need to ensure Main Roads design standards keep pace with Australian Standards and any other relevant requirements; and
- The need to continue to develop improved relationships with local government to ensure a cooperative seamless approach to access improvement.
What has Main Roads done to improve access?

Since the first Main Roads Disability Services Plan, a number of achievements have been implemented to improve access on Main Roads services and facilities. For example;

- The appointment of a designated Access and Mobility Coordinator, to support the implementation of access and inclusion strategies across the organisation.
- The widespread and responsive installation of audible and tactile traffic signals.
- The placement of tactile ground surface indicators to assist people with vision impairment.
- Main Roads has conducted a disability access audit of many of its buildings and facilities. A program of retrofitting has greatly improved access for people with disabilities.
- Roadside rest areas are progressively being upgraded to be more accessible. This includes toilets, tables and benches.
- Main Roads liaises with the Association for the Blind of WA to arrange information in alternative formats including Braille.
- A Telephone Typewriter (TTY) is available at Main Roads head office in East Perth to facilitate communication for people with a hearing impairment.
- Main Roads has undertaken a comprehensive program of disability awareness training and estimates that the majority of staff across the state have participated.
- Main Roads has responded to employee needs by providing further training on specific identified issues, such as assisting people in distress.
- Main Roads remains committed to supporting its Disability Advisory Group and ensures they are able to provide valuable ongoing input to help guide access improvements.
- Main Roads employs people with disabilities in various capacities throughout the organisation and has a relatively high employment rate compared to other public authorities.
- The new Community Engagement Program ensures people with disabilities have access to community consultation processes.
- The development of a new 2007 Customer Service Charter communicates our high level of commitment in providing excellent service to all customers.
- The new Complaints Handling Policy includes accessibility as a key objective.
How are we making our services more accessible?

To improve access for people with disabilities and maintain consistency between State and Local Government, Main Roads is working towards the achievement of key objectives, as identified by road users.

Main Roads has also developed an internal Communications and Implementation Plan which contains specific strategies, tasks, timelines and responsibilities to guide its progress towards meeting the outcomes of its DAIP.

When Main Roads receives feedback on issues that are not the responsibility of Main Roads WA, it will refer the issues to the appropriate parties as part of its commitment to enhancing access and inclusion throughout the community.
Outcome 1

People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by Main Roads.

STRATEGIES

Ensure that all events organised by Main Roads are planned in accordance with the Disability Services Commission’s Creating Accessible Events checklist and make it available to all staff to ensure events (including event traffic management) are accessible to people with disabilities.

Ensure Main Roads complies with the legislative requirements around agents and contractors.

Ensure appropriate forms, information and contract/tender documentation and templates are available on the Main Roads website for Main Roads’ contractors.

Continue to progressively upgrade safety at intersections through audible signals and tactile paving.
Outcome 2

People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of Main Roads.

STRATEGIES

Conduct a new access audit of buildings and facilities, particularly in regional areas, to provide current data and schedule any remaining remedial works to ensure accessibility.

Continue the program of upgrading accessibility of roadside rest areas, including signage to enhance awareness.

Ensure that the advice of an appropriate specialist in access is sought when planning and designing new buildings or undertaking major refurbishments.

Investigate and implement ways of minimising inconvenience and danger to people with disabilities when paths and ramps are removed during works.

Work with the relevant transport bodies to ensure seamless access to transport infrastructure.
Outcome 3

People with disabilities receive *information* from Main Roads in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it.

**STRATEGIES**

Continue to ensure all public information, including information about the accessibility of facilities and services, is available on the website and in alternative formats on request and its availability is promoted to staff and customers.

Ensure that Information Radio 6RPH is included on the distribution list for media releases, and other public information such as brochures and travel information.

Review the Main Roads Style Guide to assess its alignment with good practice in Accessible Information.

Develop all brochures, forms and other public information in accordance with the State Government Access Guidelines.

Utilise the National Relay Service to meet the communication needs of people with hearing impairments and ensure staff know how to use the service.

Ensure the new redesigned Main Roads website complies with W3C Guidelines and documents are available on the website in accessible formats.
Outcome 4

People with disabilities receive the *same level and quality of service from the staff of Main Roads as other people receive.*

**STRATEGIES**

Make all resources, including access checklists, guidelines and information available to staff on the intranet and ensure all staff are advised of their availability and purpose.

Continue to conduct regular Disability Awareness Training for staff across the organisation.

Continue to promote Main Roads’ achievements to staff and the wider community e.g. through the State Government’s Accessible Communities Awards and internal newsletters.
Outcome 5

People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to Main Roads.

**STRATEGIES**

Review existing grievance/complaints mechanisms and make sure they meet the needs of people with disabilities and ensure staff are aware of the process.

In 2007, Main Roads will be launching a new Complaints Handling Policy and Management Plan. Employees will be required to participate in a workshop training session to familiarise themselves with the new process of recording and tracking feedback from customers.
Outcome 6

People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by Main Roads.

STRATEGIES

Continue to support the Main Roads Disability Advisory Group to advise on issues raised regarding disability access and inclusion.

Consider the development of a register of interested persons willing to provide feedback on request regarding disability and access issues.

Continue to consult with disability organisations and networks as required.

Ensure consultation documents available for comment and outcomes of consultations are located on the website and in alternative formats on request.

Ensure that the access needs of people with disabilities are considered in all community consultations and that venues chosen for consultations comply with access requirements and standards.

Seek youth and regional representation on its Disability Advisory Group.
Acknowledgments

Main Roads would like to thank the following people and organisations for their valued contribution to the creation of this DAIP:

- Main Roads Disability Advisory Group
- Main Roads Disability Action Plan Steering Group
- E-QUAL disability consultants
- Main Roads employees who contributed through the staff survey
- Disability Services Commission, and
- The individual community members who provided their feedback

Feedback

Main Roads welcomes your feedback on the DAIP. Please contact Main Roads on:

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Fax: (08) 9323 4430
TTY: (08) 18430
Email: enquiries@mainroads.wa.gov.au