**Accessible ICT Procurement Case Studies**

July 2013

## Employment opportunities

An ACCAN member organisation received a complaint from a woman who had attempted to seek employment in a government department. She was required to complete a practical component during the interview process to demonstrate her computer skills. While screen reading software was loaded onto the computer as requested, it had not been authorised correctly and resulted in a dialog box continuously appearing on the screen. This created an extra barrier for the candidate and affected her overall performance. She was permitted to complete the practical tasks on the computer once these issues had been resolved, but on her second attempt, found that the database that she was required to navigate was not compatible with her screen reading software. These obstacles unfairly reduced her chance of getting the job, and helped to exclude her as a candidate.

## Communicating at work and during work related travel

Australian Public Service employee Anthony is Deaf. He is unable to use internet relay at work, or when travelling for work, because firewalls and other security in his workplace and on public computers block his ability to use either instant messaging or web-based internet relay. This significantly reduces Anthony’s ability to communicate either from the office or when on the road, placing him at a disadvantage compared to his hearing colleagues.

For a blind employee,it is impossible to use many office phone systems as they do not have built-in audio or tactile identifiers. This means people who are blind are unable to receive incoming or make outgoing calls on multi-line phone networks, and nor can they use teleconferencing devices such as Polycom hardware.

## Using office equipment

Robert who is legally blind cannot use the office multifunction printer because it has touch screen controls with no audio output. This means he is unable to copy, scan, print or fax documents independently. The multifunction office equipment does not have OCR (?) scanning capability which means that any incoming correspondence for Robert cannot be scanned into an electronic format which he can access using screen-reader software.

## Introduction of new systems without consideration of accessibility

This is the cause of a multitude of problems identified in Public Service focus group research.

* A vision impaired employee provided an example of a new invoicing system that could not be used with assistive technology.
* Another blind employee reported experiences of JAWS not working with TRIM and SAP software platforms; this was due to the design of the system and not security issues.
* A further blind employee who used JAWS screen reading software required remote access to the workplace through CITRIX. Much of the functionality of CITRIX is not accessible with JAWS when used remotely. The outsourced service provider to the NSW State Government was not prepared to test the connection and so the employee could only use some parts of the system.

## Inaccessibility resulting from network security systems

The National Relay Service (NRS), a Government funded telecommunications program for Deaf, hearing impaired and speech impaired users, is not usable in many government agency workplaces. For example, at one Centrelink office, a Deaf public servant could not use a teletypewriter (TTY) to contact the NRS because the agency’s security firewall was not compatible with the TTY technology. Another inconsistency in government agency policies is that the NRS video relay service is available through Skype and on a mobile phone such as the iPhone 4, but government agencies do not allow this to be used over their internet connections.