

Accessibility and Inclusion Action Plan 2021-25



The Department of Home Affairs and the Australian Border Force (ABF) are committed to providing an inclusive and accessible workplace for all staff. The Australian Public Service (APS) Disability Employment Strategy 2020-25 provides an overarching framework of initiatives and actions for the APS, which informed the development of the priorities set out in our Accessibility and Inclusion Action Plan 2021-25. This plan builds upon initiatives in the Department's previous Disability Action Plans.

Our Priorities

PRIORITY 1 Recruit and Retain

- Conduct recruitment review to ensure practices and pathways are inclusive of disability best practice.
- Increase employment retention through meaningful engagement for staff with disability, undertaking actions and initiatives set out under Priorities 2, 3 and 4.

PRIORITY 2 Develop

- Promote and support capability building, career progression and career path development.
- Encourage senior management to embrace diversity and ensure that developmental programs and promotional opportunities are universally accessible.

PRIORITY 3 Culture

- Foster inclusive cultures and practices in the workplace.
- Improve disability awareness and confidence.
- Focus on inclusion and intersectionality to raise awareness and broaden the definitions and scope of accessibility and inclusion.

PRIORITY 4 Accessibility

- Provide physical work environments that meet building code standards but also consider inclusive design.
 - Provide work environments that are accessible for all.
 - Ensure communication and digital environments are accessible to everyone.
 - Promote the use and benefits of Workplace Adjustments to ensure they are appropriately facilitated and provided by work areas.
 - Ensure assistive technologies are available to all staff who require them.
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KEY RESULTS FROM THE DISABILITY ACTION PLAN 2016-20

- ✓ The Disability Employee Network was rebranded to the Focus on Ability (FoA) Network, which is now inclusive of carers and allies, as well as those with disability. Membership increased from 16 members in February 2018 to 121 members in December 2020, demonstrating a growth of 650 per cent.
- ✓ Five plus Five 'Focus on Ability' sessions were successfully facilitated, providing opportunities for five staff members with disability to share their experiences with five senior leaders in an intimate forum on an annual basis. Feedback from these sessions assisted in improving support mechanisms for staff with disability.
- ✓ Resources to support staff using assistive technology such as Dragon, Zoom Text, and JAWS were developed and complemented with the updated Connected Services Portal, formerly Service Request Catalogue (SRC). Based on uptake and feedback from staff, this has created a streamlined process for staff to request assistive technologies.
- ✓ The Dandelion Program, an initiative designed to build valuable information technology skills and careers for individuals on the autism spectrum, was successfully implemented across the ICT Division with participants exceeding set benchmarks for working at APS levels and project targets. Some participants have also successfully transitioned into external APS roles and have achieved personal successes and independence.
- ✓ Significant updates were made to the Workplace Adjustment process, including a collaborative review of the Workplace Adjustment Procedural Instruction and introduction of the Workplace Adjustment Passport. Feedback from staff indicates that this material provides improved guidance on the application of workplace adjustments.