



Standing Advisory Committee Disability Issues Meeting Report

4 October 2012, 10.30am – 3.30 pm

ACCAN Office, Suite 402, Level 4, 55 Mountain St, Ultimo, NSW 2007

PRESENT: Scott Hollier – Media Access Australia (Deputy Chair)
Kyle Miers – ACCAN Board (Chair)
Nadia Moffat
Andrew Stewart – Deafness Forum of Australia
Denise Wood – University of South Australia (via phone)
Hank Wylie

APOLOGIES: Cathy Clark – Deaf Australia
Kim Curtis – Aboriginal Disability Network
Lachlan Hazelton – Physical Disability Council of NSW

Kyle Miers acknowledged the traditional owners of the land, the Gaddigal people of the Eora nation.

Briefings

Members were provided with a briefing on the ACCAN's mid-term review, conducted by the Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, and subsequent contract renewal. The Committee was also informed of the upcoming review of the Strategic Plan by ACCAN's Board, changes to the ACCAN constitution, staffing changes and the upcoming AGM. The Committee stressed the importance of educating new staff members about disability issues and suggested the staff induction process include sitting in on a SACDI meeting. The Committee also considered the importance of training telecommunications service provider staff in disability issues.

ACCAN Director of Policy and Campaigns provided a summary of ACCAN's response inquiries since June 2012. ACCAN Deputy CEO provided a status update for the projects currently funded through the ACCAN grants scheme.

GPII discussion

Members discussed the GPII project and how they could encourage support for a trial of the project in Australia. It was agreed that ACCAN and SACDI members needed to raise awareness of the benefits of GPII and demonstrate how it could profile the NBN. A sub-group of SACDI members committed to developing a specific trial plan to present to the whole committee at a later date.

Complex Communication Needs – presentation and discussion

The Committee received a presentation on consumers with complex communication needs. The presentation included an activity which asked people to communicate without using speech or writing; all participants noted the difficulty of communicating specifics in this way. It was suggested that the presentation be included in ACCAN staff induction training.

NRS request for tender

ACCAN and other organisations have submitted concerns about the NRS tender including the need for a two-way emergency call system for the Deaf community, the need to include CapTel services and the importance of having qualified interpreters staff the Video Relay Service. The Committee considered how to continue pressure on the government to deliver the range of services the community needs. The Committee discussed the process of ensuring the emergency application could be provided through the Apple Store and Android app marketplace.

The Committee discussed ACCAN's and other disability advocates efforts to discover why SMS emergency access services were not included in the NRS tender. Committee members offered to assist ACCAN in any meetings or communications with the Minister for Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy. The Committee noted ACCAN research with the Deaf community will assist in getting a sense of how many people would be unable to use an emergency SMS app.

Audio description

The current Audio Description (AD) trial on the ABC is scheduled to finish on November 4th. The trial has been very successful and a coalition of organisations have launched a campaign to keep the trial going called "It's as easy as ABC, keep AD!" ACCAN distributed campaign postcards to the Committee and informed members how they could support the campaign.

Caption complaints

The Committee was informed that ACCAN will soon take action on poor quality captions. The ACMA don't have many examples of poor quality captions and it has been difficult for advocates to argue about what constitutes poor quality. The action will be coordinated around the ACMA standard on captioning quality, to be drafted in November. Action will rely on the support of the Deaf and hearing-impaired communities. The Committee said that examples of poor quality captions are on all the time, every day and they will support any action on this issue.

Next meeting date

The next meeting is scheduled for February 2013. It was suggested that the next SACDI meeting be held in Melbourne at a meeting room in the NBN Discovery Centre, ACCAN agreed to investigate this possibility.