Disability Access   
and Inclusion Plan   
2024–29

# Alternative Formats

The Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety strives to achieve online accessibility when delivering information to be inclusive of a wide range of people, including people with disability. This plan has been designed in both a PDF and accessible Word format. If you require an alternative format, please email [accessibility@demirs.wa.gov.au](mailto:accessibility@demirs.wa.gov.au)

# Language Assistance

Interpreting and translating services are available via the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS). The service provides language interpreting in 160 languages. To use this service, please phone TIS on 13 14 50.

# The National Relay Service (NRS)

The National Relay Service (NRS) can help you if you are d/Deaf or find it hard to hear or speak to hearing people on the phone.

To access a standard, mobile, 1300, or 1900 number for the department:

* TTY/voice calls 133 677.
* Speak and Listen 1300 555 727.
* SMS relay 0423 677 767

This plan has been prepared in accordance with our obligations under the *Disability Services Act 1993*, the *Equal Opportunity Act 1984*, *Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992,* and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

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# Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (DEMIRS) respectfully acknowledges Aboriginal peoples as being the traditional custodians of Western Australia.   
We acknowledge the enduring connection Aboriginal people continue to share with the land, sea, and sky through both their ancestral ties and custodianship to Country. We pay our   
respect to Elders both past and present, and acknowledge the value brought to our department through the collective contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Western Australia.

# Message from the Director General

I am pleased to present the department’s second Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2024–29. This plan builds on the progress made in the inaugural DAIP 2018–23, and [A Western Australia for Everyone: State Disability Strategy 2020–2030](https://www.wa.gov.au/system/files/2021-05/State-Disability-Strategy-2020-2030.pdf).

DEMIRS has long promoted the importance of removing structural and cultural impediments to access and inclusion through the sub-committee of its Executive Leadership Group.

We do this through our values, our Diversity, Multicultural and Inclusion Plan, our Reconciliation Action Plan and this Disability Access and Inclusion Plan.

While we have a strong focus on access and inclusion, we accept that continuous improvement is required. While almost one in five Australians identify as having disability, less than four per cent of our workforce identifies as having disability.

We are committed to being a more accessible employer. I am confident that by adopting universal design, listening to, and learning from people with disability, and continuing to commit to equity and inclusion, we can be an employer who provides equity of access for all.

My thanks to the people who contributed to this plan and all who undertake work so that we achieve our goals.

**Richard Sellers**  
Director General

# Disability Access and Inclusion Committee Message

**Members**  
Zahirah Ismail, Locket Lee, Sharon Duffy, Carrie Hatzel, Riz Punzalan, Kath Jones, Nick Ryan, Borhan Milani, Maddy Cremades, Eric Seery and Joshua Turner.

As a group, we are as diverse as Western Australia. We have diverse backgrounds, gender norms, histories, and experiences. Friends, family, carers, and allies are also part of our community. The barriers we experience are the barriers they experience.

We know that sometimes people without disability are unsure what language to use to be respectful. We say - just ask us! Each of us have our own preferences.

The international catch cry of people with disability is “nothing about us, without us.” We hope that our group will be used as a reference for policy, program, ideas, and thoughts.

We continue to be advocates for access and inclusion in our department.

# What is Disability Access and Inclusion?

## Disability

The social model of disability says that people are disabled by barriers in society, and not by their impairments or differences.[[1]](#footnote-1) It is a focus on what people need. Environments that are designed without barriers are better for everyone. This model views people with disability as people with rights who can make decisions for their lives based on their consent.[[2]](#footnote-2) Disability rights are human rights.

*“The problem isn’t that I can’t get into a lecture theatre, the problem is that the lecture theatre isn’t accessible to me.”*   
**Professor Mike Oliver*[[3]](#footnote-3)***

## Access

Access considers that regardless of ability a person can enter, approach, pass to or from   
and make use of areas and its facilities without assistance.

## Inclusion

Social inclusion can be thought to be the opportunity for people to participate in society,   
connect with family, friends and the local community, deal with personal crises (e.g., ill health), and be heard.[[4]](#footnote-4)

## Lived experience (of disability)

‘Lived experience of disability’ should only be used for people with disability. It should never be used to describe the experiences of family or support workers without disability.[[5]](#footnote-5)

## Language

Person-first language (people with disability) and identity-first language (disabled people) are both used in Australia. In this document we use 'person with disability'. That was the consensus of people with lived experience of disability who contributed to this plan. In the future that might change and so this document will change too.

# Who we are

The Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety vision is to provide a safe, fair, and prosperous future for the Western Australia.

DEMIRS is a diverse department of approximately 1,900 people. We work out of ten regional towns and five metropolitan offices across the State.

## Our priorities

**Sustain responsible industries:** support the development of resources and strong industries that operate for the good of WA.

**Protect the community:** ensure Western Australians have access to improved work health and safety, conditions, strong consumer rights, and a fair-trading environment.

**Drive energy transition:** guide WA industries and the energy sector to transition to net zero emissions by 2050.

## Our values

Ethical. Fair. Transparent. Responsive. Respectful. Forward Thinking.

## Our objective

*To protect the rights of people with disability, remove barriers and provide equity of access for our employees and stakeholders.*

## Statement of commitment

DEMIRS commits to:

* Collaborate with people with disability who visit, seek services, interact, or are employed by DEMIRS, to provide the same opportunities, rights and responsibilities enjoyed by all people in the community.
* Guide agents and contractors delivering services on our behalf towards achieving access and inclusion outcomes.
* Consult with people with disability, their families and carers and support organisations, to further remove barriers restricting access and inclusion.
* Adhere to the *Disability Services Act 1993* (the Act) and the seven access and inclusion outcome areas, specified in Schedule 3 of the Act.
* Take all reasonable measures to ensure this plan is implemented by the department and its officers, employees, agents, and contractors.

### Table 1: Strategic Alignment

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Element | Framework |
| Guiding principles | United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disability |
| National context | *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Commonwealth)  Australia’s Disability Strategy   * National Injury Insurance Scheme * National Disability Insurance Scheme   Integrated Carer Support Service (Carer Gateway) |
| WA context | State Disability Strategy  *Disability Services Act 1993*  *Equal Opportunity Act 1994* (WA)  Workforce Diversification and Inclusion Strategy for WA Public Sector Employment |
| DEMIRS context | This plan |

# Our progress

Under the DAIP 2018–23 we:

* Prioritised best in class access and inclusion in our Strategic Office Accommodation Plan.
* Delivered learning and training programs throughout WA to our employees to build awareness and understanding of disability.
* Updated our workplace adjustment policies and procedures to be simpler and more user friendly.
* Launched the Access and Inclusion Community Teams Channel, our employee engagement channel for champions of access and inclusion.

### Table 2: Diversity and Inclusion within DEMIRS

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Body | Description |
| Executive Leadership Group (ELG) (inclusive of Corporate Executive) | Provide strategic leadership for the administration, management, and governance of the department |
| Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Sub Committee | Sub-committee of ELG; reports to Public Sector Commission |
| Reconciliation Action Plan Committee | Reports to the D&I Sub Committee; reports to Reconciliation Australia |
| Gnalla Mila, Gnalla Wangkiny Committee | Reports to the Reconciliation Action Plan Committee; reports to the D&I Sub-committee |
| Disability Access and Inclusion Committee | Reports to the D&I Sub Committee; reports to Department of Communities through the Progress Plan |
| Thrive at Work | Employee Wellbeing Strategy |
| Access and Inclusion Community Teams Channel | Employee Disability Network |

# People with disability

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) defines disability as a limitation, restriction or impairment which restricts everyday activities. In 2024 the ABS released the *Disability,   
Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings* (Summary of Findings)*.*

Key findings include:

* In 2022, 5.5 million (21.4 per cent) Australians had disability, an increase from 4.4 million (17.7 per cent) in 2018.
* Disability prevalence was similar for males (21.0 per cent) and females (21.8 per cent).
* 7.9 per cent of all Australians had a profound or severe disability.
* Almost one-quarter (24.7 per cent) of all people with disability reported a mental or behavioural disorder as their main condition.

The Summary of Findings showed an increase in the prevalence of disability. Factors which may have contributed to the change in disability prevalence between 2018 and 2022 include, but are not limited to[[6]](#footnote-6):

* a growing awareness of disability in Australia;
* a general increase in prevalence of some long-term health conditions;
* an online, self-completion questionnaire offered as an option for the first time in 2022; and
* an ageing population.

## DEMIRS data

* In 2024[[7]](#footnote-7) 75 people shared they are a person with disability.
* The prevalence of people sharing their disability has gone up in the last 12 months, from 3.48 per cent (64 staff) on 30 June 2023 to 3.86 per cent (75 staff) on 30 June 2024.

# Developing the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2024–29

Taking the inspiration from the Department of Communities Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2023–28, DEMIRS aligned the outcomes areas for this plan (as outlined in the Disability Services Regulations) to the four pillars in the State Disability Strategy.

This plan was developed through consultation with employees, contractors, and the public.

A reference group of people with lived experience of disability was formed to provide strategic feedback and input towards the planning and drafting process of the DAIP.

The Disability Access and Inclusion Committee was also closely consulted in the development of this plan.

**How we consulted internally when developing this plan:**

* A survey was published internally and promoted via our intranet and senior management mailing lists.
* Consultation with our reference group and Disability Access and Inclusion Committee.
* Interviews with our key stakeholders with functional responsibility for implementing the DAIP.
* A submission for consideration and endorsement by the Executive Leadership Group.

**How we consulted externally when developing this plan:**

* A survey was published externally in a range of formats and promoted on our website [Open Consultations](https://www.demirs.wa.gov.au/corporate/open-consultations) and wa.gov.au [Have Your Say](https://www.wa.gov.au/government/consultations).
* A request for feedback was made to disability sector organisations and other WA government agencies.
* The consultation process was promoted on DEMIRS social media including LinkedIn and Facebook.
* A request for feedback was advertised at our public reception areas across our offices.

# Implementing the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2024–29

The intent is to have a DAIP with objectives that are difficult, but not impossible to achieve.   
The intent is to boost the performance of the DAIP. We know when objectives are conservatively set to ensure they can be met it does not force a broader search of innovative ways to achieve the goals.

The department will develop an internal implementation plan that identifies action items, responsible officers, and time frames to translate this plan into meaningful change. The Disability Access and Inclusion Committee will monitor progress.

Committee members will be representatives from the business areas targeted with implementation of goals, people with lived experienced of disability (invited through an expression of interest), and a secretariat.

Voices of people with disability will be heard to progress our plan through committee membership, our Access and Inclusion Community Teams Channel, and feedback that will be sought regularly from the public.

# Pillar 1: Participate and contribute

## 1.1 All community members can participate in public consultation conducted by us.

To achieve this, we will:

* Use best practice when designing policy and delivering services.
* Learn from the skills and knowledge of people with lived experience of disability.

## 1.2 All community members are encouraged to pursue employment opportunities with us.

To achieve this, we will:

* Be accountable for commitments to raising accessibility standards.
* Increase the number of people with disability employed in our workforce.
* Foster an inclusive workplace and build awareness of disability.
* Design workplaces through universal design principles and best-in-class accessibility.
* Promote and prioritise funding for our reasonable adjustment policies.
* Actively support disability networks within and outside the department.
* Develop an accessibility catalogue, promoting a range of assistive technologies to assist people with their everyday work needs.
* Support flexible working arrangements and work from home to remove barriers to workforce participation.

# Pillar 2: Inclusive communities

## 2.1 Our events and services are accessible to all community members.

To achieve this, we will:

* Acknowledge the accessibility expectations from our customers.
* Ensure our events and functions are accessible and inclusive.
* Promote accessible guidelines for hosting meetings, events, and functions.
* Emergency and evacuation procedures for events and functions are reviewed with an accessibility lens so that people with disability are safe.

## 2.2 Our buildings and other facilities are accessible to all community members.

To achieve this, we will:

* Improve the accessibility of our buildings at the fastest rate possible.
* Adopt best-in-class access features and routinely audit our premises.
* Adopt principles of universal design when planning accommodation changes.
* Elevate our signage standards so our services, facilities, and amenities are accessible and inclusive.

# Pillar 3: Living well

## 3.1 All community members will receive the same level and quality of service from our employees.

To achieve this, we will:

* Collaborate with providers in partnership with people with disability to deliver our services.
* Ensure learning, induction and training strategies align with this DAIP.
* Policies and projects will initiate with an accessibility lens. Ensure all internal and external products and services are accessible.
* Contractors, service providers and agents are aware of the requirements to comply with this DAIP.
* Our publications are available in alternate formats and can be provided as Easy Read publications.

# Pillar 4: Rights and equity

## 4.1 Our information will be accessible to all community members.

To achieve this, we will:

* Improve our websites to the highest standard of accessible web content.
* Promote translation and interpretation services and the National Relay Service at all   
  our public counters and contact centres.
* Incorporate accessibility guidelines into our corporate style guide.
* Where possible, develop our systems with best practice accessibility standards,   
  ensuring they are inclusive and usable for all individuals, regardless of their abilities.

## All community members will have the same opportunities to provide feedback or make complaints to us.

To achieve this, we will:

* Ensure our complaints process is easy to find, navigate, and user friendly.
* Produce a range of formats for feedback, complaints, and comment.
* Report on complaint management in our annual reports including how well we   
  managed complaints.

# Governance, monitoring, and reporting

Implementation is the responsibility of all five groups in the department. Business areas will be suggested to incorporate deliverables from each outcome area into their yearly operational and branch plans.

Ways we will monitor and report on this plan:

* The Executive Leadership Group will provide oversight to ensure the DAIP is implemented.
* The subcommittee of the Executive Leadership Group, the Diversity and Inclusion Committee, will provide strategic guidance.
* The Disability Access and Inclusion Committee will provide direct feedback to progress plan and the implementation plan. Membership must have representation of people with disability.
* An internal implementation plan will map deliverables and accountability to the outcomes.
* The Corporate Services division will prepare the submission of the DAIP Progress Plan to the Department of Communities.
* Significant achievements will be reported in the department’s annual reports.

# Appendix 1

## *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and Standards

The *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (the Act) is supplemented by a series of Disability Standards and Guidelines. These provide more detail on rights and responsibilities about equal access and opportunity for people with a disability.[[8]](#footnote-8)

These are:

* Premise Standards.
* Disability Standards for Education.

Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport.

Guidelines and notes include:

* Guidelines on application of the Premises Standards.
* Advisory Note on streetscape, public outdoor areas, fixtures, fittings, and furniture.
* Guidelines on accessible bus stops online.
* Advisory note on accessibility of World Wide Web pages.
* Guidelines on Insurance.

## Premise Standards

The Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards 2010 (Premises Standards) is legislated under the Act. The purpose of the Premises Standards is to make sure:

* People with disability (and their family members, carers, and friends) have equal access to public buildings.
* Building certifiers, developers and managers fulfil their responsibilities to people with disability under the Act.

## Universal Access Through Universal Design

Universal Design is a democratic approach that designs reception and waiting spaces and public forums to be "usable all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaption or specialised design" (United Nations, 2018). Legislation and standards guide the minimum compliance required to protect against discrimination; universal design considers all people in an inclusive way.

## Principles of universal design

Compiled by advocates of universal design the 'principles of universal design' guide a wide range of design disciplines and is a useful guide for considering how the department should approach retrospective changes to accommodation, event planning, and its customer services.

## References

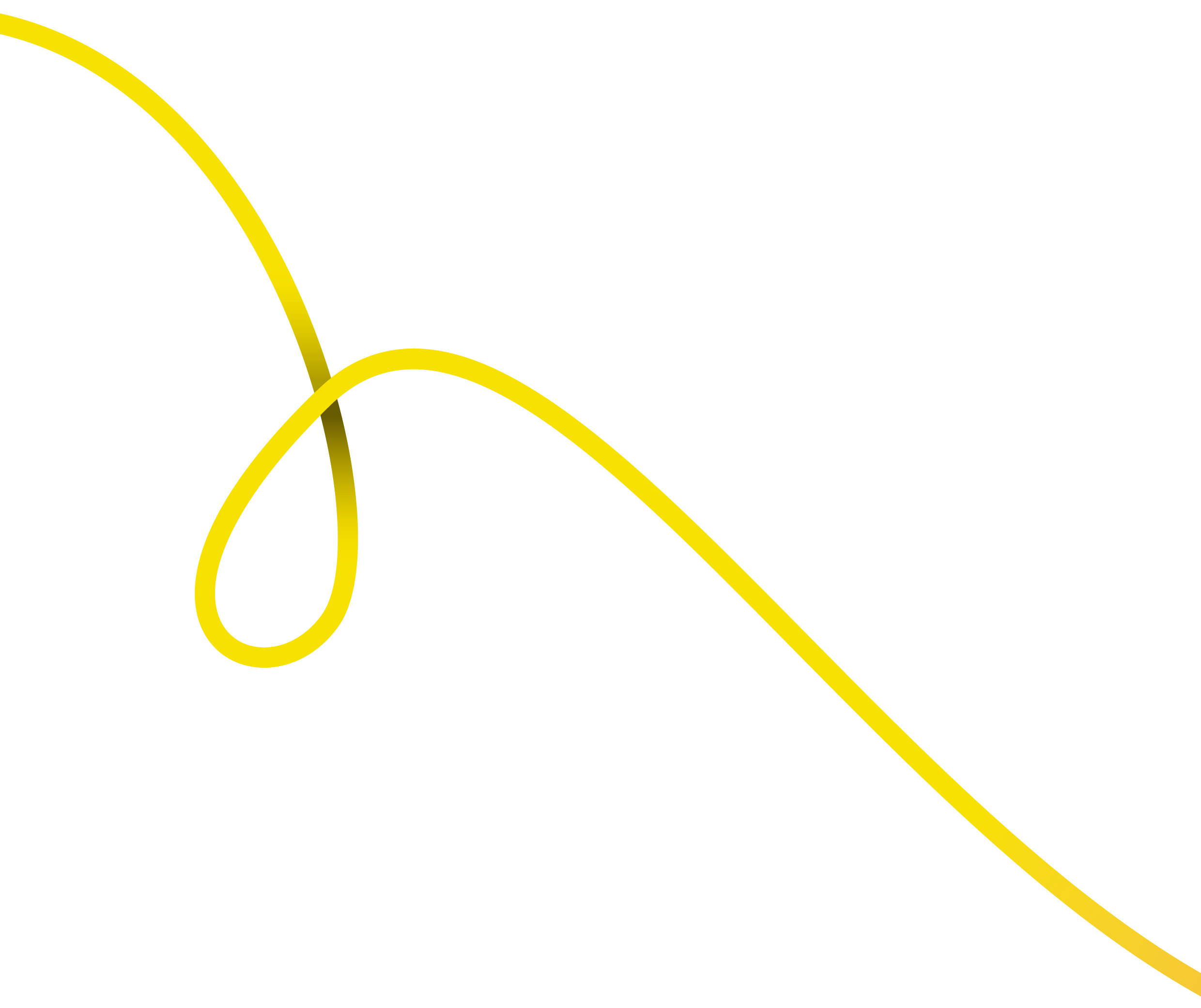
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* Australian Human Rights Commission [Social Inclusion and Human Rights in Australia](https://humanrights.gov.au/about/news/speeches/social-inclusion-and-human-rights-australia#fn6)
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* NC State University College of Design [Center for Universal Design](https://design.ncsu.edu/research/center-for-universal-design/)
* Australian Public Service [Disability Employment Strategy 2020–2025](https://www.apsc.gov.au/publication/aps-disability-employment-strategy-2020-25)

## Regular Feedback

We welcome your feedback about any access issues you have encountered with our services, information, or facilities.

## Contact Us

**Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety**

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