Standing Advisory Committee on Disability Issues

4 June 2010 Meeting Report

The SACDI Chair welcomed everyone to the fourth meeting of the Standing Advisory Committee on Disability Issues (SACDI) and acknowledged the traditional owners of the land.

There were apologies from David Parker.

Jan Ashford announced her resignation from SACDI due to limited resources and the Chair thanked Jan for her contribution.

Inclusive Communications

The meeting discussed the government's consultation about the National Disability Strategy (NDS) which has not been released yet. It was concluded that it is going to be challenging to ensure that the high level principles that are in the NDS translate into concrete actions for implementation.

Recruitment

Elissa Freeman reported that two Disability Policy Advisers are starting with ACCAN soon. Wayne Hawkins – coming from Blind Citizens Australia and Danielle Fried – coming from the National Relay Service (NRS). Dani is fluent in AUSLAN. This will be a new era for ACCAN and our Disability Advocacy on communications issues and both new staff will be attending the Cyber security Roundtable for People with Disabilities and the ACCAN Annual Conference.

Discussion of Member issues

Members discussed the following issues that were affecting their constituents:

- The National Ethnic Disability Alliance is getting funding from ACCAN Round One Grants and are using the funding to do a literature review of how people with disabilities from a culturally and linguistically diverse background (CALD) access Information & communications technology (ICT). This will be completed in July.

- A collaborative project between SACDI members to provide accredited training in accessible design

- The roll out of the CapTel Handset

- The Shadow Reporting for the UN Convention

- TIO training on disability issues

- The Raising the Floor international consortium for people who want to access the internet but are in disadvantaged and low literacy groups.

- Implementation of government web accessibility.

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Communications Needs Paper

A paper on the communications needs of communications aid users and people with acquired brain injury was tabled. according to ABS Statistics 45% of Australians have a 10 year old literacy level and that this is the main driver behind pushing for plain language documents prepared in words that are accessible to the majority of people. Government, academia, service providers, ACCAN all need to reduce the number of obscure and dense terms used in information. No matter how plain you make the language, it will still not necessarily be accessible to people with cognitive disabilities. Some text can be supplemented by icons. Consumer Affairs Victoria have put out basic information on scams for example.

Cyber Security and People with Disabilities Round Table

The meeting discussed the forthcoming ACCAN Cyber Security and People with Disabilities Round Table Around. It is shaping up to be a very exciting day in Canberra at Parliament House, with around 70 people attending.

Future meetings

The next meeting is scheduled for 11 November 2010.