

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services Disability Services Plan

Refresh 2021-22



Message from the Commissioner

The *Disability Services Act 2006* (the Act) came into effect on 1 July 2006 and continues to provide a strong foundation for promoting the rights of people with a disability and encouraging their participation in the community.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) supports the Act, which requires every Queensland Government department to develop a Disability Service Plan (DSP) to identify and address issues regarding service delivery to people with a disability.

QFES recognises the significant contribution that all our staff and volunteers bring to the organisation through their skills, experiences, perspectives, and knowledge. As an employer, QFES acknowledges the right of people with disabilities to enter and participate in an equitable workforce.

The QFES DSP includes actions for the development and improvement of services that are responsive to the needs of clients and our own people with a disability and their families and carers. The DSP has been developed through internal and external consultation and identifies our continued commitment to provide a high standard of services for the Queensland community.

During 2020 and 2021, responses to COVID-19 had impacts across all Queenslanders, and in particular services provided to persons with disability. A new National Disability Strategy, and new State Disability Plan were scheduled to be released during 2020, however this has been delayed as a result of impacts from COVID-19 response. QFES has refreshed its DSP and provides this update for 2021-22 as recovery continues.

This updated document will enable QFES to continue to support diversity and inclusivity within the community we serve.

Greg Leach
Commissioner
August 2021



About the Department

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) is the primary provider of fire and rescue, emergency services and disaster management capability services throughout Queensland. The department encompasses the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS), disaster management services, the State Emergency Service (SES), and the Rural Fire Service (RFS). The department works with community and partners to minimise the impacts and consequences of disasters and emergencies on persons, property and the environment. This is supported by assisting communities to understand their local hazards and ensuring they have the right knowledge, information and resources to strengthen their capability and resilience. QFES also supports other volunteer groups providing emergency response to Queenslanders.

About Disability Service Plans (DSPs)

Purpose of DSPs

The *Disability Services Act (Qld) 2006* (the Act) provides a foundation for promoting the rights of Queenslanders with a disability, increasing their wellbeing and encouraging their participation in community life. This legislation requires all Queensland Government agencies to develop and implement a DSP. The purpose of DSPs is to ensure each agency has regard to the Act's human rights and service delivery principles, and the Government's policies for people with a disability. DSPs aim to improve access to services across government for people with a disability, including more coordinated responses.

Policy Statement

QFES seeks to educate, inform and engage with Queenslanders with a disability to reduce the rate and impact of public safety incidents such as road crashes, fires and disaster events. QFES is committed to working with Queenslanders with a disability to build ready and resilient communities and ensure community preparedness for disaster and significant events. We support our staff and volunteers to engage fully in the workplace and community.

Monitoring and reporting

QFES reports annually on the implementation of its DSP (refer www.qfes.qld.gov.au) and contributes to a yearly progress report on the implementation of the State Disability Plan.

Information from the annual progress reports on DSPs and the State Disability Plan is shared with the Australian and other State and Territory governments as part of reporting on Queensland's commitment to the NDS.

Contact for more information

For further information, please contact QFES' Strategic Policy and Legislation Branch: QFES.PolicyandLegislation@qfes.qld.gov.au.



Communities for all

Changing attitudes and breaking down barriers by raising awareness and capability				
2017-2020 Activities/success measure	2020-21 Refresh Activities	2021-22 Refresh Activities	Overall measures	Responsible area
Action - Support national communication strategies and activities to promote the <i>National Disability Strategy 2010-2020</i>.				
Work with Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (DSDSATSP) to identify opportunities to participate in and contribute to national communication strategies and activities	Ongoing	Completed (whole-of-government action – transitioned to business as usual (BAU).	Input provided as requested by DSDSATSP	Strategic Policy and Legislation
Action – Queensland Government Ministers act as champions with business, industry and organisational partners within their portfolio to raise awareness of disability and build partnerships and opportunities.				
Work with DSDSATSP to identify portfolio specific information for inclusion in Minister’s information pack	Ongoing	Completed (whole-of-government action – transitioned to BAU.	Input provided as requested by DSDSATSP	Strategic Policy and Legislation



Action – Investigate and develop options to provide disability awareness training to Queensland Government frontline staff and to incorporate disability awareness training into Queensland Government induction programs.				
Work with DSDSATSIP to investigate options for training	Identify content from the QFES Learning Cache to be incorporated into induction and on-boarding material. Identify opportunities to support positive messaging that recognises the rights of persons with disability, such as Disability Action Week.	Completed (whole-of-government action – transitioned to BAU.	Contribute to options development as requested by DSDSATSIP, including liaison for whole-of-government awareness training packages. Key calendar events related to Queensland, national and international promotion is made available on QFES external and internal communication platforms.	QFES People Media, Communications and Online
Accessible places and spaces				
2017-2020 Activities/success measure	2020-21 Refresh Activities	2021-22 Refresh Activities	Overall measures	Responsible area
Action - Access for people with disability is improved by considering the needs of people with disability when buildings and venues used by the Queensland Government are refurbished or leases renewed and where possible in choosing venues for Queensland Government run events and meetings.				
Advice provided to staff on how to choose an accessible venue for an event or meeting	Ongoing	Completed (whole-of-government action – transitioned to BAU.	Guidance provided to staff about how to choose an accessible venue for an event or meeting	Knowledge Hub



Accessible information				
Action - Work towards ensuring all Queensland Government information is accessible and provided in multiple formats.				
Progressively review and update (where applicable) existing content. Ensure new key Queensland Government information/ materials are provided in accessible formats.	Ongoing	Completed (whole-of-government action – transitioned to BAU.	All new key Queensland Government information/ materials are provided in accessible formats Existing content progressively reviewed and updated	Media, Communications and Online
Action - Ensure websites meet contemporary Australian Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.				
Work with the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy – Queensland Government Customer and Digital Group to ensure new key website content is accessible and complies with guidelines	Ongoing	Completed (whole-of-government action – transitioned to BAU.	All new key website content is accessible and complies with guidelines	Media, Communications and Online
Respecting and promoting the rights of people with disability and recognising diversity				
2017-2020 Activities/success measure	2020-21 Refresh Activities	2021-22 Refresh Activities	Overall measures	Responsible area
Action – Government services and funded non-government services provide access to language, translating and communication services.				
Continue to provide translation services in accordance with the Queensland Language Services Policy Develop and release Use of Interpreters procedure	Ongoing	Completed (whole-of-government action – transitioned to BAU.	Language, translating and communication services are available to Queenslanders with disability when accessing QFES provided and funded services. Use of Interpreters procedure developed and published.	Whole of QFES Emergency Management and Community Capability



Employment

Leading the way – increasing opportunities in the Queensland public sector				
2017-2020 Activities/success measure	2020-21 Refresh Activities	2021-22 Refresh Activities	Overall measures	Responsible area
<p>Action - Implement strategies to reach the Queensland Government target that, by 2022, eight per cent of the Queensland Public Sector workforce will be people with disability, across attraction, recruitment, retention and career progression and development, for example flexible work practices and inclusion of people with disability in the government employer brand.</p>				
<p>Work with the Public Service Commission to implement strategies to reach the Queensland Government target of 8 per cent of the workforce will be people with a disability by 2022.</p>	<p>Review of recruitment and workforce information material (such as ALL IN. ALL FRONTS.) to include promotion and support of persons with a disability in QFES workforce.</p> <p>Review QFES Fairness, Equity and Inclusion Framework.</p> <p>Establishment of a variety of flexible work practices across QFES roles.</p>	<p>Completed (whole-of-government action – transitioned to BAU.</p>	<p>The proportion of people with disability employed in QFES workforce increases.</p> <p>Workforce information is reflective of current Queensland Government policies and includes positive messaging relating to employment opportunities for persons with disability.</p> <p>References to relevant legislation and plans are current and easy to access via links or website addresses.</p> <p>Flexible working arrangements guidelines and tools for managers and staff are implemented.</p>	<p>QFES People</p>



Everyday Services

Justice and community safety				
2017-2020 Activities/success measure	2020-21 Refresh Activities	2021-22 Refresh Activities	Overall measures	Responsible area
Action – Undertake a review of the QFES Safehome program ensuring it incorporates information for people with a disability				
Completion of review and update of program	Review QFES engagement material related to Safehome, with consideration of information specific to the needs of persons living with a disability.	Completed.	Review completed Disability related information included in	Emergency Management, Volunteerism, and Community Resilience
Action – In partnership with Deaf Services Queensland (DSQ) manage a subsidy program, for hard of hearing or deaf people, to offset the cost of specialised smoke alarms.				
Enabling subsidy program (ended 30 June 2021)	Review of needs/future requirements to be considered.	Enabling subsidy program extended to 30 June 2023.	Subsidy available and appropriately administered	Emergency Management, Volunteerism, and Community Resilience
Other services – agency specific				
Action – Increased engagement of Allies of Inclusion and Connected Conversations and Safer Workplaces				
n/a	'Reboot' of QFES Allies of Inclusion activities	Ongoing.	Establishment of Workforce Resource Groups, including membership across QFES regions and directorates QFES Executive Leadership Team members champion identified Allies of Inclusion groups	Whole of QFES, with support from QFES People



2017-2020 Activities/success measure	2020-21 Refresh Activities	2021-22 Refresh Activities	Overall measures	Responsible area
Action – Diversity Data Drive				
n/a	Seek to improve the response rate for completion of diversity data information	Ongoing.	Increased diversity data information received via use of Employee Self Service	QFES People
Action – Support local implementation of the Queensland Disability-Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DIDRR) Framework and Toolkit				
n/a	Regions to support local implementation of Phase 2 of the Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction Framework and Toolkit, where applicable.	Completed.	Phase 2 of DIDRR Framework and Toolkit implemented	Emergency Management, Volunteerism, and Community Resilience

Leadership and participation

Inclusion in consultation, civic participation and decision making and supporting leadership development				
2017-2020 Activities/success measure	2020-21 Refresh Activities	2021-22 Refresh Activities	Overall measures	Responsible area
Action – Queensland Government agencies consult with people with disability when either developing a Disability Service plan or implementing Disability Service Plan actions.				
Consult with the Queensland Disability Advisory Council through the Disability Service Plan Workshop 2017-2020.		Completed (whole-of-government action – transitioned to BAU.	This plan includes consultation details	Strategic Policy and Legislation

