

# ACCESS & EQUITY ACTION PLAN



Cairns Regional Council – Access & Equity Action Plan – Edited by Access & Equity Advisory Group, July 2009 – Doc No. 256669v2

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## **FOREWORD BY THE MAYOR**

This Access and Equity Action Plan is the culmination of a considerable amount of work by Council's Access and Equity Advisory Group in investigating the issues affecting people with disabilities and looking at how they interface with Council services, information and facilities. This plan will provide a framework for systematically addressing needs over a period of time.

Council has often been faced with the challenge of meeting the needs of people with disabilities, particularly in accessing many of the heritage buildings and streetscapes within the Cairns region. I am pleased to say that Council has risen to the challenge and endeavoured to meet the needs as they have been presented. The Access and Equity Action Plan provides a systematic framework for addressing the needs of people with disabilities and will be used by Council to prioritise funding to meet high priority needs.

Cr V Schier  
Mayor

## INTRODUCTION

The Cairns Region is located in Far North Queensland, about 1,700 kilometres north of Brisbane, and 350 kilometres north of Townsville. The Cairns Region is bounded by the Cook Shire and the Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire in the north, the Coral Sea and the Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire in the east, the Cassowary Coast Region in the south, and the Tablelands Region in the west.

The Cairns Region includes significant areas of national park and state forest, rural areas and growing urban areas. The Region encompasses a total land area of over 4,100 square kilometres. The main urban centre is Cairns, with smaller urban areas in Babinda, Cooya Beach, Gordonvale, Mossman, Newell, Port Douglas and Wonga. Urban areas include residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, entertainment and tourist land uses. Rural land is used predominantly for sugar cane farming.

Cairns is named after William Wellington Cairns, former Governor of Queensland.

The Cairns Region is one of the fastest growing in Australia, with more than 3.4 per cent annual growth between 2003 and 2007 - well above the State average.

Around 158,653 people call this tropical paradise home, and they come from a myriad of backgrounds. The region is a diverse, multicultural community where people truly make the difference.

The Cairns Region is where the reef meets the rainforest, and the Cairns Regional Council is the local authority responsible for the delivery of quality services, infrastructure and sustainable development in this unique tropical environment.

## MISSION STATEMENT OF THE ACCESS AND EQUITY ADVISORY GROUP

**“To enhance the quality of life for people with disabilities within our diverse community in our unique environment through excellence of service and leadership”.**

The core values of Council’s Corporate Plan are to provide the best possible balance of services to all areas and sectors of the community and to remain professional at all times in dealing with the many issues affecting the region and its people.

Council strives for innovation to ensure its systems and procedures reflect the highest possible standards in quality service provision for all members of the community.

The Council is an Equal Opportunity employer and through its Corporate Plan strives for quality service through quality management.

## BACKGROUND

### PURPOSE OF THIS PLAN

The purpose of this plan is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, to promote respect for their inherent dignity and to provide a framework to enable Cairns Regional Council to comply with the goals of the Commonwealth *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA)* and the Queensland *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991*.

The Australian Local Government Association has produced a document entitled *Disability Discrimination Act Action Plans - A Guide for Local Government (1995)* recommending Councils develop Action Plans for the following reasons:-

- To enhance & facilitate equitable access for all members of the community
- As sound business practice in that the implementation of such plans improves Council's performance in fulfilling its community services responsibilities to people with a disability and their families, who constitute a significant proportion of ratepayers" (P.4) and
- To reduce the likelihood of complaints lodged with Federal Government's Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC),
- To eliminate discrimination

For many years Cairns Regional Council has been involved in meeting the needs of people with disabilities, primarily through an Access and Equity Advisory Group. The committee provides a forum for people to identify concerns and to develop solutions. The Access and Equity Advisory Group is composed of a number of community representatives who have disabilities and service providers from the Disability Sector. Councillors and council staff also participate in these forums and over a number of years have seen many solutions found and implemented.

Council's commitment to meeting the needs of people with disabilities is solid and this is reflected in many of the works that have taken place in recent years.

Concern was raised that in order to provide a systematic approach to dealing with the needs of people with disabilities, that an action plan is required. The Access and Equity Action Plan is in keeping with the requirements of the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and has been prepared and provides a review of the policies and practices and a framework for communicating both with staff and with the community.

The development of the methodology in assessing priorities has been difficult but will, over a period of time, enable decisions to be made objectively and will assist in Council's budget process.

## DEFINITION OF DISABILITY

For the purposes of this Action Plan, “disability” is defined in accordance with the definition provided by the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*:

- a) Total or partial loss of the person’s bodily or mental function
- b) Total or partial loss of a part of the body
- c) The presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness
- d) The presence in the body of organisms capable of causing disease or illness
- e) The malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person’s body
- f) A disorder or malfunction which results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction
- g) A disorder, illness or disease which affects a person’s thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgements in which results in disturbed behaviour
- h) The disability presently exists
- i) The disability previously existed but no longer exists
- j) The disability may exist in the future
- k) The disability is imputed to a person

Cairns Regional Council understands “accessible” to mean services, functions and facilities that are open and available to people with disabilities which affords them the same opportunities, rights and responsibilities enjoyed by all other people in the community.

Our community is made up of a wide range of people from diverse backgrounds – old, young, single, in partnerships, male, female, from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, Indigenous or Torres Strait Islander, just to name a few – and people with disabilities are represented in all of the groups mentioned with all of the differences that implies. In the group “people with disabilities” are a diversity of needs, abilities, strengths and weaknesses.

People with disabilities face many barriers in their daily lives – barriers that limit their participation in community life. Many of these barriers are created through the design of the environment in which we live and the attitudes we have to disability; barriers that are disabling. These barriers are not created by the disability the individual may have but by the design of the built environment (e.g. buildings, footpaths, playgrounds) and the attitudes of exclusion that imply inclusive design and service provision is expensive, unnecessary or benefits only a small minority group. Inclusive design benefits everyone.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE PLAN'S IMPLEMENTATION**

Within Council there will be a regular review and update of the plan and its implementation where Key Performance Indicators will be assessed.

## **LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

The objectives of the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* are:

- (a) to eliminate, as far as possible, discrimination against persons on the grounds of disability in the areas of:
  - (i) work, accommodation, education, access to premises, clubs and sport; and
  - (ii) the provision of goods, facilities, services and land; and existing laws; and
  - (iii) the administration of Commonwealth laws and programs; and
- (b) to ensure, as far as practicable, that persons with disabilities have the same right to equality before the law as the rest of the community; and
- (c) to promote recognition and acceptance within the community of the principle that persons with disabilities have the same fundamental rights as the rest of the community.

The Act provides a prohibition on disability discrimination in various areas, particularly relating to:

- (a) employment
- (b) education
- (c) access to premises
- (d) goods, services and facilities
- (e) accommodation
- (f) sport.

The Act provides for the Minister to formulate disability standards enforceable under the Legislation.

Within the scope of Legislation, there is an understanding that meeting the objective of the elimination of discrimination may not be possible and provision has been made for situations where full compliance would result in “unjustifiable hardship”.

For the purposes of this Act, in determining what constitutes unjustifiable hardship, all relevant circumstances of the particular case are to be taken into account including:

- (a) the nature of the benefit or detriments likely to accrue or be suffered by any persons concerned; and
- (b) the effect of the disability of a person concerned; and
- (c) the financial circumstances and the estimated amount of expenditure required to be made by the person claiming unjustifiable hardship; and
- (d) in the case of the provision of services, or the making available of facilities – an action plan given to the Commission under section 64.

The provisions dealing with “unjustifiable hardship” point to the need for an action plan which, as set out in the Legislation, must include provisions relating to:

- (a) the devising of policies and programs to achieve the objects of this Act; and
- (b) the communication of these policies and programs to persons within the service provider; and
- (c) the review of practices within the service provider with a view to the identification of any discriminatory practices; and
- (d) the setting of goals and targets, where these may reasonably be determined against which the success of the plan in achieving the objects of the Act may be assessed; and
- (e) the means, other than those referred to in paragraph (d), of evaluating the policies and programs referred to in paragraph (a); and
- (f) the appointment of persons within the service provider to implement the provisions referred to in paragraphs (a) to (e) (inclusive).

One of the areas referenced to in the Act pertains to employment and there is a strong correlation to the *Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan* (EEO) prescribed under the Local Government Act.

The *Local Government Act 1993* sets out the Local Government’s commitment to the principle of equality of opportunity in relation to all employment matters. The Act requires the development, implementation and monitoring of an Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan that will:

- (1) Enable members of target groups to:

- (a) Compete for recruitment, selection, promotion and transfer within the Council; and
  - (b) Pursue careers in the agency and other agencies; as effectively as people who are not members of the target groups; and
- (2) Eliminate unlawful discrimination by the agency or its employees against members of the target groups with respect to employment matters.

It should be noted that the merit principle and the *Local Government Act* are entirely compatible. The principle of selection on merit is the sole basis for recruitment, selection, promotion and transfer.

The *Local Government Act* specifies four target groups who will be the subject of initial EEO Management Plans. It also permits the prescription of additional groups by regulation. The four groups are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people with a disability, people from a non-English speaking background and women.

The intention is to address disability discrimination issues relating to employment through the development and ongoing implementation of the EEO Management Plan.

## **REVIEW OF POLICIES & PRACTICES**

A review of Council's policies and practices relating to Disability Discrimination will be undertaken by the Access and Equity Advisory Group.

Findings from the review will be discussed to gain a user perspective of Council information, services products and facilities, and will provide the basis of the information on which the Access and Equity Action Plan will move forward.

## **ACCESS AUDITS OF COUNCIL SERVICES**

### Information – Services and Products

Cairns Regional Council provides a considerable amount of information, primarily in the following formats:

- Written brochures, circulars and information sheets.
- Face to face explanation by Customer Service Centre.
- Telephone contact.
- Council's website.

The range of information provided by Council is varied with the main areas of interest including:

- Rates
- Services and infrastructure location
- Development
- Health and safety
- Keeping of animals
- Tourism
- Roads
- Facilities

**Assessment of Disability Needs**

Disability	Issues	Solutions
Mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to buildings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lifts, ramps</li> <li>• Location/Access to services</li> </ul>
Sight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most information is in written form</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of Braille &amp; Tactile signage</li> <li>• Oral/audio explanation of information</li> </ul>
Hearing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to and understanding information difficult for people who are deaf or hard of hearing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of portable hearing loops (Phonic Ear)</li> <li>• Use of a sign language interpreter to assist</li> </ul>
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some physical disabilities limit access</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lifts and ramps</li> <li>• Location/Access of services</li> </ul>
Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People with Mental health conditions may have difficulty in understanding and responding to situations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure council officers are trained to recognise people displaying signs of mental illness and respond appropriately</li> </ul>
Intellectual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People with intellectual disabilities may have difficulty understanding Council information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure council officers are trained to assist with the provision of information.</li> <li>• Develop information brochures in simple English with visual aids</li> </ul>

Access to Facilities

Access to facilities and premises is a major issue for the Cairns Regional Council where numerous older buildings pose a significant challenge in compliance to enable equitable access. Major facilities and premises operated by Council include but are not limited to:

- Administration Buildings
- City and Suburban Libraries
- Council Cultural Facilities
- Swimming Pools
- Community Centres and Halls

**Assessment of Disability Needs**

Disability	Issues	Solutions
Mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to buildings</li> <li>• Use of toilet facilities by people with disabilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Installation of lift and ramps</li> <li>• Specific design of toilets to provide suitable facilities to people with disabilities</li> </ul>
Sight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signage</li> <li>• Visual information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Braille &amp; tactile signage</li> <li>• Audio information</li> <li>• Council officers trained to assist with the explanation of information to people who are blind or vision impaired</li> </ul>
Hearing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor acoustics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of hearing portable hearing loops (Phonic Ear)</li> <li>• Council officers trained to assist with the explanation of information to people who are deaf or hard of hearing</li> </ul>
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access</li> <li>• Tripping Hazards</li> <li>• Obstructions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ramps &amp; paths</li> <li>• Lifts</li> <li>• Tactile indicators</li> </ul>
Intellectual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Braille signage</li> <li>• Audio information</li> <li>• Council officers trained to assist with the explanation of information to people with intellectual disabilities</li> </ul>

## **METHODOLOGY IN ASSESSING PRIORITIES**

In order to determine priorities a number of criteria have been developed including:

- (a) Demonstrated extent of demand by people with disabilities from information received
- (b) The cost of compliance ranked in terms of high, medium and low cost
- (c) Usage of the facility by the general public
- (d) Degree of difficulty in compliance.

It is proposed that the identified needs be assessed in terms of the criteria listed above.

## **ACCESS AND EQUITY ACTION PLAN**

Cairns Regional Council is committed to

- (a) Provide information, services, products and facilities in a manner that eliminates, as far as reasonably possible, discrimination of any person on the grounds of disability; and
- (b) Implement the programmes outlined in the Access and Equity Action Plan within the framework of Council's financial commitments.
- (c) Ongoing consultation with individuals and disability groups regarding Council Services.

**STRATEGY 1**

**Supporting Disability Initiatives in Our Community.**

Issue	Strategy	Actions	Timeframe	Responsibility	Key Performance Indicators	Action
1.1 Council needs to obtain further information to support disability initiatives in our community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek and coordinate information from the community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a promotional strategy for the Access and Equity Advisory Group to gain information</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Access & Equity Advisory Group Access and Equity Project Officer	Annually CRM log	Through local member networks Ongoing
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct meetings of the Access and Equity Advisory Group to consider information received</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Access & Equity Advisory Group Access and Equity Project Officer	Six meetings a year	Ongoing
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report to Council all minutes and actions of the Access and Equity Advisory Group</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Access & Equity Advisory Group Access and Equity Project Officer	Following meetings all reports and minutes placed on Councils web site	Ongoing

Issue	Strategy	Actions	Timeframe	Responsibility	KPIs	Action
1.2 Recognising people with disabilities as valued and respected members of our community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equal Employment Opportunity policy</li> <li>• International Day of People with Disabilities</li> <li>• Disability Action Week</li> <li>• Responses by the Access and Equity Advisory Group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement Council's EEO Management Plan, Workforce Disability Management Plan and the HR Workforce Strategy</li> <li>• Coordinate the planning around International Day of People with Disabilities and Disability Action Week</li> <li>• Continue recognition via Disability Action Week Awards</li> <li>• Continue with Bimonthly meetings of the Access and Equity Advisory Group</li> </ul>	Ongoing   Annually   Annually   Bimonthly	Manager Human Resources   Access and Equity Project Officer Access & Equity Advisory Group   Access & Equity Advisory Group Access and Equity Project Officer   Access & Equity Advisory Group Access and Equity Project Officer	Maintain/increase levels of employment opportunities   Nominations from community members for awards   Regular attendance of Group members and Staff	Ongoing   Events coordinated by A&E Project Officer Annually   DAW Awards held annually to recognise local community   Ongoing

Issue	Strategy	Actions	Timeframe	Responsibility	KPIs	Action
1.3 Addressing low level of public awareness of people with disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raise public awareness of people with disabilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create education package on disability for public awareness presentations</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Access & Equity Advisory Group Access and Equity Project Officer	Chart forums held and attendances	Face to Face communication package created by A&E Officer  Inclusion – see the real me project launched 3 June 2010
1.4 Addressing low levels of awareness by residents and tourists to the region of accessible community support infrastructure e.g. Accommodation, Accessible public toilets and parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raise public awareness for residents and tourists alike</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor, review and upgrade “Access for All” web directory</li> <li>Monitor CRM complaints</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Access and Equity Project Officer Access & Equity Advisory Group	Web Site hits and hard copies issued  Register of complaints and acknowledgements of achievements	Continued upgrades to web site A&E Officer & volunteer staff  New Access stickers created and being distributed through region
1.5 Council needs to be responsible to the needs of people with disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council to commit to its Access and Equity Action Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council endorse and support the Access &amp; Equity Policy and Action Plan</li> <li>Apply Access Policy and Access and Equity Action Plan principles throughout Council</li> <li>Include an Access &amp; Equity Statement in the Employee Handbook</li> </ul>	December 2009  Ongoing  January 2010	Cairns Regional Council  All departments  Human Resources Access and Equity Project Officer	Meet time frames  Evidence of implementation of Action Plan  Evidence of statement included in Employee Handbook	A&E Action Plan ratified Jan 9 Mar 2010 Latest amendment February 2011  Actioned Nov 09 in draft

**STRATEGY 2**

**Organisational Change - to ensure that all Council staff are aware of and have the skills required to provide a level of service, which takes into account the needs of people with disability.**

Issue	Strategy	Actions	Time Frame	Responsibility	Key Performance Indicators	Action
2.1 Councillors, Management and Staff may not be fully aware of disability legislation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop Disability Awareness packages for delivery to Councillors, Management and Staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure departmental Managers and Team Leaders lead by example when performing Council activities and functions</li> <li>The Access &amp; Equity Advisory Group will create a Toolbox Talk</li> <li>Staff training to be included in staff inductions</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>When policies or legislative changes occur/annually</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>All Managers and Team Leaders</p> <p>Access &amp; Equity Advisory Group</p> <p>Human Resources Learning and Development</p>	<p>Increased general awareness</p> <p>Create TBT</p> <p>Implement TBT</p>	<p>Package created awaiting delivery</p> <p>Corporate inductions commence 12 July 2010</p>

**STRATEGY 3**

**Communication - to ensure that all information about functions, facilities and services is provided in formats which will meet the needs of people with a disability.**

Issue	Strategy	Actions	Time Frame	Responsibility	Key Performance Indicators	Action
<p>3.1 Information about Council functions, facilities and services is not written in clear and concise language and available in formats that are accessible for people with a disability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop clear and concise formats of accessible communications for people with disabilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council will make information available to the community on request in clear and concise language and in appropriate media for a person with disability</li> <li>Appropriate signage in accordance with AS 1428.1 is to be available to indicate accessibility to Council events and functions</li> <li>Council to include information about Council functions facilities, services and infrastructure for people with a disability on the "On Hold" telephone information</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>December 2009</p>	<p>All departments</p> <p>All departments</p> <p>Corporate Communication Research and Engagement Coordinator</p>	<p>Production of clear and concise documentation</p> <p>Production of appropriate signage</p> <p>Inclusion of information to meet timeframes</p>	<p>Stickers created and delivered Mar 10</p> <p>Actioned Aug 09</p>

Issue	Strategy	Actions	Time Frame	Responsibility	KPIs	Action
<p>3.2 Inadequate formats of communication for people who are hard of hearing or who are Deaf</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop a plan for the introduction of improved communication needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake a needs assessment with a view to:                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TTY telephone</li> <li>Internet tools</li> </ol> </li> <li>Develop a communication strategy for Customer Service staff</li> <li>Provide portable hearing loops (Phonic Ear) for Council facilities</li> <li>Provide Auslan Interpreter during Disaster Management announcements via television for all members of the community with a hearing impairment</li> <li>Provide Auslan Interpreters at all Civic receptions and Council meetings where a person who is deaf may be attending</li> </ul>	<p>2010</p> <p>2010</p> <p>Investigate 2011 for inclusion 2011/12 budget</p> <p>Immediately</p> <p>Immediately</p>	<p>Manager Information Services A&amp;E Advisory Group Access and Equity Project Officer</p> <p>Manager Service Quality FA&amp;E Advisory Group Access and Equity Project Officer</p> <p>Manager Sport, Rec and Community Development Manager Service Quality, Manager CRC Libraries</p> <p>Manager Marketing and Communications</p> <p>Manager Sport, Rec and Community Development Manager Service Quality, Manager CRC Libraries</p>	<p>Monitor needs assessment</p> <p>Monitor progress of communication Strategy and report to A&amp;E Advisory Group</p> <p>Installation of portable hearing loop system</p> <p>Monitor bookings of Auslan Interpreters</p>	<p>19 Apr 10 The National Relay Service call information added to CRC website contacts</p> <p>Apr 2010 National Relay Service information added to Customer Service Staff instruction hand books</p> <p>Under investigation June 2010</p> <p>Implemented Feb 2011</p> <p>ongoing</p>
<p>3.3 Inadequate Communication methods for people who have low vision or blind</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop methods to increase communication levels for people who have low vision or who are blind</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate Council provisions to access the following:                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>JAWS programs for internet usage</li> <li>JAWS program for CRC Libraries</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	<p>Investigate 2011 for inclusion in 2011/12 budget</p>	<p>Manager IS Manager CRC Libraries Access and Equity Project Officer</p>	<p>Monitor and report progress of provision of communication equipment</p>	<p></p>

		c) Magnification devices for visually impaired at CRC Libraries (currently Manunda library only)				
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**STRATEGY 4**

**Language - to ensure that correct terminology is used in all Council literature. Council officers use appropriate language when dealing with people with disability and issues concerning access & equity in general.**

Issue	Strategy	Actions	Timeframe	Responsibility	Key Performance Indicators	Action
4.1 Language and terminology can be inappropriate and/or insensitive to people with disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop Awareness Package to address sensitivities relating to inappropriate language and terminology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access &amp; Equity Project Officer to develop a toolbox talk to educate staff.</li> </ul>	February 2010	Access & Equity Advisory Group Access and Equity Project Officer	Record staff numbers attending Awareness training	Package developed, Commence training 12 July 2010. Presentations being conducted to external organisations and business by A&E Project Officer

## STRATEGY 5

**Employment - to ensure that people with disabilities have equal access to employment opportunities within Council and are afforded access to facilities, services and opportunities to meet their specific needs.**

Issue	Strategy	Actions	Time Frame	Responsibility	Key Performance Indicators	Action
5.1 Recognition of Council as an Equal Opportunity Employer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote council as an Equal Opportunity Employer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement Council's EEO Management Plan, Workforce Disability Management Plan and the HR Workforce Strategy</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Manager Human Resources	Monitor staffing levels with people with disabilities	Ongoing
5.2 Provision of access for all staff to their workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide access for all staff to their workplace within the organisation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue ongoing audits of Council workplace</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Work Health and Safety Advisor Access and Equity Project Officer	Monitor improvements of access to workplace	Ongoing

## STRATEGY 6

**Direct Service Provision - to ensure that all services provided by Council reflect the needs of all members of the community and those services continue to be responsive towards those needs.**

Issue	Strategy	Actions	Time Frame	Responsibility	Key Performance Indicators	Action
6.1 Non Compliance of Council facilities with Australian Standards and Regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop Audit Plan of existing Council facilities and infrastructure to comply with Australian Standards and other Regulations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On going audits to include:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accessible parking</li> <li>Accessible signage</li> <li>Accessible toilets</li> <li>Manoeuvrability inside buildings</li> <li>Access from street frontages</li> <li>Access from footpaths</li> <li>Prioritise works for upgrading Council's infrastructure</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Ongoing	Project Officer Infrastructure Management Investigations Coordinator Works and Services Access and Equity Project Officer	Monitor and report audit summary to Access and Equity Advisory Group	Parking, signage, toilets, footpath upgrades commenced Sept 09  A&E Officer working closely with Facilities Maintenance

**STRATEGY 7**

**Asset Management - to ensure access to all new and current Council assets, owned and leased, are prioritised and upgraded to required standards.**

Issue	Strategy	Actions	Time Frame	Responsibility	Key Performance Indicators	Action
7.1 Inadequate equitable access involving infrastructure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop audit plan of all new infrastructure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure funding is made available for the provision of infrastructure requirements</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Project Officer Infrastructure Management Access and Equity Project Officer	Monitor audit plan	
7.2 Off road paths are unsuitable and lack consistency for access by people with disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop audit plan of off road paths for people with disability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progressively upgrade or modify footpaths especially those leading to public buildings and facilities</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Project Officer Infrastructure Management Access and Equity Project Officer	Monitor progress Of path upgrades	
7.3 Inadequate safe access denying ease of access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop audit plan to provide ease of access to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ramps and Kerb Ramps</li> <li>Pedestrian traffic light buttons</li> <li>Beach access</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct audits and comply with accessibility standards and regulations by consultation with internal departments and external authorities such as Main Roads and Surf Life Saving Qld</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Project Officer Infrastructure Management Dept Traffic & Main Roads Surf Lifesaving Qld Access and Equity Project Officer	Monitor audit plan	
7.4 Tactile Ground Surface Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audit existing works/streetscapes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rectify according to priority of need on existing infrastructure</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Project Officer Infrastructure Management Access and Equity Project Officer	Monitor rectification work	Ongoing installation underway
7.5 Obstruction of pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audit existing pathways</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to clear obstructions from pathways and footpaths</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Project Officer Infrastructure Management Access and Equity Project Officer	Monitor rectification work	
7.6 Inappropriate signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audit existing signage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rectify inappropriate and non compliant signage where identified</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Project Officer Infrastructure Management Access and Equity Project Officer	Monitor rectification work	

Issue	Strategy	Actions	Timeframe	Responsibility	KPIs	Action
7.7 Inadequate lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audit existing lighting on streets and parks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure adequate levels of street and park lighting</li> <li>Design, specify and place new lighting to be DDA and AS compliant</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Project Officer Infrastructure Management Access and Equity Project Officer	Monitor rectification work	Upgrades taking place through CBD and parks to ensure safe levels of light
7.8 Public toilets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audit existing public toilet facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure universally Accessible Public Toilets are available throughout the region by:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supplementing and modifying existing infrastructure complying with the requirements of the DDA 1992 and Australian Standards</li> </ul> </li> <li>Ensure a continuous path of travel including ramps from car parks/pedestrian walk ways to toilets</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Project Officer Infrastructure Management Access and Equity Project Officer	Monitor rectification work	
			Ongoing	Investigations Coordinator Works and Services Access and Equity Project Officer	Monitor rectification works	
7.9 Community Centres/halls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audit existing Community Centres/halls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Address DDA 1992 and Australian Standards gaps in audits by prioritising in action plan. Complying with DDA/AS requirements.</li> <li>Ensure adequate parking and continuous accessible paths of travel including ramps to entrances</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Project Officer Infrastructure Management Access and Equity Project Officer	Monitor rectification works	Works being conducted in CRC community Halls, works commenced Jan 2010
			Ongoing	Investigations Coordinator Works and Services Project Officer Infrastructure Management Access and Equity Project Officer	Monitor rectification works	

**STRATEGY 8**

**Parks, Gardens and Reserves - to ensure that the needs of people with disabilities are taken into account in any initiatives the Cairns Regional Council undertakes with regard to open spaces.**

Issue	Strategy	Actions	Time Frame	Responsibility	Key Performance Indicators	Action
8.1 Inadequate access to Council Parks, Gardens and Reserves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop partnership with Strategic Planning and Project Services to identify accessibility to future parks, gardens and reserves</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consult with Project Services and Sport and Recreation in the development of all open spaces/parks regarding accessibility and suitability for people with disability.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Access & Equity Advisory Group Access & Equity Project Officer	Monitor development of open spaces	Ongoing, work commencing on All Abilities playgrounds Edmonton and Mossman Sept/Oct 2010

**STRATEGY 9**

**Waste Management - to ensure that all members of the community are able to use and take maximum advantage of the services provided by Council (through Contractors) in the disposal of household garbage.**

Issue	Strategy	Actions	Time Frame	Responsibility	Key Performance Indicators	Action
9.1 No differentiation of recycling bins for the people with low vision or who are blind	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop partnership with waste management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Waste Management Dept to develop and provide differentiation of recycle bins by raised lettering on recycle bins</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Cairns Regional Water & Waste Access & Equity Project Officer	Monitor implementation of tactile indicators	Commencing Jan/Feb 2011
9.2 Residents with disabilities unable to place out and retrieve bins on collection day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct survey and create register of residents requiring service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Liaise with waste management to have collector/driver collect bin from storage and return on completion. Formal request to waste management by council on behalf of client. Medical certificate may be required.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Cairns Regional Water & Waste Access & Equity Project Officer	Monitor implementation of register	The Infirm service is in place and run by Water and Waste Management.

**STRATEGY 10**

**Access Policy and Access and Equity Action Plan Update -- to ensure that the Access Policy and the Access and Equity Action Plan remain current and that strategies are adapted to reflect changes in legislation and the changing needs of society.**

Issue	Strategy	Actions	Timeframe	Responsibility	Key Performance Indicators	Action
10.1 That changes may occur in legislation and may not be captured by the Access and Equity Action Plan and the Access Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission and Anti Discrimination Commission Queensland for changes to legislation and report as necessary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a regular process for review and evaluation of the Access and Equity Action Plan and the Access Policy.</li> </ul>	Annually	Access & Equity Advisory Group  Access & Equity Project Officer	Continual monitoring Access and Equity Action Plan and Access Policy	Ongoing monitoring Latest Action Plan amendment February 2011