

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2018-23

(This plan is available upon request in alternative formats such as standard or large print, electronically by email, by post, in audio format on CR ROM and on Synergy's website)

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1. Background

1.1 Synergy

Synergy is the trading name of Electricity Generation and Retail Corporation. Synergy is owned by the State Government of Western Australia, represented by the Minister for Energy.

1.2 Functions and services provided by Synergy

Synergy is Western Australia's largest energy generator and retailer of electricity and gas, with more than one million residential, business and industry customers. Synergy operates as an energy retailer and generator in an area known as the South West Interconnected System (SWIS) that extends from Kalbarri in the north, east to Kalgoorlie-Boulder and south to Albany.

1.3 Planning for better access

It is a requirement of the *Disability Services Act 1993* that all public authorities develop and implement a DAIP demonstrating how people with a disability will have equal access to services and facilities.

1.4 Review of the DAIP 2012-17

Synergy's inaugural DAIP was published in 2007 and provided a number of key strategies to improve access and raise awareness of issues for people with a disability.

As a result of Synergy's DAIP 2012-17 the following outcomes were achieved:

- Any external events organised by Synergy were planned to achieve full accessibility by the public;
- Key contract providers (as outlined by the DAIP contract guidelines) were provided with information regarding Synergy's DAIP;
- Ongoing training was provided to customer-facing Synergy staff to help them interact with customers with a disability or other accessibility concerns;
- The Synergy office was relocated in 2016. An access consultant was engaged to ensure planning and design around building access was suitable for people with a disability;
- Synergy advertised its process for making a complaint or handling a grievance and staff knowledge was improved to facilitate the receipt of complaints;
- An accessibility audit was planned for 2017 which included training across the digital teams to improve awareness of the way customers with disability access and use

information online and how we can address this from a design, content and build perspective;

- All job advertisements contain an equal employment opportunity statement and new employees to Synergy provided with an optional diversity questionnaire; and
- The accessibility of content on the Synergy website was reviewed where required against World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) accessibility guidelines and improvements were made to make content more accessible.

1.5 Development of the DAIP 2018-23

In developing the DAIP 2018-23, a consultative approach was taken to develop strategies to achieve the seven desired outcomes set by the Disability Services Regulations.

The complete list of outcomes and associated implementation strategies can be found in Annexure 1.

1.6 Access and inclusion policy statement for people with a disability, their families and carers

Synergy is committed to:

- ensuring that people with a disability, their families and carers are able to fully access the range of departmental services and facilities (both in-house and contracted), providing them with the same opportunities, rights and responsibilities enjoyed by all people in the community;
- ensuring that people with a disability are given the opportunity to participate in shaping the development of their community through a consultative process;
- consulting with people with a 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 by providing a copy of Synergy's current plan; and
- achieving the seven desired outcomes documented within the DAIP.

2. Development of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

2.1 Responsibility for the planning process

The DAIP is the responsibility of the people and culture team in consultation with Synergy's diversity committee.

The diversity committee was established in January 2015 and comprises 11 members of staff from key areas of the business. This committee, in conjunction with the people and culture team, are responsible for the implementation of this plan.

2.2 Community consultation process

Synergy created this DAIP in consultation with key stakeholders to improve its validity.

The consultation was advertised and promoted:

- on the Synergy external website;
- on the Synergy intranet; and
- by key staff to their teams.

Consultation methods included:

- workshops with the Synergy diversity committee;
- telephone interviews with external stakeholders;
- face-to-face interviews with internal stakeholders;
- an online survey for Synergy internal staff regarding their knowledge of disability access and inclusion—30 survey responses were received;
- analysis of trends and best practice in access and inclusion information; and
- review of relevant organisational documentation.

2.3 Outcomes of the consultation process

Through consultation with Synergy staff and the public, the feedback received was largely positive, with customer facing areas of the business highlighting the importance of continual training. Overall, staff members interviewed felt that Synergy needed to maintain the strategies included within the DAIP 2012-17 and highlighted the importance of promoting the DAIP through articles on the intranet and on the contact centre knowledge base. External feedback was also positive and highlighted the need to continue creating a level of awareness so staff are equipped to effectively communicate with customers who identify themselves as having a disability.

2.4 Responsibility for implementing the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

It is a requirement of the *Disability Services Act 1993* that public authorities take all practical measures to ensure the DAIP is implemented by all staff and contractors of Synergy.

Implementation of the DAIP is the responsibility of all departments of Synergy, depending on the action required. The diversity committee will oversee and monitor the implementation process.

2.5 Communicating the plan to staff and people with a disability

The following strategies will be used to inform staff and people with a disability of the development and implementation of Synergy's DAIP:

- the DAIP working group will inform staff through various forums of the revised DAIP;
- DAIP 2018-2023 will be made available on the Synergy intranet and internet sites;
- through the Synergy website, Synergy will advise that copies of the plan will be made available to members of the public, and where applicable, will be made available in various types of format, including in standard and large print, electronically by email and in audio format on CD; and
- a notice promoting the DAIP will be placed in the West Australian newspaper.

3.6 Review and evaluation mechanisms

The *Disability Services Act 1993* sets out the minimum review requirements for public authorities in relation to disability access and inclusion plans. Synergy's DAIP will be reviewed at least every five years, in accordance with the Act.

The annual implementation plan may be amended from time to time as required. If this occurs, the amended version will be uploaded to the Synergy intranet and website, and re-submitted to the Disability Services Commission.

3.6.1 Review and monitoring

The diversity committee will meet yearly to review the suitability of the DAIP and the status of strategies detailed in Annexure 1. Review outcomes will be made available to Synergy's chief executive officer and executive. If the review concludes with changes being made to the DAIP a revised version will be submitted to the Disability Services Commission and uploaded on Synergy's intranet and website.

3. Reporting on the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

The *Disability Services Act 1993* sets out the minimum reporting requirements for public authorities in relation to disability access and inclusion plans.

Synergy will report on the implementation of the revised DAIP through its annual report and the prescribed pro-forma to the Disability Service Commission by 31 July each year, outlining its progress towards the achievement of the desired outcomes of this DAIP.

4. Contact us

Synergy welcomes your feedback. If you would like to comment on our DAIP or make a suggestion to improve access, please contact us by one of the following methods:

Phone (08) 6212 2222
TTY (08) 9221 8608
TIS 13 14 50

Email hr@synergy.net.au

Address 219 St Georges Terrace
Perth WA 6000

Mail People & Culture
Synergy
GPO Box K851
Perth WA 6842

Website www.synergy.net.au

Annexure 1: Strategies to improve access and inclusion

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

Strategy	Timeline	Area Responsible
Continue to ensure people with disability are provided with an opportunity to comment on access to services.	ongoing	all areas
Ensure that events are organised so they are accessible to people with a disability.	ongoing	retail products & markets, strategy & innovation
Ensure Synergy staff and contractors are aware of the relevant requirements of the <i>Disability Services Act 1993</i>	ongoing	commercial services, learning and development, IT commercial services, procurement
Occupational health and safety procedures are reviewed to ensure the safety of staff, contractors and visitors with disabilities in the event of a fire, evacuation or other critical incidents are addressed.	ongoing	safety people and culture, commercial services

Outcome 2: People with a disability have the same opportunities as other people to access Synergy's buildings and facilities.

Strategy	Timeline	Area Responsible
Ensure Synergy buildings are physically accessible to people with a disability as far as reasonably practicable.	ongoing	commercial services, property and fleet
As required Synergy will carry out an access audit for new sites and facilities, using the Disability Services Commission access resource kit checklist and will take reasonable steps to reduce the barriers	as required	commercial services, property and fleet
Budget for and schedule required access improvements to the Synergy building and facilities as identified in the access review/s.	ongoing	commercial services, property and fleet
Ensure the advice of an access consultant is sought where required when planning and designing any facilities or undertaking major refurbishments.	ongoing	commercial services, property and fleet

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

Strategy	Timeline	Area Responsible
Improve community awareness that information on the Synergy website is available in alternative formats upon request.	ongoing	retail products and markets, corporate communications
Continual review of Synergy employee knowledge of how to deliver information in alternative formats.	ongoing	learning and development corporate communications
If the Synergy intranet is reviewed during this time, the accessibility of content published will be included in the replacement strategy.	as required	corporate communications
Review accessibility of content on the Synergy website against World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) accessibility guidelines and implement improvements as required	as required	retail products and markets
Review the accessibility and formatting options that Synergy bills are available to customers in (including large print, text to speech compatibility, etc)	June 2018	retail products and markets

Outcome 4: People with a disability receive the same level and quality of service from Synergy staff as others

Strategy	Timeline	Area responsible
Improve staff awareness of disability and access issues and improve skills to provide a quality service to people with a disability.	ongoing	learning and development
Maintain policies and procedures to ensure they prohibit discrimination; harassment and victimisation of staff, contractors and visitors with a disability.	ongoing	people and culture
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 staff on the intranet and contact centre knowledge base.	ongoing maintenance as necessary	continuous improvement, corporate relations

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

Strategy	Timeline	Area Responsible
Maintain current complaint mechanisms to continue to ensure they meet the needs of people with a disability.	ongoing	service quality
Maintain staff knowledge so they can facilitate the receipt of complaints from people with a disability.	ongoing	service quality

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

Strategy	Timeline	Area Responsible
Synergy will continue to provide inclusive opportunities for staff, contractors and visitors with disabilities to participate in Synergy public consultation.	ongoing	all areas
Synergy will commit to ongoing monitoring of the DAIP to ensure implementation and satisfactory outcomes.	ongoing	people and culture as the caretaker of the DAIP with input from all other areas

Outcome 7: People with a disability have the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment with a public authority.

Strategy	Timeline	Area Responsible
Synergy will ensure that all job advertisements are available in different formats such as 12 or 14pt Arial font.	ongoing	people and culture
Synergy will continue to encourage people from all diversity groups to apply for all roles by including an equal employment opportunity statement to all adverts.	ongoing	people and culture
Synergy will continue to monitor and review our policies and procedures to be inclusive of people with a disability.	ongoing	people and culture
Synergy will ensure staff who have a disability are provided with appropriate development / promotional opportunities to meet longer term plans for career development.	ongoing	people and culture/ management
Synergy will provide training to hiring managers on how to interview a person with a disability.	as required	people and culture
Take immediate corrective action on any complaint or concern that disability has been a barrier to obtaining or maintaining employment.	as required	people and culture people managers