



# Expanding Your Sport & Recreation Markets

Universal Access to Your  
Facilities & Programs



This publication has been prepared for both private and Local Government sport and recreation facilities throughout Western Australia.

### **Acknowledgements**

This publication has been a joint project between the Western Australian Municipal Association, the Department of Sport and Recreation and the Disability Services Commission. Industry advice has been provided by Women's Sports West, Recreation Network, the WA Disabled Sports Association, the WA Sports Federation and the South West Recreation Advisory Group.

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Disability Services Commission

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A joint project between the  
Western Australian Municipal Association  
Department of Sport and Recreation and  
Disability Services Commission



WESTERN  
AUSTRALIAN  
MUNICIPAL  
ASSOCIATION

Department of  
Sport and Recreation



making a difference



# Foreword

Physical activity is becoming increasingly important to our community. More and more people are taking up the challenge of increasing their fitness level and enjoying the many benefits of being physically active. Participation at fitness centres is continually increasing, and more people are jogging or walking through our parks, streets and public open spaces.

For many members of our community accessing appropriately designed facilities is difficult and in some instances impossible. Suitable programming and time allocation to allow for cultural diversity, people with disabilities and seniors is undertaken on an ad hoc basis throughout the State.

The WA Municipal Association, in conjunction with the Department of Sport and Recreation and the Disability Services Commission, has produced this publication, funded by the Lotteries Commission of WA, to guide facility managers through facility improvements and program development.

*Expanding your Sport and Recreation Markets* is a practical and informative guide aimed at increasing community participation at your facility and giving you the market edge in our rapidly changing society.

**We recommend this publication to you and hope that it provides the basis for expanding opportunities offered by your sport and recreation facilities through the provision of increased access and programs suitable for all members of our diverse Western Australian community.**



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Western Australian  
Municipal Association



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# Contents

<b>Foreword</b> .....	ii
<b>1 Introduction</b>	
1.1 Why Produce this Guide and Who For? .....	1
1.2 What is Meant by Sport and Physical Activity? .....	2
1.3 The Benefits of Participation For All. ....	2
1.4 Role of Local Governments in Facility Provision for All the Community .....	3
1.5 Role of State Sporting Associations in Providing Services .....	4
1.6 Role of the State Government — Funding and Agencies .....	4
1.7 Barriers to Participation .....	6
1.8. The Rights of People with Disabilities .....	7
<b>2 Planning a Facility</b>	
2.1 Access for All? .....	9
2.2 Legislative Requirements for the Built Environment .....	10
2.3 Design Standards/Principles. ....	11
2.4 Feasibility Study .....	11
2.5 Consulting Your Market .....	12
2.6. Location. ....	12
2.7 Design Brief Including Access in the Design and Construction Phases .....	13
2.8 Adapting Existing Facilities. What can you do? .....	15
<b>3 Design Elements</b>	
3.1 Continuous Accessible Path of Travel .....	16
3.2 Change Rooms/Showers .....	16
3.3 Hoists/Lifts/Ramps/Steps .....	17
3.4 Toilets .....	17
3.5 Reception Areas .....	17
3.6 Audio Loops .....	18
3.7 Floor Surfaces .....	18
3.8 Parking .....	19
3.9 Spectator Seating .....	19
3.10 Signs .....	19
3.11 Café/Kiosk .....	20
3.12 Pools/Spas .....	20

<b>4</b>	<b>Improving Access to Your Facility — Points to Consider</b>	
4.1	Background . . . . .	22
4.2	How to Use the Lists . . . . .	22
4.3	General Access to Your Facility . . . . .	23
4.4	Indoor Multi-Purpose Sports Centres . . . . .	23
4.5	Aquatic Facilities . . . . .	25
4.6	Community Hall . . . . .	26
4.7	Stadiums . . . . .	26
4.8	Outdoor Reserves/Parks/Sportsgrounds. . . . .	27
4.9	Sporting Clubs. . . . .	27
<b>5</b>	<b>Management</b>	
5.1	Knowing Your Community and its Diversity . . . . .	29
5.2	Considering Culture . . . . .	30
5.3.	Contract Management . . . . .	30
5.4	Staff Training and Development. . . . .	30
5.5	Positive Attitudes . . . . .	31
5.6.	Communication — What do I say? . . . . .	32
<b>6</b>	<b>Programming</b>	
6.1	Flexible Participation. . . . .	34
6.2	Program Development . . . . .	35
6.3	Setting the Price . . . . .	36
6.4	Marketing and Promotion . . . . .	36
6.5	Scheduling. . . . .	37
6.6	Evaluation . . . . .	37
<b>7</b>	<b>Key Contacts</b> . . . . .	41
<b>8</b>	<b>References &amp; Resources</b> . . . . .	43
	<b>Appendix 1: Legislation</b> . . . . .	45



# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Why Produce this Guide and Who For?

The *Expanding Your Sport and Recreation Markets* guide is a joint initiative of the Western Australian Municipal Association, the Department of Sport and Recreation, the Disability Services Commission and is funded by the Lotteries Commission WA.

The guide is aimed at highlighting technical details of building design as well as aspects of service delivery/program development which can be modified to remove any perceived barriers to participation by members of your community.

Facility managers are continually required to increase participation and this guide aims to assist by providing strategies and case study examples from within Western Australia to act as a catalyst in the development of services and programs for all.

While a large percentage of this guide focuses on the requirements of access for people with disabilities, it should be noted that any facility which meets this requirement will also ensure ease of access

for others such as seniors and parents with prams and therefore improve access for the whole community.

The guide is structured around three distinct areas:

- **Section 1**  
(Chapter 1)  
Background materials and legislative requirements
- **Section 2**  
(Chapters 2-4)  
Planning a facility and specific design details with checklists
- **Section 3**  
(Chapters 5-6)  
Program development and staff development

It is recognised that a lot of the material contained within Section 2 is available from other publications provided by a variety of organisations and as such referral will be made to these documents.

However, it is intended to produce a resource for all facility managers from the





local park to the multi-use recreation centre which can be readily available to provide information to better meet the needs of the entire community, particularly people with disabilities, seniors, parents and those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

## 1.2 What is Meant by Sport and Physical Activity?

Sport and physical activity are well known terms indicating participation in activities which require some physical exertion in either a formal organised setting or independently. Researchers worldwide have examined the impact of activity and inactivity with findings all leading to the conclusion that regular sport and physical activity are a central and vital component of an overall healthy lifestyle. The outcomes of participation include:

better health, improved fitness, better posture and balance, increased self-esteem, weight control, stronger muscles and bones, feeling more energetic, relaxation and stress reduction, continued independent living in later life...

The list goes on and on!

Within Australia, the Commonwealth Government has acknowledged the importance of physical activity within its national participation framework 'Active Australia' the vision of which states:

*"The vision of Active Australia is all Australians actively involved in sport, community recreation, fitness, outdoor recreation and other physical activities."*

Active Australia aims to provide a

**"Active Australia also recognises that for many Australians, being part of a community activity or organisation is a way to develop friends and have social contact while at the same time benefiting from physical activity and its health related outcomes."**

*A National Participation Framework, Active Australia, 2000*

framework and direction to increase participation by ensuring participation is:

- more accessible to all of us, regardless of our ability level, where we live or were born, how old we are or whether we are male or female;
- suited to our ability, interest or activity level so that we can choose between a range of activities and participate in some form of physical activity throughout our lives;
- fun and enjoyable;
- well organised and managed; and
- as safe as possible.

The Western Australian Sport and Recreation Council endorses the vision and outcomes set out in the Active Australia National Participation Framework.

## 1.3 The Benefits of Participation for All

There are numerous benefits for facility managers and their communities as a result of participation in sport and physical activity.

These benefits fall into five key categories.



- **Personal and individual benefits** including an increase in self-esteem and self-confidence, prevention of health problems, reduction of stress, improved interpersonal relationships and learning new skills, thereby improving the sense of independence and autonomy.
- **Social and community benefits** including creating a positive influence on the development of social and community attitudes such as cooperation, understanding, character, team spirit, fair play and loyalty.
- **Economic benefits** including capital development of sport and recreation facilities, production of goods and services, an improvement in work performance, productivity, decreases in absenteeism, and a reduction in workplace accidents. Direct economic benefits can be achieved through hosting special events, an expanding program base and attracting new participants.
- **Environmental benefits** including protection of biodiversity by the provision of outdoor parks and open spaces, improved air quality by reducing car trips by cycling or walking instead and improving the visual and aesthetic aspects of the community.
- **Reduction in crime and anti-social behaviour** — numerous studies have identified that people who participate in physical activity are less likely to commit crime and engage in anti-social behaviour.

People who enjoy an active lifestyle are not only more physically fit, but are healthier and enjoy a sense of greater psychological well-being.

Specific benefits can be gained by ensuring your facility is accessible for all the community, whether they be parents with prams, seniors or people with disabilities, such as:

- increased catchment population;
- expanding your sponsorship market by the identification of relevant commercial organisations to match your patronage;
- staff development;
- better communication skills;
- flexible service delivery;
- improved community awareness and acceptance of people with disabilities; and
- participants will be able to enjoy the same life experiences as others in the community.

For people with a disability, sport participation fosters confidence, acquisition of life skills and greater independence. Athletes with a disability are found to have significantly higher self-esteem, exhibit greater life satisfaction and happiness, are more outgoing and attain higher levels of education than people with disabilities who do not participate in sport and recreation.

### 1.4 Role of Local Governments in Facility Provision for All the Community

While there is no single, pre-determined role for Local Government when it comes to sport and recreation provision, Local Government is the number one provider of sport and recreation facilities throughout Australia.

As well as providing facilities a number of Local Governments have employed recreation professionals and increased their involvement in the direct provision of services and programs.



**“In 1992 a study found that the annual expenditure of Local Governments on sport and recreation in 1989/90 was \$1.127 billion dollars”**

*Local Government Sport and Recreation Provision in Australia, Confederation of Australian Sport, November, 1995*

The *Strategic Directions for WA* document by the WA Sport and Recreation Council has identified a number of strategies including the need for Local Governments to produce Sport and Recreation Plans for their area. This has seen a number of Local Governments examine their existing role and identify trends and preferred directions for the next 10 years.

Given Local Governments' range of responsibilities, it can be seen that they are the sphere of government with the greatest potential to influence communities towards greater participation in physical activity.

## 1.5 Role of State Sporting Associations in Providing Services

The role of State Sporting Associations has become more diverse as emerging trends impact on their sphere of influence. However, they are still the managers of their sport within the State and as such they are:

- the direct providers of sporting competition, from the elite level to community mass participation through their networks of clubs and organisations;
- instrumental in determining needs for new facilities and identifying areas of demand within their activity;

- the link between the State Government and their patrons;
- responsible for the marketing of their sport and are the 'public voice' in the media; and
- they provide coaches and officials to control each sport.

Sporting associations and clubs have been heavily reliant on government funding to meet their facility needs. Changes in government funding, the structure of national competitions, changes in facility standards required to meet international and national accreditation and the limited availability of sponsorship funding are having a major impact on the community's ability to sustain the required levels of facility provision.

## 1.6 Role of the State Government — Funding and Agencies

There are a number of State Government departments or agencies charged with responsibility for various services and funding programs and that have a direct involvement in efforts to increase participation in sport and physical activity by all the community.

### ■ Department of Sport and Recreation

The Department of Sport and Recreation provides leadership, information, education, support and funding to the sport and recreation industry. It achieves this through metropolitan and regional offices, which undertake a range of programs focussing on high quality physical environments, well-managed organisations and skilled and informed people delivering services in the industry. Its mission is:

*“To enhance the lifestyle of Western Australians through their participation and achievement in sport and recreation.”*



The department aims to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to participate in their chosen sport or recreational activity at the level that best suits them.

The department administers an annual grant system to assist Local Governments, clubs and state sporting associations to assist in the provision of new and modified facility development known as the Community Sporting and Recreation Facilities Fund. Applications for funding close in September each year and applicants are notified in February of the following year regarding the outcome of the assessment process.

[www.dsr.wa.gov.au](http://www.dsr.wa.gov.au)

### ■ Disability Services Commission

The Disability Services Commission was established in December 1993 under the *Disability Services Act 1993*.

Under the Act, the Commission is responsible for policy and program development and service planning in all areas that affect the rights and needs of Western Australians with disabilities.

The Commission provides funding to more than 140 non-government agencies to provide services for people with disabilities and their families and carers in Western Australia. It also provides many of these services directly and supports individuals and families to determine and coordinate the services they need. Its vision is:

*“All people live in welcoming communities that provide friendship, mutual support and a ‘fair go’ for everyone including people with disabilities, their families and carers.”*

The primary focus of the Commission is to make a positive difference to the lives of

people with disabilities, their families and carers.

The Commission provides leadership to:

- support local communities in welcoming and assisting people with disabilities, their families and carers;
- achieve access to quality support and services for people with disabilities; and
- protect the rights of people with disabilities who are especially vulnerable and support them to live a full and valued life.

[www.dsc.wa.gov.au](http://www.dsc.wa.gov.au)

### ■ Lotteries Commission WA

The Lotteries Commission of Western Australia was established under the *Lotteries Commission Act 1990* and is a government instrumentality responsible for selling lottery games and distributing the profits for the benefit of the Western Australian community. Its mission is:

*“To provide funds and support to the community of Western Australia through excellence and integrity in our lottery business.”*

Funding programs are managed through five broad program areas:

- Community Support and Development;
- Priority Groups with Special Needs;
- Community Sector Development;
- Environment; and
- Community Cultural.

A total of 5% of the Lotteries Commission's net receipts are allocated directly to the Department of Sport and Recreation to support sport in Western Australia, thus sporting activities and facilities are generally not eligible for funding.

Funding towards time limited projects



and/or capital equipment may be provided through specific initiatives, which include:

- **Gordon Reid Foundation for Recreation for People with Disabilities Grant** to assist people with disabilities to participate in Community based recreation; and
- **Community Centre Grants** to assist communities to provide premises for broad community use as a focus of community interaction and involvement. Grants may be provided towards the purchase, renovation, fit out, extension or construction of premises.

Program guidelines and application forms may be obtained from the Lotteries Commission web site. Intending applicants are strongly encouraged to discuss proposals with a program coordinator prior to submitting a formal application.

[www.lottery.wa.gov.au](http://www.lottery.wa.gov.au)

## ■ **Healthway**

Healthway provides grants for health and research projects as well as sponsorships for sports, arts, racing and community groups, which encourage healthy lifestyles and advance health promotion programs. Its vision is:

*“A Healthy WA”*

In its *Strategic Plan 2000-2003* it identifies a number of priority populations including:

- Youth;
- Indigenous people;
- Rural and remote communities;
- Groups with low income and low levels of education; and
- Others in whom health inequalities exist.

[www.healthway.wa.gov.au](http://www.healthway.wa.gov.au)

Further information on each department and agency is available by contacting them direct. Contact details appear in Section 7 of this guide.

## 1.7 Barriers to Participation

The barriers to participation are not just physical or built restrictions, but are also other issues affecting a person's perception of real barriers.

The 'Pilot Survey of the Fitness of Australians'<sup>1</sup> found the main reasons given for not participating in physical activity were:

- lack of time (40%);
- no motivation (30%);
- injury or disability (20%); and
- not the “sporty” type (20%).

Similar barriers were identified by the Centre for Population Health in its guide *Promoting Physical Activity in your Community* (1998):

- lack of time;
- lack of motivation;
- injury/disability;
- fear for personal safety (eg dogs, other people, traffic, uneven pavements); and
- lack of facilities.

Both of these studies addressed the whole community and it must be acknowledged that there are obstacles which only affect certain groups in the community, or certainly affect some groups more than others, such as the lack of child care facilities for parents, lack of transport for seniors, lack of programs and facilities in more remote locations.

The obstacles identified in Table 1 are general observations only and do not

<sup>1</sup> *Creating Active Communities*, NSW Department of Local Government, 2001



Table 1: General obstacles within the community

	Seniors	Parents	Non-English speaking	People with disabilities
Lack of time		X		
Lack of money	X	X	X	X
Lack of information	X	X	X	X
Lack of accessible facilities	X	X	X	X
Need care/support	X	X		X
Feel unsafe	X		X	X
Cultural needs			X	
Lack of transport	X	X	X	X
Physical access needs	X	X		X
Language barrier			X	
Lack of confidence	X		X	X
Lack of suitable programs	X			X

necessarily relate to individuals within a specific group. Also, some individuals may belong to more than one grouping. Identifying obstacles within your community is paramount and is addressed further in Section 5.1, Knowing Your Community.

## 1.8 The Rights of People with Disabilities

Disability affects the lives of more than half a million Western Australians. Australian Bureau of Statistics figures indicate that 355,500 people have some level of disability while a further 200,000 people provide care and support to family and friends with disabilities.

The *Disability Services Act 1993* defines disability as a condition that:

- is attributable to an intellectual, cognitive, neurological, sensory or physical impairment or a combination of those impairments;

- is permanent; and
- may or may not be episodic in nature.

Disabilities can result in a person having a substantially reduced capacity for communication, social interaction, learning or mobility and a need for continuing support services in daily life.

Some disabilities, such as epilepsy, are hidden, while others, such as cerebral palsy, may be visible.

With the assistance of appropriate aids and services, the restrictions experienced by many people with a disability may be overcome.

People with disabilities face many access barriers in the built environment such as steps, unclear signage and lack of hearing augmentation. It is important to note that most of those barriers can be overcome through informed planning.

Other barriers that can be experienced by people with disabilities are high participation costs, negative community



The rights of people with disabilities ensure their access to facilities; it is your responsibility as Manager of the facility to ensure that their access is an enjoyable experience where they are welcomed as valuable members of your community.

attitudes and lack of support from family and friends.

Under the *Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992* it is unlawful to discriminate against people with disabilities in a number of areas including “access to premises, clubs and sport”.

Additional legislation and policy requirements are addressed within Appendix 1, but all contain reference to “access for all” and as such it can be seen that people with disabilities have as much right to access your facility as other community members.

The National Recreation Network (NICAN) on ‘Recreation for People with a Disability’ within its National Policy, *Recreation and Leisure are Serious Business* (1998), made a number of recommendations:

- “the provision of additional funds for the specific purpose of assisting existing community-based recreation to welcome and support people with a disability;

- educating and upgrading the attitudes and skills of recreation personnel, so that they may provide adequate and appropriate services to people with a disability;
- the distribution of relevant information about recreation services and opportunities to people with disabilities, especially persons who may reside in institutional settings;
- carrying out community-based access audits on areas such as accessible design, public transport, and community (especially service) attitudes;
- the review and adjustment of recreation service costs, so that people with a disability, who are on a low income can participate in a dignified manner; and
- providing the opportunity for people with disabilities to participate fully in all areas of decision making relevant to their particular recreation option.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> *Creating Active Communities*, NSW Department of Local Government, 2001

## Did you know? In Western Australia...

- 19% of the population (355,500) have a disability;
- one in three people knows someone with a disability, whether as a family member, friend, or workmate;
- 15% of the total population (272,900) have a core activity restriction (ie a restriction in communication, mobility or self care);
- 5.6% of the total population (101,400) have profound or severe core activity restrictions and sometimes need help or supervision with one or more tasks associated with daily living;
- 199,600 carers provide day-to-day support for family or friends with disabilities (ie 8% of the Western Australian population);
- 93% of people with disabilities live in the community, either independently or with family and friends;
- 74% of Western Australians with a disability live in the metropolitan area and 26% live in rural areas; and
- the informal network of family and friends provides 70% of all assistance required by people with disabilities.

Source: *Disability Services Commission*



## 2. Planning a Facility

A successful sport or recreation facility is the result of thorough planning. Without adequate planning the facility will probably fail — fail to meet the current and future needs of the community, fail to meet financial goals or fail to be managed effectively.

Recent public sector reform in Australian Federal, State and Local Governments has been aimed at delivering more cost-effective public facilities and services.

Balancing economic performance with social equity is a major issue in recreation planning, where the community is concerned with their 'quality of life' based on the availability of sport and recreation opportunities within their local area, while governments are, in addition, concerned with the financial performance and return on their investment.

Ensuring your facilities and services are accessible to all members of the community — such as youth, seniors, people with disabilities and people from different ethnic groups — will lead to a greater potential to meet both social and fiduciary responsibilities.

### 2.1 Access for All?

When the word 'access' is mentioned, people automatically think 'car parking bays and toilets'. While access to toilets and car parking bays is important, there is much more to access provision. One of the most fundamentally important aspects of access provision is to achieve 'continuous accessible paths of travel'.

Consider a person with disabilities visiting your facility. Would they find that it is totally accessible, partially accessible or inaccessible?

To give you some understanding of the issues faced by 19% of the population, possible barriers that people with disabilities may face include the following:

#### ■ Barriers to physical access

Kerbs and footpaths, weight of doors, access to desks, counters, steps, narrow corridors, loose furniture obstructing pathway, or steep ramps;





### ■ Barriers to accessible information

Height of reception desk for a person in a wheelchair, leaflets and pamphlets out of reach, size of font too small, or language used;

### ■ Barriers due to lack of staff awareness and skills

Staff unaware of the specific communication skills needed for people with disabilities, lack of understanding of abilities and limitations;

### ■ Barriers to opportunities to socialise

Telephone too high, drink fountain inaccessible due to height and operating lever, café area at different floor level, or step entrance.

“Providing accessible leisure and tourism experiences for people with physical disabilities is a right not an option [and] opens the door to a large growing market”

*S. Darcy,  
Australian Leisure Management,  
June/July 1999*

Providing accessible facilities and services also assists our ageing population and parents with children.

Physical access to a facility is not an end in itself but a starting point for ensuring accessible activities for all the community.

The next phase is to ensure the development of programs and activities that respond to the needs of specific target groups within our community and distribution of information and publicity to let them know about these programs.

“If a council expends the additional money to provide access, and no one knows the access exists, then the provision of access is almost a waste of money”

*S. Darcy,  
Australian Leisure Management,  
June/July 1999*

## 2.2 Legislative Requirements for the Built Environment

Under the *Disability Services Act 1993*, State Government agencies and Local Governments have a responsibility to develop and implement Disability Service Plans which aim to ensure that people with disabilities are able to access community recreation services and facilities that are available to other community members.

Further, the *Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992* requires all groups and services to ensure that they do not discriminate against people on the basis of their disability. Both of these provisions provide an important legislative basis to support the inclusion of people with disabilities in community life.

For new facilities, Local Governments, architects and planners need to be fully aware of the requirements of the legislative requirements of the *Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)* and the *Building Code of Australia (BCA)*.

The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission has released advisory notes on access to premises to assist developers to meet their access responsibilities under the DDA. For details refer to *Buildings — A Guide to Access Requirements* on the Disability Services Commission web site (<http://www.dsc.wa.gov.au>)

## 2.3 Design Standards/Principles

The development or redevelopment of sport and recreation facilities is subject to an increasingly complex range of expectations from customers, managers, legislators and funding agencies.

Some of the issues that must be met are:

- statutory controls;
- building codes and standards;
- varying user requirements;
- economic constraints;
- performance requirements;
- funding agency requirements; and
- community expectations.

To meet these expectations and requirements and ensure an effective design process leading to a successful facility development, it is vital that the following elements are considered:

- clear understanding of the desired outcomes based on identification of the issues at the outset;
- an analysis of key data and community requirements;
- assessment of alternative responses and solutions within the design process;
- a broad understanding of how the community 'uses' public facilities; and
- identification of any current barriers to participation.

Having a full understanding of current issues and a clear picture of the desired outcomes will aid the designer to meet expectations. Any design process needs to be inclusive and ensure that no section of the community is disenfranchised by the facility design.

The requirements for access benefit a large proportion of the community and while some aspects may appear to be expensive, their exclusion will in the final analysis be more costly in terms of community access.

The translation of community needs into a schematic design is the key element, so a focus needs to be maintained on the final outcomes by the clear description of functional elements, the management of the facility, technical issues which need to be applied and finally the aesthetic appeal of the facility.

## 2.4. Feasibility Study

A Feasibility Study is the second phase of the facility planning process.

“Feasibility is a term akin to viability, but it should not be equated with or restricted to financial profitability or viability. Rather feasibility should be taken in the sense of it being an assessment of the development proposal which seeks to demonstrate that it is possible to proceed with the development on one or more grounds.”

*Marriot, Getting it Right,  
Hillary Commission, 1993*

It is an essential part of the planning process because it:

- assesses whether the client and the community can afford to build and operate a facility over the short and long terms;
- reduces the element of uncertainty and risk;
- identifies the 'best fit', including the mix of features, location, size, range of activities and services to be offered, and the capacity for shared use;



- attempts to balance conflicting demands and ensures the project is viewed objectively so that rational decisions can be made;
- identifies sources of funding and can assist in raising the necessary funds to develop the facility; and
- identifies the most appropriate management and marketing strategies for the proposed facility.

### 2.5 Consulting Your Market

Any facility development should be about meeting community needs. It should be designed for and with people, facilitate community interaction and be a 'community hub'.

To this end, community involvement is essential if the proposed facility is to:

- be relevant to local needs;
- achieve long term sustainability via high utilisation and financial returns; and
- establish specific usage and functional requirements.

Consultation with a broad cross-section of the community is vital to identify potential barriers to participation; specific groups need to be targeted to gain their views, such as:

- ethnic communities;
- people with disabilities;
- seniors; and
- parents.

Inclusion of these views at the outset will result in a facility that best caters for the needs of all the local community.

For more information, refer to the Department of Sport and Recreation's publication *How to undertake a Feasibility Study for a proposed Sport or Recreation Facility*.

### 2.6 Location

The site location for new facilities should have been analysed as part of the Feasibility Study. For existing facilities the location is obviously predetermined and it may prove cost prohibitive to relocate the entire facility.

The location of any facility is crucial in determining the level of access by the community.

Issues that need to be addressed when determining a site for a new facility include:

- transport routes to site, including:
  - vehicle access
  - pedestrian access
  - public transport access, and
  - external traffic flow;
- topography of the site;
- size;
- adjacent developments;
- developments in neighbouring councils;
- facility orientation;
- capacity for extensions;
- development costs; and
- environmental issues.

The need to ensure personal 'safe' use of any facility is becoming increasingly important to all members of the community, particularly seniors, parents, children and people with disabilities. The once successful community facility located in isolation to other public facilities is the subject of concerns by users throughout Western Australia. Personal safety needs to be addressed in terms of access, lighting and supervision of facilities.

## 2.7 Design Brief Including Access in the Design and Construction Phases

A design brief has been defined as:

*“...a set of instructions from the client to the designer, outlining what the client expects the final product (facility) to provide. It can vary in length, content and form depending on the nature and complexity of the project.”*

Hillary Commission, 1993 (p.19)

The key elements of a project design brief for a sport or recreation facility are:

- a description of the project history and the client agency;
- the purpose and nature of the facility;
- general design characteristics;
- a management plan;
- a schedule of the required facility components and, where possible, a concept diagram;
- specific requirements in relation to access provisions;
- specific requirements in relation to utilities, services and external works;
- details of any environmental issues which need to be addressed;
- the standards of quality and finishes required;
- site details;
- key dates for the commencement and conclusion of the project; and
- a revised project budget including, where stipulated, the cost limit of the project.<sup>3</sup>

Within the design brief it is important to ensure that the architect/designer is fully aware of the need to meet all building regulations, standards and approvals

<sup>3</sup> *How to prepare a Project Design Brief for a Sport or Recreation Facility*, Department of Sport and Recreation

The aim of the project design brief is to convert your expectations into reality.

particularly those relating to the provision of access for people with disabilities as any changes made later in the design stage, or after construction commences, always have a significant impact on the overall project cost.

When detailing the facility components, it is vital that you spell out the access requirements and other particular requirements to meet the needs of people with disabilities other than those required by the standards.

It is also important to remember that people with different disabilities have a range of needs other than wheelchair access and the brief should contain details regarding signage for the vision impaired, audio loops, vehicle parking and so on.

To ensure that access is appropriately addressed it is recommended that a clause be inserted in the tender documents that includes the following information:

*“The development will be planned so that it is accessible to people of all ages and abilities. The design will comply with the access requirements outlined in the ‘HREOC Advisory Notes on Access to Premises’ (obtained from [http://www.hreoc.gov.au/disability\\_rights/standards/Access\\_to\\_premises/premises\\_advisory.html](http://www.hreoc.gov.au/disability_rights/standards/Access_to_premises/premises_advisory.html) and the BCA.)”*

For more information refer to the Department of Sport and Recreation’s publication, *How to prepare a Project Design Brief for a Sport or Recreation Facility*, *Sporting Dimensions*, and *Buildings — A Guide To Access Requirements*.



### Case Study: Outdoor Integrated Playground

#### Yokine Integrated Playground

Yokine Reserve is located in the City of Stirling adjacent to the Sir David Brand School for Children with Disabilities.

In 1992 a grant application was made to the Gordon Reid Foundation to access funds to develop an integrated playground to encourage interaction between children with disabilities and able-bodied children.

A grant of \$15,000 was received and matched by the City of Stirling, providing a total of \$30,000 to develop a regional playground.

The 'Regional Playground' criteria was defined as:

- more than ten play events;
- contained within a sandpit;
- servicing a three kilometre radius; and
- incorporating support facilities including seating, bins, drink fountains, access and parking.

The playground caters to children with disabilities through the inclusion of larger decks, double handrails, ramps with a 'lip' to prevent wheels dropping off the ramp and rubber matting or concrete paths to access all equipment.

Following discussions with local residents, users and the Sir David Brand School some modifications were made to the initial design including:

- installation of a perimeter fence to prevent dogs entering the sandpit;
- installation of a sensory path;
- larger areas to allow wheelchairs to pass;
- overhead activities;
- activities which provide an opportunity to 'look down' thus creating a sense of height;
- include sensory activities in the playground, path and/or wall; and
- stationary activities which encourage hand/eye coordination such as abacus, steering wheels, squeeze bars, viewing panels, Tic Tac Toe and shop fronts.

The addition of these modifications has provided all children with a challenging, fun playground that is well used.

The features of the playground can be incorporated into many existing playgrounds and thus encourage integration between children with disabilities and able-bodied children.

#### For further information please contact:

The Recreation Officer

City of Stirling

Tel: (08) 9345 8555

Fax: (08) 9345 8693

Web site: [www.stirling.wa.gov.au](http://www.stirling.wa.gov.au)

## 2.8 Adapting Existing Facilities. What can you do?

Within Western Australia there are a number of sport and recreation facilities that were built prior to legislation such as the *Disability Services Act 1993*, that requires public authorities to work towards achieving five key outcomes, these being:

- existing services are adapted to ensure they meet the needs of people with disabilities;
- access to buildings and facilities is improved;
- information about services is provided in formats which meet the communication requirements of people with disabilities;
- advice and services are delivered by staff who are aware of and understand the needs of people with disabilities; and
- opportunities are provided for people with disabilities to participate in public consultations, grievance mechanisms and decision-making processes.

The Building Code of Australia (BCA), the *Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)* and the 'HREOC Advisory Notes on Access to Premises' outline mandatory and recommended requirements concerning access to facilities and buildings.

While it is acknowledged that a number of access issues in 'old' facilities require

major structural changes, it is also possible to remove some existing barriers by making simple changes to the physical environment. Not all solutions need to be complex and costly, often simple low cost changes can make all the difference.

Examples of these changes can be seen in a number of facilities where ramps have been provided, a hoist has been fitted to an outdoor swimming pool, removal of kerbs in certain locations, re-marking of car parks to allow for the locating of access bays, new signage produced in appropriate font and colour, the use of the international symbol of access, display of the better hearing counter card, changes in floor coverings, replacement of entry doors, changes to colour schemes and so on.

On first observation, the requirements of the BCA and the 'HREOC Advisory Notes on Access to Premises' and Australian Standards on Access may appear daunting and cost prohibitive but, as shown above, many simple changes can be made to make your facility more accessible without great expense.

Facility managers may need to change policies, procedures and practices to allow for a more flexible approach in providing services to people with disabilities, young children, women with special needs (cultural, economic and physical) and seniors.



## 3. Design Elements

Certain design elements of a facility have been identified within the BCA, the 'HREOC Advisory Notes on Access to Premises' and the Australian Standards. A summary of these issues is provided below along with comments regarding the impact on the management of your facility.

### 3.1 Continuous Accessible Path of Travel

Making your facility accessible is not just about meeting access requirements defined within legislative access requirements, but also a practical linking of the various aspects. This means the individual items of access features must link to provide an accessible pathway.

A continuous accessible path of travel is defined as:

*"An uninterrupted path of travel to or within a building providing access to all facilities. This will not incorporate any steps, stairs, revolving doorway, escalator, turnstile or other impediment which would prevent it from being safely negotiated by people with disabilities."<sup>4</sup>*

### 3.2 Change Rooms/Showers

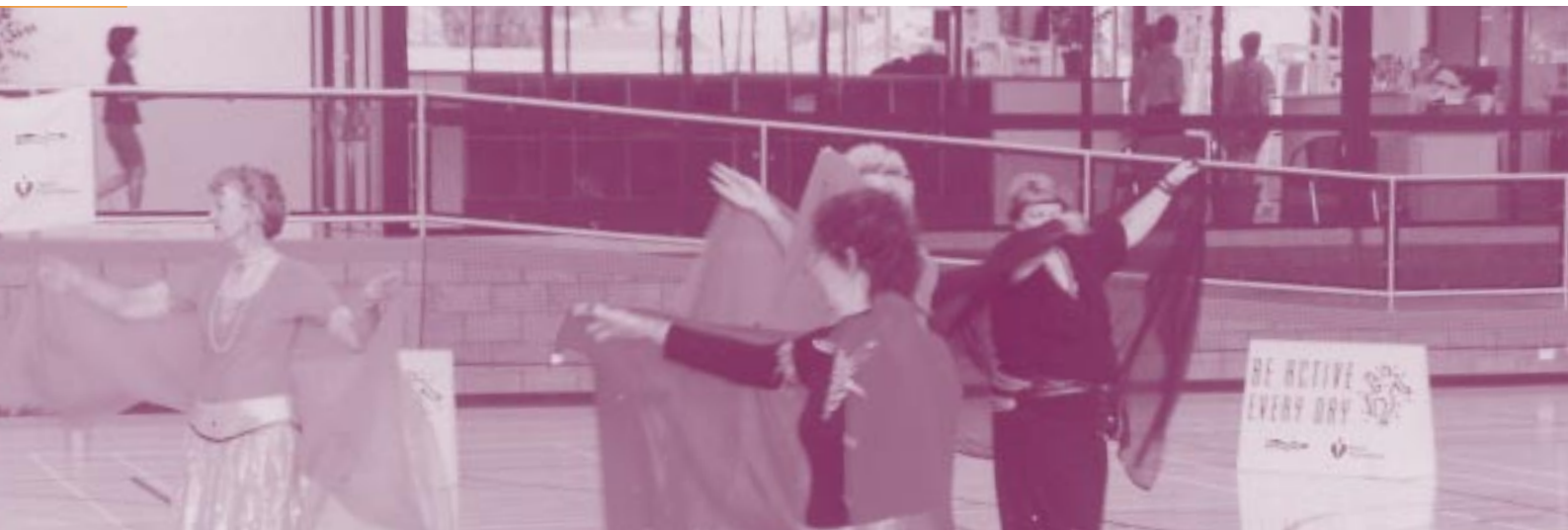
The number of change rooms and showers will be determined by the total floor space as defined within the Building Code of Australia — Public Buildings. In addition you will need to have some idea of the projected use of your facility and the type of use whether it be in an aquatic centre, sporting club or sports centre. In a multi-use centre the correct positioning of change rooms and showers will reduce the need to duplicate facilities and multiple groups utilising different facilities within your centre can use the same change rooms and showers.

Consideration will need to be given to:

- number;
- type (dry side/aquatics/gymnasium/teams/individuals);
- seating;
- locker space;
- floor surface (slip resistant);
- clothes hooks height;
- shower cubicles for people with disabilities;
- doors;

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<sup>4</sup> Access Resource Kit, Disability Services Commission



- mirrors
- fixtures;
- privacy;
- family cubicles; and
- access to all of the above.

### 3.3 Hoists/Lifts/Ramps/Steps

Where there is a change in floor levels or multiple levels within a building you will need to consider access issues and how people will get to and from their destination.

The use of hoists/lifts/ramps/steps will be appropriate in different circumstances but some thought needs to be given to the appropriate siting. Where steps are provided, it is important to consider the following aspects:

- location;
- supervision;
- floor surface (slip resistant);
- height of steps;
- step edging (contrasting colour);
- handrail; and
- alternate accessible route.

Where ramps are provided, it is important to consider the following aspects:

- location;
- supervision;
- floor surface (slip resistant);
- slope/gradient;
- colour contrast;
- tactile ground indicators;
- handrails; and
- lighting.

Where hoists/lifts are provided, it is important to consider the following aspects:

- location;
- supervision;
- operating signs/buttons;
- size;
- emergencies (telephone and alarm); and

- ease of operation, preferably independently by people with disabilities.

### 3.4 Toilets

Correctly locating toilets will aid the efficient management of your facility and will be determined by the BCA — Public Buildings and the projected use and type of events to be held. Where it is envisaged that a large number of spectators are expected to attend the permanent facilities, supplementary portable toilets may be required.

Unisex accessible toilets are preferable to separate male/female toilets, enabling carers and partners to assist if possible. The location of accessible toilets should be within a continuous accessible path of travel and positioned close to activity areas.

Issues that need to be considered when locating toilets within the facility include:

- location;
- number and type (male/female/accessible);
- signage;
- size;
- locking mechanisms;
- handles (type), grab rails;
- toilet size (children's /full size/ accessible);
- toilet paper dispenser;
- basins
- mirrors;
- light switches (height); and
- hand dryers (height).

### 3.5 Reception Areas

The reception counter should be the central focus of your facility and is the first point of contact with your community. The adage 'first impressions are lasting impressions' is particularly true when using a sport or recreation facility and while a lot of this can



be attributed to receptionists' or staff dealings, the physical design of your reception can impact on the community's leisure experience.

Physical design aspects of reception areas need to take into consideration the management requirements of your facility. It should be an area that provides control, information and direct lines of supervision of the entry and other areas within the facility.

When designing a reception, the following issues should be considered:

- access from entry doors;
- visibility from entry doors;
- counter height;
- loose furniture (chairs/display stands);
- colour of loose fittings to provide a contrast;
- floor surface;
- lighting;
- accessible toilets;
- supervision line of sight;
- staff requirements;
- 'Better Hearing Counter Card';
- signage; and
- TIS and TTY Relay Service phone number on display.

### 3.6 Audio Loops

The ability to hear public announcements and other information is important in ensuring the safe use of your facility. As our community ages, and given the linkage between age and deteriorating hearing, many more people have difficulty understanding management directives which may impact on the multi-use of facilities. The addition of an audio loop or other appropriate hearing augmentation at identified locations within your facility will aid in ensuring public announcements are heard by all your users.

An audio loop is defined as:

*"An amplifier and long cable which transmits sound from a public address system directly to the hearing aids of people positioned inside the loop cable. Audio loops can be transportable and are available for hire or purchase to assist people with a hearing impairment at public events. They can also be permanently built into buildings at time of construction."*

*Access Resource Kit,  
Disability Services Commission*

Sound proofing certain activity areas will increase the multiple use of your facility. For instance two meeting rooms adjacent to each other or sharing a common wall are difficult to program simultaneously when aerobics is being held in one of the rooms. The noise from this activity makes hearing very difficult in the adjoining room and thus limits its use. By sound proofing one area the multi use of all areas is more possible.

### 3.7 Floor Surfaces

The correct selection and maintenance of floor and ground surfaces is important in the ongoing integrity of your facility and has a capacity to impact on both the ease of use by your customers as well as the ongoing financial implications of maintenance.

High areas of traffic need to be identified to ensure that a hardwearing, non-slip surface is provided. All Local Governments and facility providers have a duty of care to ensure that not only are floor surfaces appropriate for their use but also are maintained in an appropriate manner. An inappropriate maintenance program resulting in surfaces becoming slippery (eg sports hall floors) or not repairing holes or ensuring reticulation heads are covered in sports grounds and parks can result in accidents.

When considering the floor surfaces within your facility, it is important to address the following:

- type and variety of use;
- areas of high traffic;
- areas subject to spillage (kiosks, aquatic areas);
- changes of floor surfaces (eg carpet to parquetry etc);
- maintenance requirements;
- access by people with a disability using wheelchairs or walking frames;
- signage; and
- cost.

### 3.8 Parking

The amount of car parking required for your facility will be determined based on the projected use of your facility, public transport access and the type of events planned.

Based on the total number of bays provided a percentage of these bays must be designated as 'Accessible Bays' and designed in accordance with the Australian Standards.

Currently (2001) an accessible parking bay is defined as:

*"A parking bay with a minimum width of 3200mm (3800mm preferred). The bay will be adjacent to the building entrance and be on level ground with a firm surface with no loose particles. Access to adjacent pathways shall be level or via kerb ramps."*<sup>5</sup>

The amount of car parking provided can impact on your facility and its viability. If people have trouble parking they may stop using your facility.

Some issues that require consideration in determining your car parking provision include:

- size;
- location (close to entrance);
- access and egress;
- lighting;
- landscaping;
- security;
- drop off point;
- bus parking; and
- flat surface.

### 3.9 Spectator Seating

Depending on the size of your facility and the type of program/events conducted it may be necessary to consider spectator seating. Spectator seating can be permanent or mobile but in either case consideration needs to be given to its design and positioning.

In terms of people with disabilities, it is important that a continuous path of travel is provided and spaces provided for wheelchairs in any configuration. Additional space needs to be provided to allow for friends and partners to be able to sit with a person using a wheelchair. Access needs to be provided to all types of seating (ie box, decking, public etc).

All seating needs to ensure a clear line of sight to the event for all patrons including those in wheelchairs and this will vary between the general viewing public and those persons with a disability.

While not specifically related to seating, it is also important that any scoring system is auditory as well as visual to enhance the experience for a vision impaired person.

### 3.10 Signs

A well-signed facility, including location signs, direction signs and information signs, will assist the efficient management of your facility. It is important to remember that not

<sup>5</sup> Access Resource Kit, Disability Services Commission



all people have perfect eyesight and as such the style of sign is critical.

Issues that need to be addressed in determining the style of signs include:

- size;
- font size and style;
- colours/non reflective;
- contrast;
- positioning;
- graphics; and
- illumination.

### 3.11 Café/Kiosk

A good café/kiosk needs to be conveniently located for all customers to attract the public. It needs to be attractive and have an ability to serve large numbers of people in a quick and efficient manner. Whether the café/kiosk is being designed as part of a new facility or you are looking at necessary modifications to an existing café/kiosk, the following access issues need to be addressed:

- counter height;
- positioning within building;
- signage;
- space between tables/eating area (wheelchair circulation);
- type of tables and leg clearance; and
- accessible toilets.

### 3.12 Pools/Spas

The development or redevelopment of swimming pools throughout Western Australia has become a priority in most communities. The existence of a number of 1970s designed Olympic swimming pools and the 'origin' of the indoor leisure pool has resulted in higher community expectations regarding public aquatic centres. Swimming pools differ from other sport and recreation facilities due to the

ever present 'water element' and as such designing of these facilities has resulted in a number of new innovations such as indoor wave pools, movable floors and movable bulkheads.

As with any facility design, the key issues to be determined are how the facility is to be used, by whom and the differing ways in which it is expected to operate.

Access for people with disabilities to the pool and spa need to be considered at the outset and includes the following systems:

#### ■ Lifts

Pool lifts are mechanical devices that move a person into or out of the water.

Some lifts are permanently installed while others are portable, placed in a deck mounting or rolled into place when needed. Lifts may require a transfer from a wheelchair to the lift seat or may have a sling seat that moves the person directly from a wheelchair to the water. Some lifts are power operated and others are operated manually; the user can operate some independently, while others require assistance. (Preference for individual operated lifts.)

#### ■ Movable Pool Floors

Movable pool floors allow the entire pool floor or just a section of the floor to be raised or lowered to any depth or to a desired slope. Hydraulic pistons are used to slowly move the floor. When the floor is raised to deck level, participants can either walk or roll their wheelchairs on to the pool floor and be lowered to the desired water depth.

#### ■ Ramps

Pool ramps typically begin at the pool's deck level and provide an even sloped surface into the water. They may be constructed as part of the pool or may be portable or removable equipment but either way will need hand rails.

### ■ Stairs

Unlike ladders, stairs provide gradual entry into the pool. They may be a permanent part of the pool, built into the pool tank or into the wall of the pool, or be removable and portable. Stairs may be narrow or wide and should have handrails.

### ■ Zero Depth Entry

Zero depth entry pools provide an end of the pool where the pool bottom begins at the deck level and gradually slopes to a deeper level. This creates an entry similar to that of a beach.

Consideration should also be given to:

- colour contrast;
- handrails;
- slip resistant floor surfaces; and
- access to change rooms and toilets.



# 4. Improving Access to Your Facility – Points to Consider

## 4.1 Background

The following facility-specific lists have been developed to provide you with considerations to make your facility more user-friendly to seniors, parents and people with a disability.

The listings are not all-inclusive, but do provide a logical walk through your facility by any potential customer.

A more detailed checklist is available from the Disability Services Commission in its document *Access Resource Kit* which looks at the specifics of the Building Code of Australia, the 'HREOC Advisory Notes on Access to Premises' and

Australian Standards available on the Disability Services Commission web site (<http://www.dsc.wa.gov.au>).

## 4.2 How to Use the Lists

The specific facility lists provide a number of questions requiring an assessment of various aspects of the facility.

Some of the questions relate to building design and as such need to be considered in light of standards and set requirements, while others relate to management issues and how the facility is used.

Once you have reviewed the relevant

For people planning or upgrading services and facilities it is recommended that you refer to the latest 'Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission Advisory Notes on Access to Premises'. These notes are available from the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission at GPO Box 5218, Sydney NSW 1042 or on their web site ([http://www.hreoc.gov.au/disability\\_rights/standards/Access\\_to\\_premises/premises\\_advisory.html](http://www.hreoc.gov.au/disability_rights/standards/Access_to_premises/premises_advisory.html)).





sections of the lists, summarise your responses and list those items that are not currently accessible. Staff and management should then consider solutions to the issues, some of which might be simple and cost effective to remedy.

Those items that require structural modifications or purchase of equipment need to be costed and prioritised for inclusion in budget deliberations. Don't forget to check other funding sources such as the Lotteries Commission or the Department of Sport and Recreation.

You will continually need to be aware of how your facility is used and be proactive in determining the need to remove any barriers to participation to retain and attract new customers to your facility.

### 4.3 General Access to Your Facility

#### Car Parking

1. Do you have the required number of accessible parking spaces?
2. Are your accessible car parking bays clearly signed?
3. Do you have an enforcement procedure in place to ensure the accessible bays are only used by appropriate persons?
4. Is there a continuous accessible route of travel from the car park to the entrance?
5. Do you have a car/bus drop off area close to the entrance?

To accurately answer these questions you will need to refer to the *Access Resource Kit* available from the Disability Services Commission web site (<http://www.dsc.wa.gov.au>).

#### Entrance

1. If there are stairs at the main entrance, is there also a ramp or lift, or is there an alternative accessible entrance?
2. Are there clear signs indicating the nearest accessible entrance?
3. Do you have automatic doors?
4. If the door is manually operated, is it easy to open?
5. Is the doorway wide enough to allow for people in wheelchairs to enter when door is open?
6. Can a smooth transit be made through the doorway? (No steps or change in floor surface level)

#### Reception

1. Is the reception desk clearly seen from the entrance door?
2. Can all furniture, fixtures and fittings protruding into the access way be detected by a person with a vision impairment using a cane?
3. Do you have a wheelchair accessible counter area with a reduced height and sufficient leg clearance underneath?
4. Is the reception area well lit?
5. Is there a 'Better Hearing Counter Card' on display?

### 4.4 Indoor Multi-purpose Sports Centres

#### Activity Areas/Meeting Rooms

1. Are all of your activity areas on one level?
2. If you have more than one level in the facility is there an accessible route to the upper levels?



3. Are there clear signs to indicate the accessible route?
4. Are all floor coverings non-slip and of equal levels?

### Sports Hall

1. Is there a continuous accessible path of travel to the courts?
2. Are there clear signs indicating the nearest accessible entrance?
3. Is all loose equipment stored outside of access ways?
4. Do you provide spectator seating within your sports hall?
5. Is there access to the spectator area for use by persons in wheelchairs?
6. Do you have a PA system, if so does it include an audio loop?
7. Can all users see/hear the scoreboard?

### Café/Kiosk

1. Does the café/kiosk have a continuous accessible path of travel?
2. Can all furniture, fixtures and fittings protruding into the access way be detected by a person with a vision impairment using a cane?
3. Do you have a wheelchair-accessible counter area with a reduced height and leg clearance underneath?
4. Do you have suitable wheelchair circulation between tables?
5. Are there wheelchair accessible toilets in close proximity to the café/kiosk?

### Gymnasium

1. Is there a continuous path of travel to the gymnasium?
2. Where the floor surface is not firm (exercise mats) is it clearly signed?

3. Are loose weights stored after each use?
4. Are there raised platforms for some pieces of equipment?
5. Is some equipment accessible by people with disabilities?

### Change Rooms/Showers

1. Do you have designated accessible change/shower rooms?
2. Do all accessible change/shower rooms meet the access requirements in terms of doorway and shower cubicle size, grab rails, seats, tap styles, change table etc?
3. Is the accessible change/shower room unisex to permit assistance being given by friends and partners?
4. Is the floor slip resistant?
5. Do you have regular inspections/cleaning of this area?
6. Do you have some private changing areas?

### Toilets

1. Do you have designated accessible toilets?
2. Are the toilets clearly signposted with the international access symbol?
3. Do all accessible toilets meet access requirements in terms of doorway size, locking mechanisms, grab rails, seats, basins, toilet paper dispenser, tap styles, mirrors?

### Utilities

1. Is a public telephone available?
2. Can persons in wheelchairs access the public telephone? (Consider the height, telephone cord length and circulation space)
3. Is the area surrounding the telephone well lit?

To accurately answer these questions you will need to refer to the *Access Resource Kit* available from the Disability Services Commission web site (<http://www.dsc.wa.gov.au>).



4. Does the phone have a volume control?
5. Are drinking fountains provided in the facility?
6. Is there an accessible drinking fountain?
7. Are the drinking fountain controls operable by one hand and in an accessible position?

### 4.5 Aquatic Facilities

#### Swimming Pool/Spa

1. Is there at least one accessible means of water entry/exit provided for each pool that is located on an accessible route?
2. Is there a colour contrast edging around the pool?
3. Is there a hoist/ramp available at the entry point?
4. Do you have a trained attendant who can assist with pool entry/exit where required?
5. Is the floor slip resistant?
6. Are the controls in the spa area easily operable?

#### Café/Kiosk

1. Does the café/kiosk have a continuous accessible path of travel?
2. Can all furniture, fixtures and fittings protruding into the access way be detected by a person with a vision impairment using a cane?
3. Do you have a wheelchair accessible counter area with a reduced height and leg clearance underneath?
4. Do you have suitable wheelchair circulation between tables?
5. Are there wheelchair accessible toilets in close proximity to the café/kiosk?

#### Change Room/Showers

1. Do you have designated accessible change/shower rooms?
2. Do all accessible change/shower rooms meet the access requirements in terms of doorway and shower cubicle size, grab rails, seats, tap styles, change table etc?
3. Is the accessible change/shower room unisex to permit assistance being given by friends and partners?
4. Where carers are expected to assist people in changing is there a change table and hoist available?
5. Is the floor slip resistant?

#### Toilets

1. Do you have designated accessible toilets?
2. Are the toilets clearly signposted with the international access symbol?
3. Do all accessible toilets meet the access requirements in terms of doorway size, locking mechanisms, grab rails, seats, basins, toilet paper dispenser, tap styles, mirrors etc?

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3. Is the area surrounding the telephone well lit?
4. Does the phone have a volume control?
5. Are drinking fountains provided in the facility?
6. Is there an accessible drinking fountain?
7. Are the controls operable by one hand and in an accessible position?

To accurately answer these questions you will need to refer to the *Access Resource Kit* available from the Disability Services Commission web site (<http://www.dsc.wa.gov.au>).



### 4.6 Community Hall

#### Main Hall

1. Is there a continuous path of travel to the main hall from the entrance?
2. Is the floor surface slip resistant?
3. Do you have a PA system, if so does it include an audio loop?
4. If an audio loop is available is a sign indicating its presence clearly visible at the main entrance?
5. Is all loose equipment stored after use?

#### Stage

1. Is there a stage in the hall?
2. Is the stage accessed by steps or ramp?
3. Are there handrails available on the steps or ramps?
4. Are there change rooms for the stage?
5. Is there a continuous path of travel from the change rooms to the stage?
6. Is the change room large enough to allow ease of movement for people using wheelchairs?

#### Kitchen/Meeting Rooms

1. Do you have a wheelchair accessible counter area with a reduced height and leg clearance underneath?
2. Are fridges available for the storage of medication?
3. Are light switches at a level where a person in a wheelchair can operate them?
4. Is there a continuous accessible path of travel from the entrance to the meeting rooms?
5. Are all floor surfaces firm and non-slip?

### 4.7 Stadiums

#### Access

1. Is there the required number of accessible car parking bays?
2. Is there a suitable drop-off point to allow for ease of access?
3. Is there a continuous accessible path of travel from the parking area to the venue?
4. Is there an accessible entry provided at all controlled entry points?
5. Are all crowd control staff aware of the specific needs of people with disabilities?

#### Viewing

1. Is a continuous path of travel provided to access the viewing areas?
2. Are positions provided in various locations for people using wheelchairs?
3. Is sufficient space provided for people using wheelchairs to allow them to sit with partners, carers or friends?
4. Are positions located to allow comparable lines of sight to the general viewing area?
5. Is the scoring auditory as well as visual?
6. Does the emergency exit provide a continuous accessible path of travel from the venue?

#### Refreshments

1. Do you have a wheelchair accessible counter area with a reduced height and leg clearance underneath?
2. Are straws available?
3. Can someone sitting in a wheelchair easily see menus?
4. Is there a visual display of menu items to aid people who cannot read or speak English?

To accurately answer these questions you will need to refer to the *Access Resource Kit* available from the Disability Services Commission web site (<http://www.dsc.wa.gov.au>).



5. Is a range of items provided to allow for choice and special dietary requirements? (eg diet drinks, people with allergies, diabetes etc)

### 4.8 Outdoor Reserves/Parks/ Sportsgrounds

#### Pathways/Trails

1. Are there any facilities located on the pathway or trail, which will limit access? (eg bridges, gates, turnstiles, narrow paths)
2. Is an alternative route provided where access is limited and is it signposted?
3. Are shelters provided to protect against the weather?
4. Are shelters provided near set down points, seating and eating areas and viewing areas?
5. Is the floor surface firm and non-slip to allow ease of access by wheelchair users and parents with prams?

#### Amenities

1. Are BBQs and picnic areas accessible by all persons?
2. Is the BBQ/picnic area well lit at night particularly at access points?
3. Is there an accessible toilet available in close proximity to the BBQ/picnic area?
4. Is there a tap to provide water for guide dogs or companion dogs?
5. Is there a firm pathway to all accessible facilities within the park such as toilets, playground and picnic area?
6. Is the drinking fountain accessible? (eg controls easy to operate, leg clearance underneath etc)

#### Information (Refer Section 6.4)

1. Is there a map provided that clearly depicts access limitations?
2. Is the map provided in graphic form as well as text for people who cannot read?
3. Is information multilingual?
4. Is all signage well lit?

### 4.9 Sporting Clubs

#### Membership

1. Is your membership open to all members of the community?
2. Do you encourage a culture of inclusion within your club?
3. Are members prepared to make changes in facilities and programs to expand the accessibility of your club?
4. Do you ensure that your marketing is specific to targeted populations within your community?
5. Do membership fees reflect the level of participation (ie reduced rates for those who cannot participate in all activities)?

#### Playing Facilities

1. Are all your playing facilities accessible?
2. Is there a continuous accessible path of travel to the playing area?
3. Where there are access limitations have you considered the placement of ramps?
4. Are access limitations clearly sign posted to advise patrons of the situation?
5. Are handrails provided on all steps and ramps?
6. Are the edges of paths well marked to allow for people with a vision impairment to negotiate them?

To accurately answer these questions you will need to refer to the *Access Resource Kit* available from the Disability Services Commission web site (<http://www.dsc.wa.gov.au>).



### Social Facilities

1. Do you have a wheelchair accessible bar/kitchen counter area with a reduced height and leg clearance underneath?
2. Can all furniture, fixtures and fittings protruding into the access way be detected by a person with a vision impairment using a cane?
3. Do you have suitable wheelchair circulation between tables?
4. Are there wheelchair accessible toilets?
5. Is there a 'Better Hearing Counter Card' on display?

To accurately answer these questions you will need to refer to the *Access Resource Kit* available from the Disability Services Commission web site (<http://www.dsc.wa.gov.au>).



# 5. Management

## 5.1 Knowing Your Community and Its Diversity

For any facility to be successful it must firstly identify the needs of its community then provide programs and services to meet those needs.

Knowing your community and its socio-economic profile is the basis of understanding its diverse ages, ethnicity, ability, mobility, family structure, education and housing characteristics.

Australian Bureau of Statistics data should be gained for the following characteristics:

- **Population growth/density**

Population projections will give an indication of the expected population growth or decline and potential impacts on service demands.

- **Age/gender structure**

Understanding the age/gender composition of the area will aid in the determination of specific age/gender related needs.

- **Ethnicity**

Identifying the country of origin and language spoken at home will highlight

any concentration of particular ethnic groups requiring specific facilities and programs.

- **Mobility**

An understanding of motor vehicle ownership and travel to work may assist in identifying access issues and the need to link in with public transport when scheduling specific programs.

- **Ability**

Identification of the number of people with disabilities, including type of disability, will assist in highlighting specific needs within your community.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics provides census data every five years which contains data that can be extracted for specific geographic areas. Data currently takes some 18 months to be collated and published and care should be taken in newer areas as the community may have changed considerably since census collection.

Census data analysis should be supplemented with some form of community consultation such as:

- community surveys;





- discussions with other community/service groups; or
- community observations.

Knowing your community will help you identify 'gaps' in your program and service provision. Planning of suitable programs will require an understanding of generic needs of each group and may require you to seek relevant partnerships within your community, such as links with:

- Seniors Recreation Council;
- WA Disabled Sports Association;
- Recreation Network;
- Migrant Resource Centre;
- Access Advisory Council; and
- Local Users Advisory Group within your area etc.

### 5.2 Considering Culture

*Expanding your Sport and Recreation Markets* is all about identifying groups within our community who may be

“Australia’s population is diverse, made up of people from indigenous backgrounds as well as those whose cultural origins are based in another country. The formation of our communities in terms of origin, descent, language, culture, religion and other characteristics, needs to be reflected in the way opportunities for participation in recreation, leisure, sport and art are provided.”

*Creating Active Communities,  
NSW Department of Local Government,  
2001*

prevented from using your facility due to access issues.

Embracing diversity within your community will provide new opportunities for expanding your sport and recreation market, which in turn will improve your economic return.

### 5.3 Contract Management

The move towards contract management of various sport and recreation facilities within Western Australia is likely to continue so ensuring all facilities are accessible to all the community is vital.

When considering tender specifications, it is important to consider some measures of community use along with financial requirements. Service levels that reflect the composition of the community need to be determined to ensure the facility can be used by all.

Simple measures could include a requirement for a number of programs to target specific user groups or evaluation of facility use providing information about the number and type of activities and users.

All tender specifications need to take into consideration the social as well as financial benefits.

### 5.4 Staff Training and Development

It has often been said that your staff are your greatest resource so investing in their development is vital to maintain standards and improve service delivery.

Staff, whether they be paid employees or volunteers:

- set the centre’s atmosphere;
- serve your customers;



- provide programs; and
- receive direct customer feedback.

Good staff need to be continually challenged to maintain high levels of motivation, job satisfaction, high performance levels and reduction in absenteeism and staff turnover.

As the complexities of facility management increase, it is important that each and every staff member continues to grow and develop skills and abilities.

It is vital that staff have an awareness of the specific issues related to the varying needs of the community whether they be seniors, people with disabilities, parents or people from non-English speaking backgrounds, in other words 'different strokes for different folks'.

Training courses could include:

- technical skills (computer skills, first aid, lifeguard skills, sport specific coaching skills etc);
- customer service skills;
- communication skills (written and oral);
- program development;
- program delivery;
- disability and cultural awareness; and
- personal presentation.

It is important to remember that all staff should have the opportunity to attend training courses. Too often the receptionist or casual staff who deal directly with the public are omitted, yet they are often the first public face of your facility!

### 5.5 Positive Attitudes

Successful facilities recognise that there is a need to develop a positive and supportive environment that welcomes all members of the community. Negative experiences from staff or community members can result in a person not returning to your facility. A

supportive environment has been defined as:

- "welcoming people in;
- accepting differences;
- finding valued roles for all;
- interdependence; and
- recognising the contribution and gifts others bring."<sup>6</sup>

While some understanding of specific disabilities will be of benefit, it is not the only knowledge or skill required to ensure positive attitudes within your facility. It is just as important that all staff consider individual needs and:

- listen to your existing customer concerns, feelings and aspirations;
- recognise individual abilities, talents, skills and interests;
- offer assistance if necessary;
- give encouragement and recognition; and
- identify key community members to act as role models.<sup>7</sup>

**"... a leisure centre must be responsive to the needs of its customers by treating each one as the most important person in the centre."**

*Leisure Centre Management,  
Hillary Commission for Sport, Fitness  
and Leisure, 1993*

<sup>6</sup> *Community Inclusion For All, Creating Inclusive Communities*, Townsville, Australia

<sup>7</sup> *Everybody In! Guide to the Active Inclusion of People with a Disability*, SPARC Disability Foundation Inc, 2000



## 5.6 Communication — What do I say?

Communication is a crucial part of everyday life. It is the means by which we give and receive information from and to other people.

We communicate in many ways including:

- speech/vocal;
- gestures;
- facial expressions;
- body language;
- physical contact;
- writing;
- graphics; and
- computerised systems.<sup>8</sup>

No one approach is better than another and it may be that a number of communication techniques are required to communicate with our customers. For instance, when communicating with a person who does not speak English it may require pictures or mime to communicate, whereas with others we may need to say what is required in a simple sentence structure.

What is important is that each person who uses your centre is treated as an individual with specific needs and thus consideration must be taken of the communication approach to be used.

Of utmost importance in communicating is the ability to listen to the individual's needs and not pre-judge their requirements.

Communicating with people with disabilities is no different to any one else.

In general terms:

- smile;
- listen to the person;
- maintain eye contact;
- watch for a person's body language;
- speak clearly and naturally;
- wait for a response to questions;
- see the person not any disability;

<sup>8</sup> *Everybody In! Guide to the Active Inclusion of People with a Disability*, SPARC Disability Foundation Inc, 2000

“The greatest single barrier to participation for persons with a disability is the attitude of others.”

*Rick Hansen, cited in ParticipACTION*

- avoid jargon;
- do not 'talk down' to anyone; and
- if you are unsure what has been said, ask the person to repeat.

At times, people with a disability may experience difficulty in asking for information, directions, help or permission.

This might be because they are:

- unaware of the need to ask;
- unsure who to ask;
- unsure how to ask;
- fearful of failure or ridicule;
- fearful that asking for help will perpetuate negative labels; or
- not prepared to ask certain people who may be perceived as always saying 'no'.<sup>9</sup>

When assisting with people with disabilities remember the following points:

- treat people with a disability as you would any other member of the community;
- be honest and realistic in your response;
- do not feel guilty about refusing unreasonable requests but explain why it is not possible;
- maintain eye contact and avoid aggressive responses;
- be aware of the tone you use;
- communicate at a comfortable distance;
- be prepared to negotiate and possibly meet half way; and
- ask if they need assistance if they appear to be having any difficulties.

<sup>9</sup> *Everybody In! Guide to the Active Inclusion of People with a Disability*, SPARC Disability Foundation Inc, 2000



## Case Study: Recreation Access for People with Disabilities (RAPiD)

### WA Disabled Sports Association and the Department of Sport and Recreation Great Southern Region

In December 1999 the WA Disabled Sports Association encouraged the formation of a local committee to develop recreation activities and programs for people with disabilities.

In February 2000 a local group met to discuss broader issues regarding access to services by seniors with restricted mobility (ie arthritis, isolation etc) and people with disabilities in the Great Southern.

The committee is composed of representatives from the Disability Services Commission, the Department of Sport and Recreation, ACTIV Foundation Accommodation Services, Lower Great Southern Primary Health Service, the Schizophrenia Fellowship Albany and Districts Inc, Great Southern College of TAFE and the City of Albany's Senior Advisory Committee.

The committee has developed a program to enhance opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in sport and recreation activities in the region. Activities include wheelchair sports, equestrian events and others.

The program's mission is:

*"To ensure that people with disabilities in the Great Southern Region are given equal opportunity to access sport and recreation as their metropolitan counterparts."*

To create lasting legacies that improve the wellbeing of people with disabilities.

The project objectives are:

- to develop a program that will enhance the physical, mental, social, emotional wellbeing of people who have a disability;
- to create more welcoming environments that embrace people with disabilities as members of the community;
- to create greater opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in community activities;
- to raise community awareness of issues facing people with disabilities; and
- to prepare a broader cross section of the community to accommodate people with disabilities.

The project was launched in February 2001 and whilst still in its infancy the committee is confident that it will help create an environment in the region where seniors and people with disabilities feel welcome to participate in recreation activities.

### For further information please contact:

The Chairperson,  
RAPiD

Tel: (08) 9841 6800

Fax: (08) 9842 1660

Email: [sportrec@omninet.net.au](mailto:sportrec@omninet.net.au)



# 6. Programming

## 6.1 Flexible Participation

What can I do to ensure the full participation of people with a disability in my community event?

Too often generalisations are made about people with disabilities; they are often grouped together as 'disabled people' and considered to be the same. Abilities, confidence and personalities of people with disabilities cover the same range as other people in the community. There is a wide range of disabilities all with varying degrees of ability. For this reason it is important that the needs of the individual be considered in programming. Some people with disabilities seek and need considerable support with things like physical lifting, meal assisting etc, others may need no more than transport. A person with a disability is someone with specific needs, the same as you and I.<sup>10</sup>

Including persons with a disability in community and leisure events has many benefits for individuals, the community and

society as a whole. Here are a few steps to assist you in the inclusion process:

- develop partnerships with people with a disability;
- develop partnerships with local clubs, sporting organisations;
- involve individuals with disabilities and their advocates (parents, spouses, carers and teachers) as advisors in the planning process;
- develop partnerships with agencies serving people with disabilities;
- involve agencies serving persons with disabilities that can provide professional advice about how to best include their clients in community events;
- use a community development approach by identifying individuals capable of providing leadership within the community;
- take stock of all that the community has to offer, including programs, services, training and other opportunities;
- tap into these resources to enhance opportunities for persons with a disability;
- educate the individual about leisure opportunities;

<sup>10</sup> *Training manual for support persons*, Recreation Association for the Disabled of WA, Abbotts, P 1986



- avoid making assumptions about an individual's interests and abilities; and
- everyone is different and unique. Some individuals may have limited experience with leisure and recreation, so give them an opportunity to sample an activity.

## 6.2 Program Development

Developing new programs within your facility is usually prompted by the identification of the following:

- individual needs being unmet and this need being either expressed or observed;
- perception or knowledge of staff that needs are being unmet; or
- request from community members whose needs are being unmet.

A clear understanding of what unmet need you are attempting to respond to will assist in determining the type of program, the time of the program and the cost to participate.

A three-step development model provides for a logical process of development based on:

### Step 1: Identify Benefits

Once you have identified the specific group or market segment for which there is an unmet need, it is necessary to determine what benefits are expected as an outcome.

Benefits could include:

- to get fit;
- to improve health;
- to share the program with other people;
- to meet new people;
- to have fun; and
- to get away from families for a while.

In addition to these personal or individual benefits there should also be some facility benefits such as:

- increased use of facility;
- reduction in down time; and
- increase in income.

### Step 2: Structure the Program

Once the benefits have been defined the specific program can be structured around the following issues:

- type of program (eg aerobics, basketball, abseiling etc);
- program leader (skills required, payment, number of staff required etc);
- facilities required (meeting room, gymnasium pool etc);
- participant numbers required;
- participant cost;
- time of program;
- name of the program; and
- how the program will be advertised.

### Step 3: Check all Ancillary Facilities

While the program and all of its direct issues should have been addressed in Step 2 it is necessary to ensure that all aspects associated with use of the centre are integrated with the individual program such as:

- car parking facilities;
- public transport;
- changing rooms;
- toilets;
- refreshments;
- crèche;
- staff attitudes and knowledge;
- cleanliness of centre; and
- equipment needs.

Attention to detail could be the difference between a successful program and a failure.

For instance a well structured 'women's aerobic class' could fail if crèche facilities are not available and a 'seniors' class' is too difficult to access due to it being programmed in the meeting room on the upper floor.



Think outside the square, seek solutions rather than problems!

All staff need to be aware of new programs to avoid losing potential customers due to lack of knowledge.

### 6.3 Setting the Price

Setting the price to participate is one of the more difficult aspects within the public sector in comparison to the private sector that must have a profit motive to remain in business.

A variety of pricing objectives can be used as a base:

- **Maximum revenue**  
Setting a price that will maximise revenue.
- **Maximum participation**  
Setting a price that will encourage maximum participation, which could be low cost.
- **Cost neutral**  
Setting a fee to cover direct costs only.
- **Pilot program**  
Setting a 'promotional price' to assist in the establishment of a new program.
- **Equity**  
Setting a price that takes into account the ability of the market segment to pay and thus subsidise their participation, such as seniors, people with disabilities, children etc.
- **Competitive pricing**  
Setting a price that takes into consideration what your competitors are charging.<sup>11</sup>

Once the pricing objective has been determined then a program price needs to be calculated using all the information available for direct costs and overhead costs.

Direct costs include venue hire, program staff and equipment. Overhead costs include salaries of all staff associated with the centre, power, water, cleaning, maintenance and other facility costs.

Predicting the number of participants is difficult and it is better to be conservative rather than overestimate.

### 6.4 Marketing and Promotion

“An effective promotion strategy will result in increased participation and increased revenue.”

*Making Your Recreation Centre Viable, SCORS*

As part of program development, consideration needs to be given to the way the program will be advertised and promoted. The type of promotion will need to be determined in relation to the market segment identified.

Some of the distribution techniques that can be used are:

- shopping centre display;
- staff contact;
- print media/local newspaper;
- radio;
- phone;
- direct mail;
- e-mail;
- word of mouth from satisfied customers; or
- use of a variety of formats to meet the needs of people with disabilities and non-English speaking backgrounds.

<sup>11</sup> *Making your Recreation Centre Viable, SCORS*

To maximise communication with people with different abilities, information needs to include:

- short sentences;
- clear headings;
- pictures and diagrams;
- appropriate definitions;
- dark colour print with contrast to paper;
- font size minimum of 11pt but preferably 12pt;
- font style (San Serif, Univers, Arial, Helvetica);
- non-reflective paper; and
- alternative formats available on request.

Failing to advertise your new programs may result in a lack of participants and thus limit the type of activities, programs and participants.

## 6.5 Scheduling

The time and location of the program needs to be directly related to the market segment, customer preference, need and availability.

Some practical hints for scheduling your centre include the following:

- adult programs are scheduled predominantly after 6pm Monday to Friday;
- children's activities occur between 4pm and 6pm during the week and Saturday mornings;
- schedule the most popular activities at times that are difficult to fill;
- during the daytime, schedule
  - school activities
  - seniors programs
  - pre school activities
  - parents of young children;

- programs using the same equipment should be scheduled consecutively;
- exclusive hire groups should be scheduled outside of normal opening hours; and
- Sundays should be scheduled for specific sports club training, church groups etc.<sup>12</sup>

Identifying various market segments within your community and careful consideration of the 'best' time for related programs will enhance the utilisation of your facility.

## 6.6 Evaluation

Often overlooked due to time constraints, proper evaluation remains the critical determinant of a program's need and its duration.

Evaluation techniques range in method from very sophisticated analytical written reviews to an informal discussion with a participant over a cup of coffee.

Whatever the method, objective assessment for any recreation program is necessary. Sharing both the positive and negative aspects of programs can be a useful learning tool for everyone.

Programs should provide challenges and new experiences while remaining within the capacities of the participants. As well, they should provide for increased levels of participation and learning. More importantly, they should respond to individual as well as group needs and provide for those values attributed to participation in leisure activities.

<sup>12</sup> *Making your Recreation Centre Viable*, SCORS



# Case Study: Integrated Programs for People with Disabilities

## Recreation Network

Recreation Network Inc assists individuals to discover their personal recreation interests and aspirations and then facilitates them to become involved in community recreation.

One of the organisational goals is also to educate the community at large to be aware of and accept people with disabilities as valued participants in community activities.

An individual's disability is not seen as a limitation that prevents them from being involved in the activity of their choice.

A good example follows:

Mary is a woman in her early forties with a degenerative eye disease which has left her with a significant vision impairment. Due to this, Mary had been unable to access her favourite sporting activities for some time, and not only had her level of fitness dropped, but her self-esteem was also suffering.

Mary referred herself to Recreation Network because she was seeking assistance to become re-involved with her sport. After a few discussions with a Recreation Advisor, she agreed that she would try to get back involved with her previous passion — aerobics!

Upon meeting her for the first time, the aerobics instructor was concerned that Mary would not be able to maintain the fast pace of the class— however, Mary assured her that this would be possible. This is how:

When they had spoken about returning to an aerobics class, Mary and the Recreation Advisor devised a strategy whereby Mary would attend the first class and a couple of subsequent classes with the Recreation Advisor, who would 'mirror' the instructor's movements in the routine. Mary had gained a phenomenal capability for memory after the loss of her sight, and was able to memorise the movements after only a couple of sessions. If the instructor varied her movements in any way, she would always shout these out to the whole class anyway.

Mary was able to access the fitness program of her choice, with minimal assistance from disability specialists, and the co-operation of the aerobics instructor.

### For further information please contact:

Recreation Network

Tel: (08) 9443 8788

Fax: (08) 9443 8799

Web: [www.rec.net.au](http://www.rec.net.au)

## Case Study: Integrated Programs for People with Disabilities

### Y-Not

The Morley Sport and Recreation Centre is a multi-purpose Recreation Centre consisting of three basketball courts, a function room/performing arts theatre, a gymnasium, minor function room, aerobics room, meeting rooms, crèche, café area and a commercial skin and beauty centre.

The Centre is owned by the City of Bayswater and managed by the YMCA of Perth.

The YMCA and the City of Bayswater believe that all members of society have an inherent right to pursue leisure opportunities in their own community and to this end are keen to identify strategies that will make its services more accessible to people with special needs. As part of this plan the YMCA, in conjunction with the City of Bayswater's Leisure Information Service, developed a recreation program called Y-Not.

### Program

It was identified through qualitative research that there was a lack of programs for people with disabilities, adults and children and specific impairment groups (eg vision impaired).

Three separate programs are now run under the Y-Not banner:

- fitness programs for the vision impaired in the gymnasium;
- a program for participants with intellectual disabilities that provides a wide range of passive and active leisure activities. This program has both an adults and children's group; and

- 'Y-Not Flex', an aerobics class specifically designed for people with varying intellectual and physical disabilities.

### Access

A transport service is provided for clients who live in Bayswater and surrounding suburbs as well as a pick-up and drop-off service for clients utilising public transport.

The Centre itself has been designed to ensure access by all patrons with automated doors, ramps, accessible toilets, change rooms and parking bays.

### Timing

The Y-Not program gives people the opportunity to use the centre during traditional off-peak time, creating a relaxed, non-threatening environment.

It should be noted that some people with disabilities require the attendance of carers who may not be available after 5pm and thus off-peak time is in fact the most appropriate time to organise activities for this particular group.

### Equipment

Specialised equipment, which allows full usage by all clients, was purchased for the gymnasium through a grant from the Gordon Reid Foundation.

### Target Groups

The primary target group is people within the local area who have special needs and



### Case Study: continued

the secondary target group includes services and associations for people with disabilities. These associations may have clients suited to the programmed activities who would gain emotionally, physically and socially by attending the centre.

#### **Fees**

The fees for the programs are subsidised at \$8.25 and \$7.70 for the two adult programs and \$5.00 for the children's program, making the program affordable and accessible.

#### **For further information please contact:**

The Manager

Morley Sport and Recreation Centre

Tel: (08) 9375 3529

Fax: (08) 9275 9170

Email: [morley@ymcaperth.asn.au](mailto:morley@ymcaperth.asn.au)



## 7. Key Contacts

### **Department of Sport and Recreation (Funding and Advice)**

PO Box 66  
Wembley WA 6014  
Tel: (08) 9387 9700  
Fax: (08) 9387 9726  
Web: [www.dsr.wa.gov.au](http://www.dsr.wa.gov.au)

### **Lotteries Commission (Funding)**

PO Box 1113  
Osborne Park WA 6917  
Tel: (08) 9340 5270  
Fax: (08) 9340 5274  
Web: [www.lottery.wa.gov.au](http://www.lottery.wa.gov.au)

### **Disability Services Commission (Access Advice)**

PO Box 441  
West Perth WA 6872  
Tel: (08) 9426 9301  
Fax: (08) 9481 5223  
Web: [www.dsc.wa.gov.au](http://www.dsc.wa.gov.au)

### **Healthway WA (Funding)**

PO Box 1284  
West Perth WA 6872  
Tel: (08) 9321 4355  
Fax: (08) 9324 1145  
Web: [www.healthway.wa.gov.au](http://www.healthway.wa.gov.au)

### **Recreation Network (Advice and linkages)**

391 Oxford Street  
Mt Hawthorn WA 6016  
Tel: (08) 9443 8788  
Fax: (08) 9443 8799  
Web: [www.rec.net.au](http://www.rec.net.au)

### **Seniors Recreation Council (Advice and linkages)**

PO Box 66  
Wembley WA 6913  
Tel: (08) 9387 8811  
Fax: (08) 9387 3001  
Web: [www.srcwa.asn.au](http://www.srcwa.asn.au)





**Womensport West  
(Advice and linkages)**

PO Box 57  
Claremont WA 6010  
Tel: (08) 9387 3633  
Fax: (08) 9387 5641  
Email: [womensport@wswest.asn.au](mailto:womensport@wswest.asn.au)

**WA Sports Federation  
(Advice and linkages)**

PO Box 57  
Claremont WA 6010  
Tel: (08) 9387 8100  
Fax: (08) 9387 8018  
Web: [www.wasportsfed.asn.au](http://www.wasportsfed.asn.au)

**WA Disabled Sports Association  
(Advice, program development and linkages)**

PO Box 1162  
East Victoria Park WA 6981  
Tel: (08) 9470 1442  
Fax: (08) 9470 3878  
Email: [reception@wadsa.org.au](mailto:reception@wadsa.org.au)

**Independent Living Centre of WA (Inc)  
(Resource Support and Advice)**

3 Lemnos Street  
Shenton Park, WA 6008  
Tel: (08) 9381 0600  
Fax: (08) 9381 0611  
Web: [www.ilc.com.au](http://www.ilc.com.au)

**ACROD WA Division  
(Service Providers Advocacy)**

1/59 Walters Drive  
Osborne Park WA 6017  
Tel: (08) 9242 5544  
Fax: (08) 9242 5044  
Email: [acrodwa@acrod.org.au](mailto:acrodwa@acrod.org.au)

**People with Disabilities (WA) Inc  
(Advocacy and Advice)**

37 Hampden Road  
Nedlands WA 6009  
Tel: (08) 9386 6477  
Fax: (08) 9386 6451  
Web: [www.pwdwa.org](http://www.pwdwa.org)

**Hills Community Support Group Inc  
(Program Development)**

PO Box 1328  
Midland WA 6936  
Tel: (08) 9250 5300



## 8. References & Resources

### References

*Everybody In! Guide to the Active Inclusion of People with a Disability*, SPARC Disability Foundation Inc, 2000

*Creating Active Communities, Physical Activity Guidelines for Local Councils*, Department of Local Government, NSW Health Department, NSW Sport and Recreation, National Heart Foundation of Australia (NSW Division)

*Leisure Centre Management*, Hillary Commission for Sport, Fitness and Leisure, 1993

*Access Resource Kit*, Disability Services Commission

*How To Prepare A Project Design Brief For A Sport Or Recreation Facility*, Sport and Recreation WA

*How To Undertake A Feasibility Study For A Proposed Sport Or Recreation Facility*, Sport and Recreation WA

*Australian Leisure Management* June/July 1999 Darcy, S

*Community Inclusion For All*, Creating Inclusive Communities, Townsville, Australia

*Training Manual For Support Persons*, Recreation Association for the Disabled of WA, Abbots, P 1986

*Making Your Recreation Centre Viable*, SCORS

*You Can Make A Difference To Customer Relations For People With Disabilities In Local Government And State Government Agencies*, Disability Services Commission

*Buildings — A Guide To Access Requirements*, Disability Services Commission and Department of Local Government

For further information regarding the above publications please contact:

**The Manager Information Centre/Library  
Department of Sport and Recreation**

PO Box 66

Wembley WA 6913

Tel: (08) 9387 9700

Fax: (08) 9387 9726

Email: [info@dsr.wa.gov.au](mailto:info@dsr.wa.gov.au)

Web: [www.dsr.wa.gov.au](http://www.dsr.wa.gov.au)





### Resources

#### Independent Living Centre of WA (Inc)

The Independent Living Centre of Western Australia (Inc) is a non-profit community service organisation that provides impartial, expert advice on equipment, building and design, access and resources for people with disabilities, their advocates, carers and service providers.

The ILC provides the following unfunded services for which a fee will be charged:

#### Access and Design Consultancy

This service provides a professional evaluation and design consultancy service that assesses the accessibility of new and existing facilities for people with disabilities. The Consultancy is a member of the Disability Services Commission's Recommended Disability Access Consultants.

Services include:

- evaluation of plans in the concept and design stage;
- consultation with designers and people with disabilities;
- monitoring the construction stage of new facilities;
- on-site assessments of a wide range of existing buildings and facilities including parks and gardens, sports centres, government buildings, offices and health facilities;
- interpretation of Australian Standards and relevant legislation to ensure that all aspects of a building meet or exceed the minimum statutory requirements;

- information and advice on incorporating the principles of Universal Design;
- identification and documentation of existing or potential barriers to access and advice on how to best overcome these barriers; and
- product sourcing and evaluation.

#### Equipment Lending Library

The Library provides short-term hire of equipment that is designed to meet the needs of people with a disability. The hire period provides an opportunity to trial the equipment before purchasing and to determine how the equipment will meet the needs and suit the environments in which it will be used.

#### Education and Training

The ILC Education Programme is designed to provide practical hands-on training for people working with the elderly and those with disabilities.

Workshop topics include:

- Manual Handling
- Disability Awareness
- Personal Care
- Hoists and Slings

#### Further information may be obtained from:

Independent Living Centre of WA (Inc.)

3 Lemnos Street

Shenton Park, Western Australia 6008

Tel: (08) 9381 0600

Fax: (08) 9381 0611

Email: [enquiries@ilc.com.au](mailto:enquiries@ilc.com.au)

# Appendix 1: Legislation

The Disability Discrimination Act makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person on the basis of their disability.

There are various pieces of legislation that protect and promote the rights of people with disabilities as well as codes and standards that relate to the development of buildings and facilities.

Each document has been summarised below.

The focus of the summaries provided is on anti-discrimination law and the accessibility required to support people with disabilities. It is important to note that discrimination on the basis of gender, race, religion and marital status are of equal significance and facility managers should ensure that their facilities are non-discriminatory and provide access for all.

## 1. ***Western Australian Equal Opportunity Act 1984*** **amended 1988**

The *Western Australian Equal Opportunity Act 1984* was amended in 1988 recognising that people with disabilities require and are entitled to the same level of service as is available to other members of the community. The amendment to the Act makes it unlawful for a person to discriminate against any person on the grounds of impairment. Under the legislation, an action is regarded as being discriminatory if a person with an impairment is treated less favourably than others in the same or similar circumstances.

Impairment is defined as any condition existing at birth or from an illness or injury.

It includes defects or disturbances in the normal structure or functioning of a person's body or brain or any illness that impairs a person's thought processes, perceptions of reality, emotions or judgement or which results in disturbed behaviour. It also includes impairments that existed in the past and no longer exist. If a person believes they have been discriminated against by a public agency because of their impairment, they have the right to complain to the Commissioner of Equal Opportunity in Western Australia.

As well as disability the Equal Opportunity Act protects people from discrimination in the following aspects of life:

- sex;
- marital status or pregnancy;
- family responsibility or family status;
- race;
- religious or political conviction; or
- impairment or age

in the areas of work, accommodation, education, the provision of goods, facilities and services, access to places and vehicles, land and the membership of clubs.

## 2. ***Western Australian Disability Services Act 1993***

The *Western Australian Disability Services Act 1993* includes nine principles applicable to people with disabilities. In summary, these principles state that a person with a disability has the right to be respected for their human worth and dignity and has the

“Everybody deserves a ‘fair go’. It doesn’t matter what sex, race or age you are, if you have a disability in any way, what your marital status is, the religious or political beliefs you might hold — everybody has the right to be treated fairly.”

*WA Equal Opportunities Commission*

same human rights as other community members regardless of the degree and nature of their disability. In particular, each person with a disability has the same rights as other members of the community to:

- develop their individual physical, social, emotional, intellectual and spiritual capacities;
- receive services that support the attainment of a reasonable quality of life in a way that least restricts their rights and opportunities and also recognises the role of the family unit;
- participate in making and implementing the decisions which affect their lives;
- pursue grievances in relation to services;
- access appropriate accommodation and employment; and
- have reasonable expectations of accessing similar services whether living in country or metropolitan areas.

Under Part 5, Section 28 of the Act, State Government agencies and Local Governments are required to develop and implement a disability service plan that will further the principles of the Act. This essentially means ensuring that people with disabilities can access services provided by public authorities in Western Australia. To comply with the *Western Australian Disability Services Act 1993*, public authorities are required to develop a disability service plan and report on their plan implementation each year in the agencies annual report to parliament.

The recently updated *Access Resource Kit* (Disability Services Commission) provides relevant checklists and can be accessed via the Internet or direct from the Commission’s Access Improvement Branch.

### 3. Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act

The *Disability Discrimination Act* is a Commonwealth Act that seeks to provide uniform protection against discrimination based on disability for everyone in Australia. Section 31 of the Act also provides for the formulation of “disability standards” in relation to public transport, education, accommodation, employment and Commonwealth Programs. Once a standard has been approved it has the force of law. Under the Act discrimination in the areas of employment, education, access to premises, accommodation, buying or selling land, activities of clubs and incorporated associations, sport, administration of Commonwealth laws and programs and the provision of goods and services is unlawful. A person who believes they have suffered discrimination may make a complaint to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.

While it is not compulsory, public authorities can choose to prepare and implement action plans under Section 60 of the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*. A disability service plan may also qualify as an

action plan under the Commonwealth legislation.

Lodging an action plan may assist public authorities if complaints alleging discrimination on the basis of disability are made to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.

HREOC have produced 'Advisory Notes on Access to Premises'. While these notes do not have the force of law they have been prepared by the commission to assist people to understand their responsibilities and rights in relation to the DDA. It is recommended that they be used as a principal reference for people planning new developments.

#### 4. Building Code of Australia 96 1999 & Australian Standards AS 1428/AS 2890

The three documents relating to the mandatory provision of environmental access are the Building Code of Australia (BCA) and Australian Standard AS 1428 Part 1 and Part 4 which is called up in the BCA. Currently the mandatory access requirements in the BCA are not consistent with those of the DDA.

The access requirements of both the Australian Standards on Access and the BCA are currently being reviewed so that they are consistent with the legislative requirements contained within recent legislation, particularly the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*.

Until these reviews are completed, it is strongly recommended that the developers of buildings and facilities consult the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission's 'Advisory Notes on Access to Premises' as well as the BCA. These documents reference the Australian Standards on Access, and are listed below.

##### ■ AS 1428.1-1998 General requirements for access — buildings

This Standard outlines building requirements designed to permit general use of buildings and facilities by people with disabilities acting independently, or in the company of an assistant where a person's usual method of operation is with an assistant. It also specifies design requirements for doorways, access pathways, circulation spaces and fitments in particular.

This Standard is referenced in the BCA as providing the minimum requirements for access for specified classes of buildings.

##### ■ AS 1428.1 Supplement 1-1990 General requirements for access — buildings commentary

This Standard explains how the dimensional details required in AS 1428 were formulated.

##### ■ AS 1428.2-1992 Enhanced and additional requirements — buildings and facilities

This Standard is intended to be used in conjunction with AS 1428.1 where appropriate. It enhances the minimum requirements set out in Part 1.

It also includes requirements for items which are not covered in Part 1, such as information relating to access requirements in kitchens and laundries.

##### ■ AS 1428.3-1992 Requirements for children and adolescents with physical disabilities

This Standard sets out requirements for the design of buildings and facilities suitable for access by children and adolescents with physical disabilities in the age range 3 to 18.

##### ■ AS 1428.4-1992 Tactile ground surface indicators for the orientation of people with vision impairment

This standard specifies requirements for

tactile ground surface indicators or pavers which are designed to give warning of hazards and directional information to pedestrians who are blind or who have impaired vision. It is intended for use on ground, road or floor surfaces.

### ■ **AS 1735.7-1988 Stairway lifts**

This Standard specifies requirements for power stairway lifts intended for use by persons with limited mobility. The lift consists of a carriage, incorporating a platform, or a chair, or both, for raising or lowering persons along stairways.

### ■ **AS 1735.12-1999 Escalators and moving walks Part 12. Facilities for persons with disabilities**

This Standard is intended to apply to specific lifts that a building authority has allocated for use by persons with disabilities, and has provided facilities for such use. It is complementary to AS 1428.1 and AS 1735.3.

### ■ **AS 2890.1 (1993) Off-street parking: Mandatory requirements**

This Standard sets out minimum requirements for design and layout of off-street parking. Appendix C of this Standard provides guidelines for the provision of parking for people with disabilities.

## 5. **Local Government Act 1995**

The *Local Government Act 1995* is having a significant impact on how councils are required to conduct their activities, and in particular is impacting on sport and recreation provision in the following ways:

- contracting/tendering out of some services and functions that have traditionally been undertaken within council leisure departments;
- the restructuring of leisure departments into business units with resultant effects on the scope of services being provided;
- a focus on financial / social accountability in providing facilities and services on the basis of the community's capacity to pay; and
- requiring the provision of facilities to be directly related to principal activity plans.



A joint project between the  
Western Australian Municipal Association  
Department of Sport and Recreation and  
Disability Services Commission



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making a difference



Western Australia  
*Millions Won. Thousands Helped.*

