



**THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

**AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY GOVERNMENT SUBMISSION
TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, AGEING AND
COMMUNITY SERVICES**

**INQUIRY INTO THE EMPLOYMENT OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN
THE ACT**

April 2017

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ACT Government Submission to the Standing Committee on Health, Ageing and Community Services Inquiry into the Employment of People with Disabilities in the ACT

Introduction

The ACT Government is pleased to make a submission to the Standing Committee on Health, Ageing and Community Services Inquiry into the Employment of People with Disabilities in the ACT.

The Statement of Ambition (released by the Chief Minister in March 2016), articulates the vision of Canberra being one of the world's most liveable and competitive cities – welcoming to all. Diversity is critical to the competitiveness of Canberra on the global stage. Equity and inclusiveness are cornerstones of Canberra's values and policies. Continuity of these values will further strengthen the city.

The Submission has been jointly prepared by the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate (in relation to information pertaining to the ACT Public Service (the ACTPS)) and the Community Services Directorate (in relation to information pertaining to ACT based private enterprise and community organisations).

The ACT Public Service

The ACTPS is a diverse organisation of just over 21,000 people with responsibilities that range from Namadgi National Park to green and brown-field development fronts, from buses to fire engines, from municipal services to the health, education and justice systems, and from supporting the most vulnerable people in our community to fostering business development and innovation. As such, it offers a uniquely broad range of job opportunities within a single enterprise.

The ACTPS is committed to attracting, developing and retaining a diverse workforce characterised by a positive reputation founded on the respect and courtesy we extend to our colleagues and clients.

The size and scope of the ACT means ACTPS employees are able not only to develop and implement policies and programs which directly benefit the ACT citizenry, but also to see the benefits of their work in their community.

Having a public service that both reflects and values different viewpoints is an important factor in delivering effective services to the community.

It is similarly important that the ACTPS reflect the community it serves, and is well placed to anticipate and meet the needs of the community and governments of the day.

The ACTPS as an Employer

As an employer, the ACTPS strives to achieve a diverse and skilled workforce where individuals are valued for their differences, experiences, knowledge and backgrounds and the contribution they can make to the government of the day's agenda.

With this in mind, the ACTPS has a particular focus on seeking the expertise and insights that people with disabilities can provide to improve Government policies and services both to their own communities and the whole ACT community.

A Whole of Government Inclusion Team has been established in the Workforce Capability and Governance Division of the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate. The Inclusion Team is involved in a range of activities and initiatives including maintaining the Respect Equity and Diversity Framework, coordinating traineeships, providing pastoral care to trainees and graduates, promoting the ACTPS's commitment to inclusion employment at public events and monitoring and reporting on inclusion numbers across the ACTPS.

ACT Based Private Enterprise and Community Organisations

The Disability Services Sector in the ACT is complex and dynamic, bringing with it many opportunities and challenges.

The sector is shaped by:

- changing models of care and service;
- evolving demographics in the ACT and nationally;
- the implementation of a National Disability Insurance Scheme;
- complex legislative frameworks;
- significant duty of care accountabilities;
- a diverse range of organisations providing a wide range of care and services, many of which are specialised and unique;
- a very competitive and increasingly constrained funding environment;
- a variety of perceptions which influence employment choices across the sector within a competitive employment market; and
- increasingly complex and changing needs of people with disabilities as they move through different stages of their lives.

The Office for Disability was launched in December 2016 to provide a focal point for the ACT Government's ongoing work to ensure that Canberra becomes an even more inclusive and engaging city for people with disability.

ACTPS Disability Employment Strategy

The *ACTPS Employment Strategy for People with Disability* (the Employment Strategy) was launched in 2011 and was one element of the Respect Equity and Diversity Framework (the RED Framework) that was endorsed by the then Chief Minister in 2010.

The vision of Employment Strategy was that the ACTPS will be a disability confident service, in which people with disability are able to access secure and sustainable employment opportunities and are respected for their skills and capabilities.

The Employment Strategy included a target (diversity target) of doubling the headcount of employees who identified as having a disability at 30 June 2010 by June 2015. That was increasing from 327 employees to 654 employees.

Review of the RED Framework

A review of the RED Framework commenced in March 2014 and was concluded in December 2014. The review was undertaken in three stages. Stage One (undertaken in March-April 2014) involved a governance and environmental review to ascertain views across the ACTPS on how the RED Framework sits in the contemporary values and behaviours environment. Stage Two (completed in August 2014) used discussion papers and face-to-face consultations to obtain qualitative data from internal and external stakeholders in order to make an assessment of whether the RED Framework has met its objectives. The discussion papers sought the 'lived' experience of those who have had contact with the RED Framework since its launch in 2010. Stage Three brought the review to a conclusion by the combination of the outcomes of Stages One and Two into the final report.

The review confirmed that the RED Framework has been instrumental in developing and fostering a positive workplace culture. It also confirmed that the RED Framework has successfully provided a foundation on which employees have built on and should be maintained.

In relation to the Employment Strategy specifically, the internal and external feedback strongly identified that it should be officially moved out of the RED Framework, and developed as a stand-alone strategy. The report identified that this course of action would support a re-focus on the strategy, including the diversity targets; and would provide the opportunity to issue a strong message across the ACTPS about the purpose and vision of the strategy.

The report noted that although the diversity targets had not been met, growth had occurred since 2010 at an average of 27 employees per annum who identify as a Person with Disability. A comparison of 2012-13 and 2013-14 headcount indicates a higher growth in the 2013-14 period than that of the total growth in the ACTPS of 2.7%. In 2013-14, the ACTPS employed 31 People with Disability (384 up to 415) representing a growth of 8.1%.

The final report from the review was tabled in the Assembly in May 2015.

Development of the Stand-Alone Employment Strategy

Over the last twelve months work has been undertaken to transition the Employment Strategy from an element of the RED Framework to a stand-alone strategy.

To acknowledge the level of maturity that now exists in this area across the ACTPS, the Employment Strategy has been reshaped into a People with Disability Employment Framework (the Employment Framework). This framework sets out the following seven levers of action to achieve a diverse and inclusive workforce:

- inclusive workplaces;
- recruitment;
- retention;
- build capability;
- leadership;
- collaboration; and
- recognise and celebrate.

The Employment Framework is a high level document providing overarching direction on the inclusion activities directorates can implement themselves or participate in at the whole-of-government level. As each directorate already has, or is in the process of developing, employment strategies (stemming from the incorporation of annual targets into the performance plans of Directors-General, discussed below under the Data Collection, Monitoring and Reporting Mechanisms heading below), the expectation is that in-depth information and analysis, including reporting and measures of accountability, is included at the directorate level.

The Employment Framework commits the ACT Government to employment at least 654 People with Disability by 30 June 2019.

Initial consultation on the Employment Framework was held with directorates in November 2016 and it was considered by the Human Resource Directors forum in February 2017. It will be finalised and launched by 30 June 2017. A copy of the draft Employment Framework is at [Attachment A](#).

Diversity Targets

As discussed above, the review of the RED Framework identified that while progress had been made, the original targets under the Employment Strategy had not been met.

In February 2015 the Head of Service extended the timeframe for achieving the targets to 2018-19 and revised the methodology by which the ACTPS would reach or exceed this goal.

This issue is discussed further in the section below on Data Collection, Monitoring and Reporting Mechanisms.

Attraction and Retention Programs in the ACTPS

The employment of People with Disability within the ACTPS continues to grow, with workforce data at June 2016 showing that the employment of People with Disability has increased to 2.2% (458 employees). This growth is supported by the whole of government attraction and retention programs that have been, and are being implemented, by the Inclusion Team to support directorates to increase the participation of People with Disability within the ACTPS.

Graduate Program

The ACTPS Graduate Program attracts high calibre graduates from across Australia and continues to be a successful avenue for attracting People with Disability to the ACTPS. It is a full-time program conducted over 10 months, offering graduates three diverse work rotations, tailored learning and development and permanent appointment on successful completion. Particular focus is placed on ensuring each candidate is provided with the necessary reasonable adjustment to support them in the selection process.

In 2016, nine People with Disability graduates were part of the 45 graduate cohort. Sixteen inclusion positions were identified for the 2017 ACTPS Graduate Program to support the placement of both People with Disability and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. Five graduates with a Disability commenced in Graduate Program in February 2017.

Inclusion Traineeships

The ACTPS currently offers two inclusion traineeships which provide People with Disability additional employment pathways into the ACTPS.

Inclusion ICT Traineeship

The Inclusion ICT Traineeship commenced in July 2016 with two trainees. This is a three year program specifically for individuals that identify with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Trainees undertake a Certificate IV and Diploma in ICT and are offered permanent ICT positions in the ACTPS on successful completion of the program. Work undertaken by the trainees in the

workplace supports the training and includes ICT testing, asset coordination and ICT support. In January 2017 one trainee left the program to commence full time university studies.

Inclusion Traineeship

The pilot Inclusion Traineeship for applicants who identify as having a disability was advertised in September 2016. There was a high level of interest in the traineeship and over 200 applications were received. Interviews were held between October 2016 and January 2017. Nine trainees commenced in the ACPTS in February 2017.

The traineeship runs for 12 months. As part of the traineeship, the trainees are required to complete a formal learning and development program which takes into account the capacity of the individual and the needs of the work area. Following successful completion of the traineeship, trainees are permanently appointed to the ACTPS at the Administrative Service Officer Level 2 or equivalent depending on the directorate in which they are placed.

Constructive and supportive feedback has been provided to each of the unsuccessful applicants. One of the main areas of concern in relation to applicants was the lack of knowledge and involvement with Disability Employment providers. These providers play an important role in getting applicants work ready and provide support and guidance with applications, CVs and referees and work trials or experience. To help with this, the Inclusion Team are investigating the feasibility of an Employment Provider Expo in late 2017 where unsuccessful applicants can link up with Providers. If this initiative progresses the Inclusion Team will work with ACT Education and Disability ACT to invite members of the ACT community, including new school leavers looking to enter the workforce, to attend.

All trainees and placement areas are provided with pastoral care, guidance and support from the Inclusion Team as part of the traineeship programs.

Australian School Based Apprentices

The ACTPS is currently working with employment providers to establish a register for Australian School Based Apprentices (ASBAs) for People with Disability, with a view to promoting this to directorates as an opportunity to employ an apprentice in 2017-18.

Disability Employee Network

In order to provide support to ACTPS employees with a disability, an ACTPS Disability Employee Network will be created in 2017. The Network will undertake a range of responsibilities that may include:

- consulting with members and staff to advocate their views and needs;
- working with Inclusion Champions across the ACTPS, in particular the Network Champion;
- representing the ACTPS/directorates or the Network at meetings and forums where issues concerning employees with disability are being discussed;
- providing guidance and support, consistent with ACTPS guidelines, to members;
- facilitating broader learning and awareness of issues relating to Network members across the ACTPS;
- co-ordinating with directorate and the Inclusion Team events for members and interested stakeholders;
- developing, in partnership with Inclusion Team and the Inclusion Practitioners Network, an annual Network work plan;
- providing consultation and/or input to policy development when appropriate; and
- reviewing, in partnership with stakeholders, Network-related Workforce Plans.

Inclusion Practitioners Network

In addition, an ACTPS Inclusion Practitioners Network will be implemented and will act as an avenue for all staff involved in the inclusion space to network and share learning and increase understanding on whole of government inclusion initiatives.

Other Initiatives and Support

Employee Assistance Program

All ACTPS directorates provide employees and their immediate families with access to Employee Assistance Programs. These Programs provide independent, confidential and professional counselling services at no cost to employees.

Flexible Working Arrangements

ACTPS Enterprise Agreements provide a range of flexible working arrangements for employees. These provisions include flexible starting and finishing times, access to part time work and job sharing, home based work and purchased leave.

In line with amendments to the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Clth), the Government supported an increase in the circumstances that allow employees to seek flexible working arrangements; for example, to accommodate caring responsibilities, disability or being over the age of 55.

Australian Network on Disability

The Inclusion Team co-ordinates the whole of government membership with the Australian Network on Disability.

The Australian Network on Disability provides resource material, guidelines, policies and training for disability employment. Training provided by the Australian Network on Disability is tailored to the individual requirements of the directorate and can be tailored specifically for Executive level or General Staff. The Australian Network on Disability also has the expertise and capacity to work with individual directorates to develop Disability Action Plans.

The Australian Network on Disability has worked with the ACTPS to provide a number of policies and guidelines that are published on the ACTPS Employment portal.

Attraction and Retention Programs for ACT Based Private Enterprise and Community Organisations

The following information is drawn from the report *The State of the Community Service Sector in the Australian Capital Territory 2016*, prepared for the ACT Council of Social Service by the Social Policy Research Centre, University of New South Wales.

- 4 in 10 organisations with paid staff reported employing at least one member of staff with a disability.
- The survey reported the following breakdown, by main service type, of the proportion of organisations employing staff with a disability:
 - Child, youth and family 52%;
 - Disability, ageing and carer 50%;
 - Information, advocacy, legal and peaks 38.5%; and
 - Other main service 16%.

The ACT Inclusion Council is a government advisory body that brings the government and the Canberra business community together to promote initiatives that value and engage people with disability.

Formerly known as the Business Leaders Innovative Thoughts and Solutions (BLITS), in December 2013, members unanimously agreed to rename BLITS to the ACT Inclusion Council to minimise confusion and reflect the Board's vision for inclusion.

In 2015 the ACT Inclusion Council launched the Disability Confidence Canberra (DCC) at a workshop on What the NDIS means for Canberra Business. This workshop was well supported with over 70 attendees discussing the economic opportunities that the National Disability Insurance Scheme will bring to the territory.

The DCC is a joint project with the ACT Inclusion Council, ACT Government, NICAN, and Eric Martin and Associates, and aims to achieve an increase in its business and community engagement.

The DCC is a speaking and education program that involves members of the Council speaking to businesses, organisations and local community groups. The DCC will equip business and community with information on disability, facts on disability employment, and practical tools to become disability confident. This includes an information handbook which provides information about including employees who have a disability, and manuals and checklists to provide technical guidance for businesses to self-assess and build confident access in their organisation for people with disability.

The Council will continue to strengthen its relationship with the business community through leveraging opportunities at the Chamber, including further DCC workshops that promote employment opportunities for people with disability.

Employment of people with disability will continue to be the core priority of the ACT Inclusion Council for 2017.

At its most recent meeting, the Council decided on the need to agree on a specific, tangible target of people with disability employed by business members. The Council also discussed launching an 'employment campaign', to convey the benefits to businesses for employing people with disability, with 'champions' to talk to employers about their experience of employment of people with disability.

The ACT Disability Reference Group (the DRG, formerly known as the ACT Disability Expert Panel) has a number of priorities, including the issue of people with disability and employment.

On Thursday 30 June 2016, DRG held a Disability Employment Roundtable (the Roundtable). The Roundtable involved 25 attendees from the government, for purpose and corporate sectors. The objectives of the Roundtable were to:

- identify the barriers to people with disability gaining employment and discuss why these barriers continue to exist;
- gain an understanding of the current disability employment landscape in the ACT, and policies and programs that are currently in place; and
- identify one or two key policy drivers and practical solutions which might help to overcome these barriers.

A report presenting the findings for the Roundtable and survey against each of the objectives, and concluding with recommendations for future action to improve disability employment outcomes in the ACT was developed in the months following the Roundtable. A copy of the report is at [Attachment B](#).

Summary of roundtable findings and survey responses

The Issues Paper identified a number of barriers for people with disability seeking employment. These barriers were categorised as being employer focused, employee focused, system or government focused and across multiple areas. The survey and roundtable confirmed these barriers and identified additional barriers, as outlined below.

As part of prioritising the issue of employment, the DRG has an Employment Sub-Committee whose role is on focus on employment gaps for people with disability, and to feed that back to the broader Reference Group.

The Employment Sub-Committee has been liaising with the Canberra Business Chamber, advocating for the Chamber to undertake a survey with its members to research gaps in the employment of people with disability.

The Chair of the DRG, Ms Sue Salthouse, also held three ACT Employment Enhancement Strategy Meetings in September 2016, to discuss how employment of people with disability in the non-government sector can be enhanced. A number of actions have come out of those meetings for the DRG, including an exercise to map the employment landscape in the

ACT through the focus of identifying “Disability Champions” scoping their roles to promote inclusion of people with disability in employment.

The DRG also plays an important function in connecting information about people with disability between the ACT Public Service and the business community.

Data Collection, Monitoring and Reporting Mechanisms

Data Collection

Data collection of employees with Disability in the ACTPS is currently provided by Shared Services HR Reporting. Specific data relating to People with Disability is available when an employee identifies as having a disability. This can either be at the time of employment or at any given time.

Diversity Targets

As discussed in the ACTPS Disability Employment Strategy section above, the review of the RED Framework identified that while progress had been made, the original targets under the Employment Strategy had not been met. Table 1 below shows the progress against the targets.

	June 2012	June 2013	June 2014	June 2015	June 2016
Headcount	343	384	415	437	458
% of total workforce	1.8%	1.9%	2.0%	2.1%	2.2%

Table 1: People with Disability Employees 2012-2016

In February 2015 the Head of Service extended the timeframe for achieving the targets of 654 employees out to 2018-19. Directorate diversity targets are issued in July each year for the financial year ahead. The targets take into account the proportion of the workforce each directorate employs and are based on the remaining growth required to reach the whole of government targets by 2018-19.

Since June 2015, diversity targets have been incorporated into Directors-General performance agreement adding accountability for inclusion employment in the ACTPS. The Head of Service provides Directors-General with quarterly updates on their directorate's progress towards the targets to ensure ongoing accountability in meeting diversity targets. The quarterly reports include updates on work completed in the previous quarter, upcoming

initiatives and a quarter end headcount for each directorate for both people with Disability and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

State of the Service Report

The State of the Service Report provides an account of the management of the ACTPS. The Workforce Profile provides a holistic overview of the ACT Public Sector and detailed analysis of ACT Public Service workforce data. It includes data, analysis and commentary on employment and key demographics, including part time employment, employment growth, separation rates and diversity.

The Workforce Profile uses the HR reporting resources of Shared Services to provide year-on-year comparisons for the past five years. Shared Services HR reporting has access to data for close to 95% of the ACT Public Sector workforce.

Relevant data from the 2015-16 State of the Service Report can be found at:

<http://www.cmd.act.gov.au/functions/publications/2015-16annualreport/state-of-service-report/act-public-service-workforce-201516/4>

Contractor Central

The ACT Government has partnered with Comensura to implement a new business management solution, Contractor Central ACT, to simplify the management of our contracted workforce.

Contractor Central ACT is a centralised system that will enable ACT businesses to easily engage with the ACT Government through an online process, regardless of the directorate they supply contracted workers to. This will reduce red tape and increase transparency, streamlining the process of sourcing and managing contracted workers.

Contractor Central ACT will also enable the ACTPS to count people working within the Service under third party contracts, in addition to those directly employed. This will give a more accurate count of our total employment inclusion numbers. For example, as at 30 June 2016 Spotless Employment, who hold a maintenance contract with Housing ACT, directly engaged or subcontracted 46 people with a disability.

Experiences and learnings from Australian State, Commonwealth and international jurisdictions

The Whole of Government Inclusion Team actively monitors developments in disability employment initiatives across Australian jurisdictions.

The ACTPS is a Gold member of the Australian Network on Disability. This membership provides the Inclusion Team the opportunity to be involved in, and keep up to date on, initiatives being offered and under development by the Network for the Australian Public Service, State and Territory public services and the private and community sectors in Australia. ACTPS directorates and agencies also have the opportunity to be involved in initiatives run by the Australian Network on Disability. This is generally coordinated by the Inclusion Team.

The Inclusion Team is also involved in other established networks with bodies such as Disability Employment Providers. Through one of these networks, the team has been approached by the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science for access to the merit list from the recently advertised Inclusion Traineeship.

On 31 May 2016 the Australian Public Service Commission launched *As One: Making it Happen, APS Disability Employment Strategy 2016-19*. The strategy sets out actions aimed at attracting and retaining people with disability in the Australian Public Service (APS). Individual agencies are responsible for improving the representation of people with disability in their workforce. A review of APS agencies has shown varying levels of activity in developing actions under the strategy.

The establishment of the Whole of Government Inclusion Team combined with the One-Service approach and the size of the ACTPS facilitate the development and implementation of initiatives to increase the employment of People with Disability.

University of Canberra Report - Employing People with Disability in the APS

The outcomes of the University of Canberra Report - *Employing people with disability in the APS* - are broken up into the following three focus areas for improvement:

1. Cultural alienation – the existing definition of disability (which is based on a deficit model) disempowers rather than empowers people with disability, particularly those with mental illness and/or requiring organisational support for assistive technology. Lack of empowerment leads to low levels of employee confidence and organisational trust. Trust remains the key to enhancing disclosure.

Unconscious bias is often reflected in general staff and managerial behaviour towards people with disability and is reflected in negative preconceptions of their capability and perpetuated through a top-down conception of high performance which serves to disempower rather than empower people with certain disabilities.

It should be recognised that people with disability may simply work differently.

2. Managerial capability and support – Managers are seen as an important support mechanism for people with disability by the majority of our respondents but on average just under half felt supported by managers. Inconsistent managerial practices create a significant implementation gap in disability policy. Managers require significant upskilling, in particular, with regard to people management skills. At the same time, it is equally evident that managers need to be incentivised to take the time to think about how to work differently to accommodate (and benefit from) diversity. There is also an urgent need for more HR expertise in disability to support management. Moreover, there can be no doubt that the APS would benefit from role models at the senior management levels. Executive voice is critical to the achievement of a diverse and progressive culture.
3. Implementation and learning – The APS needs to ‘step into the shoes’ of people with disability. Significant barriers persist in working practices that serve to exclude rather

than enhance workplace participation in areas such as recruitment, career planning, reasonable adjustment, flexible work, and performance management. Although the majority of respondents said they were aware of disability policy and procedure, and believed these policies supported staff needs, most respondents felt these were not being applied effectively. The quality of learning and development was viewed to be poor, especially for managers, and largely based on E-learning without fundamental human interaction. In many departments training was not mandatory.

The Report focuses on the Australian Public Service and was based on consultation with Australian Public Service Departments and Agencies. With the work that has been undertaken since the launch of the Employment Strategy in 2011, the ACTPS is well placed to be an employer of choice for People with Disability.

The Employment Strategy provides that Persons with Disability include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. This has been drawn from the United Nations Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities.

In 2014- 15 a series of “Disability Confidence” seminars were rolled out across the ACTPS. These seminars provided managers with increased awareness of the benefits and support mechanisms available in employing people with a disability. The seminars are currently being revamped to include a focus on unconscious bias and the additional support now available to work areas.

The ACTPS has partnered with the Australian Network on Disability to publish the Manager’s Guide: Disability in the Workplace toolkit on the ACTPS Employment Portal. The toolkit builds employer and employee confidence; confidence to talk about differences; confidence to provide assistance and workplace adjustments; and confidence to remove workplace barriers so the requirements of a diverse range of individuals can be met. All employees are able to access the toolkit through the Employment Portal.

The ACTPS Reasonable Adjustment policy was released in November 2015. The policy notes that the principles and application of Reasonable Adjustment applies to all stages of employment including recruitment, selection, induction, training and career development, participation in projects and committees and return to work following an injury.

The ACTPS is committed to the principles of Reasonable Adjustment to ensure all individuals have equal employment opportunities. The ACTPS seeks to apply the principles of Reasonable Adjustment to remove barriers to workplace participation for individuals with disability and individuals with an injury.

The policy identifies that 'Reasonable Adjustment' can be defined as administrative, environmental or procedural modification required enabling an individual to meet the requirements of a position. It may be a change to a work process, practice or procedure that enables an individual with a disability or injury to perform their job in a way that minimises the impact of their disability or injury. Reasonable Adjustment allows an individual to:

- perform the inherent or essential requirements of their job in a safe manner;
- have equal opportunity to be considered for selection, appointment, promotion, transfer, training and other employment opportunities;
- experience equitable terms and conditions of employment; and
- maximise productivity and workplace satisfaction.

The ACTPS Recruitment Guidelines were revised in 2015. The guidelines identify that a recruitment process should allow all people to compete on an equal basis for employment opportunities. In line with the ACTPS's commitment to the principles of equity and diversity, all directorates must follow the principles of reasonable adjustment. Additionally, the ACTPS has obligations under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)*, the *Discrimination Act 1991 (ACT)*, *Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)*, the *Human Rights Act 2004 (ACT)*, and the *Human Rights Commission Act 2005 (ACT)*. These obligations include ensuring that all employees and potential employees can participate fully in all aspects of employment.

The principles of reasonable adjustment must be applied to all stages of the recruitment and selection process to ensure that all applicants have the opportunity to compete for the position equally and fairly. Reasonable adjustment in recruitment may include a change to a process, practice or procedure to enable an individual with a disability or injury to compete for a position in a way that minimises the impact of their disability or injury. For example, a person with an anxiety disorder or who is vision impaired may be given (extra) time to read through interview questions or undertake scenario based assessments.

It is the responsibility of the selection committee to ask applicants if any reasonable adjustments are required to enable them to participate equally in the recruitment process. It is better practice to ask all applicants when inviting them to an interview or assessment process, regardless of whether they have indicated that special requirements are required on their application form.

Selection committees must ensure that all applicants are assessed on their ability to meet the inherent requirements of the role. 'Inherent requirement' means the ability to perform the essential functions required to be able to undertake the role.

A whole of government mandatory training policy is currently being developed. It is expected that training on the RED Framework, ACTPS Code of Conduct, Values and Signature Behaviours and Cultural Awareness will be categorised as mandatory training for all employees.

Regular training on the RED Framework is available to all ACTPS employees through the ACTPS training calendar. Evaluations are undertaken on every course and participants are able to rate the course on the basis of its content, delivery and materials/equipment. Any feedback is followed up both with the course provider and the employee (if they identify themselves).

The ACTPS Induction Manual (revised in December 2016) provides information to new employees on the RED Framework and diversity.

The ACTPS acknowledges that one size does not fit all and that flexibility is required in all aspects of Inclusion employment. These practices are encouraged and championed by the overarching Inclusion Employment strategies, the Inclusion Team and Inclusion Employment Champions.

Gender Related Matters

In Australia, women with disabilities bear a disproportionate burden of poverty, are less likely to be in paid work than other women, disabled men or the population as a whole. There has been no improvement in the unemployment rate of women with disabilities for more than a decade, and where they are employed, women with disabilities experience significant and systemic discrimination.

They have lower incomes from employment than men with disabilities In Australia, the gender gap in pay has widened over the last four years .Superannuation savings are directly linked to paid work, and current average superannuation payouts for women are less than half that received by men.

Gender biases in labour markets have meant that disabled women's productive potential is less effectively tapped than disabled men's and that disabled women have been more concentrated than disabled men in informal, subsistence and vulnerable employment.

Over the last decade, the unemployment rate for disabled women in Australia has remained virtually unchanged (8.3%) despite significant decreases in the unemployment rates for disabled men.

Employment of women with disabilities in the Australian public sector shows an employment rate of approximately 2.8%, compared to that of men with disabilities of 3.9%.

Women with disabilities have less financial resources at their disposal than disabled men, and are particularly vulnerable to living in insecure or inadequate housing.

The ACT Women's Plan 2016-26 has recognised that the intersection of gender with other factors such as disability compounds the level of discrimination faced by women in society and the workplace. The plan acknowledges that making improvements to reduce attitudinal

structural barriers to the full participation of women with disability is vital to ensure that all women are afforded their full human rights including the right to work.

The ACTPS

The statistical information set out below has been drawn from data provided by Shared Services HR Reporting.

As at 30 June 2016, the ACTPS workforce was comprised of 13,810 female employees, equivalent to 65.0 per cent of the workforce. Table 2 below shows the gender breakdown for People with Disability over the last six financial years. As at 30 June 2016, 56 per cent of employees with Disability were female.

Gender	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Female	200	189	207	229	237	257
Male	151	154	177	186	200	201
Total	351	343	384	415	437	458

Table 2: Gender breakdown for People with Disability

The ACTPS has a gender pay gap of 3.6 per cent, a pay gap that is significantly smaller than both the national gender pay gap (16.2 per cent at May 2016) and ACT labour force pay gap (10.8 per cent at May 2016).

As at 30 June 2016, the average salary for People with Disability was slightly less than the average ACTPS salary (\$85,019 compared to \$87,584). This equates to a pay gap of 3%.

Part-time employment arrangements show the ACTPS to be an organisation that accommodates flexible working practices, allowing both women and men to maintain a healthy work life balance while progressing their careers. As at 30 June 2016, 105 employees with Disability worked part-time. This is 22.9% of the People with Disability cohort which is directly comparable with the 23.8% of employees working part-time across the whole of the ACTPS.

Other Matters

The National Disability Insurance Scheme

Because of the introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and the ageing of the general population, national and local workforce modelling forecasts there will be increasing demand for workers in a range of professional and non-professional occupations related to the disability support sector.

Forecasts for 2015-16 and 2016-17 predicted the ACT disability sector needs approximately 500 new workers each year. Of these, 170 extra direct support workers and 130 extra welfare support workers per year may be needed.

The ACT is a trial site and the first jurisdiction to fully implement the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). As a fundamentally new approach to funding and delivering disability services, the NDIS has motivated ACT providers to seek out and consider new service delivery models and ways of using human capital. As a small jurisdiction with agility and ease of communication, the ACT is uniquely positioned to attempt an innovative approach to sustainably address workforce capacity issues through cross-sector transformation.

A recent public tender undertaken by the ACT Government acknowledged the importance of people with disability and the importance of employing people with disability in a variety of roles, including peer worker roles within the disability sector. Some of the issues the tender addressed include:

- consistent definitions for a range of paid, volunteer and peer disability worker roles,
- a shared sector position about the role, boundaries and skills required of paid; volunteer and peer support workers; and
- provide a systematic review of best practice in engaging peer workers in psychosocial disability support; which includes suitable frameworks, indicators and locally appropriate guidelines.