



# **Western Australia Police Force Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2018 - 2022**

Upon request, this plan is available in alternative formats, for example electronic copy, large print, audio versions.

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## Commissioner's Foreword

I am pleased to present the *Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2018 - 2022* for the Western Australia Police Force.

The WA Police Force is committed to providing trusted and valued policing to our diverse community. We recognise that people with disability have the right to fully access the agency's services, information and facilities, and also acknowledge that these individuals may experience unique barriers or challenges when engaging with police.

The WA Police Force developed its first *Disability Service Plan* in 1998 and in the 20 years since then, the agency's access and inclusion policies have been reinforced through numerous practical improvements in policing services. This includes the SMS Assists initiative which provides people with hearing and speech impairments with an alternative means of communicating with police.

The strategies outlined in the *DAIP 2018-2022* reinforce the agency's commitment to be responsive and inclusive with policing services to people with disability, their families and carers. These strategies are drawn from disability issues identified by the DAIP Coordination Committee, the Australian Human Rights Commission and the *National Disability Strategy 2010-20* and align with our agency's values and service delivery standards.

In 2017, as part of the State Government's Machinery of Government changes, the Road Safety Commission (RSC) was administratively attached to the WA Police Force. The *DAIP 2018-2022* also includes the RSC's access and inclusion strategies for people with disability.

I would like to acknowledge and thank all those involved in the development of the *DAIP 2018-2022*, particularly the community members and disability organisations who shared their personal experiences and valuable insights with us. We look forward to continued communication and collaboration, as we work together to enhance WA Police Force services and outcomes for people with disability.



**Chris Dawson APM**  
**Commissioner of Police**  
**Western Australia Police Force**

## **Organisational Overview**

The WA Police Force is one of eight police jurisdictions in Australia and is the largest single police jurisdiction in the world, covering 2.5 million square kilometres. The agency recognises community and cultural diversity as an enriching and fundamental feature of our society and is committed to providing effective policing services that are accessible, culturally appropriate and responsive to all communities in the State.

### **Our Vision**

To be an exceptional Police Force to our community.

### **Our Mission**

To provide trusted and valued policing for Western Australia.

### **Our Services**

- Metropolitan policing services
- Regional and remote policing services
- Specialist policing services
- Improve community awareness of road safety in Western Australia.

The Metropolitan Region and Regional WA deliver the policing services within Western Australia. The Metropolitan region consists of eight districts and 35 police stations. Regional WA has seven districts and 123 police stations currently.

Besides frontline policing, services are provided through a wide range of specialist areas such as State Traffic, Judicial Services, Intelligence and State Crime. These services are supported by a number of administrative business areas including Media, Business Strategy and Finance, Policy and Legislation, and People Capability.

The WA Police Force operates throughout the State from a number of diverse facilities, including Police Headquarters, local police stations, specialist and administrative offices, detention facilities, multi-function police facilities, the Western Australia Police Academy and others.

The Road Safety Commission (RSC) was incorporated within the WA Police Force on 1 July 2017. The RSC holds responsibility for reducing the road trauma on WA roads. It does so by harnessing the knowledge and expertise from a diverse range of interests from the private sector, government agencies and the community, into policy initiatives to be researched, developed or implemented.

Further information on the agencies can be found at <https://www.police.wa.gov.au> and <https://www.rsc.wa.gov.au/>

## **Access and Inclusion Policy Statement**

It is the policy of WA Police Force to provide professional, accessible and appropriate services for all Western Australians, including people with disability, their families and carers. The agency is committed to continuous improvement, with the *DAIP 2018 – 2022* providing a framework to identify and implement changes that will help achieve the Plan's seven outcomes:

1. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by WA Police Force.
2. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of the WA Police Force.
3. People with disability receive information from the WA Police Force in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it.
4. People with disability receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of WA Police Force as other people receive from the staff at WA Police Force.
5. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to WA Police Force.
6. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by WA Police Force.
7. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment within the WA Police Force.

## ***Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2012 – 2017 Review***

The WA Police Force is proud to have made a number of significant achievements in its previous disability plans. These include:

- Since 2014, an additional field within the WA Police Force complaints database system was added to identify any complaints received from people with disability, to better understand and address their grievances.
- WA Police Force participates in the *National Survey of Community Satisfaction*, which aims to measure public satisfaction with police and service quality. In 2016, a question was added to identify whether survey participants had a disability, helping us to better understand the level of satisfaction that people with disability have with our services.
- WA Police Force worked with WA Deaf Society to develop signage for all customer service areas, promoting the availability of AUSLAN interpreters.
- All police stations and facilities constructed during this period incorporated universal access requirements. There are also ongoing refurbishments and retrofitting of older WA Police Force buildings to improve accessibility, including the upgrade of numerous front counters to make them compliant.

- A review of *Standard Operating Procedures* for the Perth Watch House resulted in a number of changes to improve the care needs for people with disability in custody, including the 24x7 availability of a specially trained nurse to deliver medical assessment and assistance to detainees. Furthermore, wheelchairs have been made available in all 24 hour lock-up facilities, for use by detainees.
- The agency's Mental Health Co-Response Trial commenced in 2016, providing a coordinated, holistic response to people experiencing mental health crisis in the community. Developed and delivered in collaboration with the Department of Health and the Mental Health Commission, this initiative provides a framework for early intervention and diversion away from the justice system to appropriate pathways in the health system.
- Mental Health First Aid training was introduced and made available for all police employees. This course teaches participants how to recognise and respond to mental illness, including various forms of psychosocial disability.
- The WA Police Force regularly contracts Australian Disability Enterprises to provide a range of valuable services to the agency, including cleaning, gardening, engineering/manufacturing, catering and maintenance.

## **Development of Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2018 – 2022**

### **Planning Process**

Within the agency, Judicial Services maintains responsibility for the coordination and development of the DAIP. In addition, the DAIP Coordinating Committee was established to help develop, implement and report on the Plan. This Committee includes representatives from business areas across the agency who are responsible for implementing the strategies.

Planning for the *DAIP 2018–2022* included a comprehensive review of the previous plan, identification of successful strategies and those that needed further work. This review also incorporated contemporary research, environmental scans and information gathered through community feedback and complaint mechanisms.

### **Consultation Process**

The WA Police Force sought to consult widely in the development of this plan. An invitation to comment was also promoted to police employees through the intranet page and the internal newsletter. An advertisement was published in the *West Australian* newspaper on 9 March 2018. Through this process, the agency received 16 contacts and comments about the DAIP, five from service providers, five from individual community members and six from police employees. The DAIP was also shared on the WA Police Facebook page where it was seen by over 40,000 people.

Information about the DAIP review was emailed to 40 disability organisations, who were asked to provide input and share the invitation to comment through their networks. Two of these

organisations, Mental Health Matters 2 and the WA Deaf Society, invited agency representatives to meet with their members to gather more detailed feedback.

Further to this, the agency hosted a DAIP Stakeholder Workshop on 8 June 2018 to seek input in the development of its current DAIP. The workshop was attended by 66 people, including 24 police employees from relevant business areas and 42 community representatives, from the following organisations:

- |                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| - Ability Centre                  | - Mental Health Matters 2                   |
| - Aboriginal Health Council of WA | - My Place                                  |
| - Advocare Inc.                   | - People with Disability WA                 |
| - Autism Association of WA        | - Richmond Wellbeing                        |
| - Carers WA                       | - Rise Network                              |
| - Citizen Advocacy Perth West     | - Rocky Bay                                 |
| - Community Vision                | - Salvation Army WA                         |
| - Deafness Council WA Inc.        | - Spine & Limb Foundation Inc.              |
| - Developmental Disability WA     | - St Bartholomew's House                    |
| - Explorability Inc.              | - Sussex Street Community Law Services Inc. |
| - Helping Minds                   | - Telethon Kids Institute                   |
| - Mental Health Advocacy Service  | - WA Deaf Society                           |
|                                   | - WA's Individualised Services              |

The workshop was also attended by representatives from 21 different business areas within the agency, including the RSC. Internal and external stakeholders worked together to review the success of previous DAIP strategies, identify opportunities for improvement and provide suggestions for new strategies.

Prior to the Machinery of Government changes, the RSC was a separate agency with its own *Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2016-20* in accordance with the *Disability Services Act 1993*. As a result of the RSC's administrative attachment to the WA Police Force, the strategies elaborated in RSC's *DAIP 2016-20* have been incorporated into this document. The RSC sought feedback on the consolidated document, including that from the Vulnerable Road User Advisory Group.

### **Communication of the DAIP**

The WA Police Force *DAIP 2018- 2022* will be promoted internally and externally in the following ways:

- On the WA Police Force & Road Safety Commission websites
- On the WA Police Force & Road Safety Commission's intranet page
- An article in internal newsletters
- A broadcast email to all staff
- A notice placed in the *West Australian* newspaper
- Copies sent to everyone who participated in the consultation process

Copies of the *DAIP 2018-2022* will also be made available in alternative formats, upon request.

### **Implementation and Monitoring**

Implementation of the DAIP is the responsibility of all WA Police Force employees, agents and contractors.

Strategies outlined in the *DAIP 2018 – 2022* are broad enough to allow flexibility and responsiveness throughout the life of the Plan, but more specific actions and details are contained in the internal implementation plan, which will be reviewed and updated annually. The DAIP Coordination Committee will meet regularly to review progress and provide updates from relevant business areas on the implementation of DAIP strategies.

Police employees, community members and disability organisations are invited to provide feedback on the DAIP and its strategies. The WA Police Force will aim to regularly communicate and consult with relevant stakeholders, to ensure that barriers to access and inclusion are addressed appropriately.

The agency will ensure that agents and contractors engaged to provide goods or services to, or on behalf of the agency are informed about the *DAIP 2018 – 2022* and the requirement to conduct their business in line with its objectives.

### **Reviewing and Reporting**

The WA Police Force DAIP will be reviewed at least every five years, in accordance with the *Disability Services Act 1993*. The agency will publish an update on DAIP strategies in the agency's Annual Report, and will also provide an annual report to the Department of Communities, outlining our progress against each strategy.

Should the *DAIP 2018-2022* need to be amended, the consultation procedures will be followed and a copy of the amended plan will be lodged with the Disability Services Commission, as per the *Disability Services Act 1993*.



## **Strategies to Improve Access and Inclusion**

### **Outcome 1: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by, WA Police Force.**

- The DAIP Coordination Committee will guide the implementation, monitoring and reporting of DAIP activities.
- Encourage Police employees, agents and contractors to be aware of, and comply with, the DAIP requirements.
- Develop and implement flexible strategies to improve access to WA Police Force services for people with disability, their families and carers.
- Ensure that events organised by WA Police Force and the Road Safety Commission are inclusive and accessible for people with disability.

### **Outcome 2: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of WA Police Force.**

- Continue to advocate for all buildings and facilities to be physically accessible to people with disability, while meeting safety and security obligations.
- Consider and accommodate the physical needs of people with disability while in police care or using police facilities
- Ensure fire wardens are trained in evacuation procedures for people with disability.
- Feedback about access from employees or visitors with disability is acted upon, in a timely and appropriate manner.

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

- Maintain and improve accessibility of WA Police Force and the Road Safety Commission website for people with disability.
- Provide information in a wide range of accessible formats.
- Undertake targeted community engagement with people with disability and disability organisations.

### **Outcome 4: People with disability receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of WA Police Force as other people receive from the staff at WA Police Force.**

- Where appropriate, develop and implement flexible strategies to improve the quality of WA Police services for people with disability, their families and carers.
- Educate WA Police Force employees on disability and access issues, and encourage awareness and compliance of DAIP requirements.
- Support community networks, advocacy groups and individuals in developing resources to facilitate understanding of police process.

**Outcome 5: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to WA Police Force.**

- Encourage complaints processes to be accessible in various formats.
- Improve staff knowledge concerning the special needs of people with disability, including substantive equality expectations, so they can facilitate timely and professional receipt and resolution of complaints from people with disability.

**Outcome 6: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by WA Police Force.**

- Ensure that WA Police Force and Road Safety Commission consultations are inclusive for people with disability, including accessible venues.
- Provide ongoing opportunities for people with disability and disability organisations to provide feedback and input on WA Police Force and Road Safety Commission services and access and inclusion issues.

**Outcome 7: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment with WA Police Force<sup>1</sup>.**

- Continue to support the management of health and welfare issues for police officers and police staff.
- Promote accessible and inclusive recruitment practices for unsworn staff.
- Support and accommodate the needs of employees with disability within the workplace.
- Foster a workplace culture that is inclusive, respectful, equitable and supportive of diversity.

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<sup>1</sup> Due to the nature of the role of sworn police officers (only), WA Police will apply Section 66q of the Equal Opportunity Act 1984 in relation to employing people with disability