



Optus Disability Action Plan

Review Report

2003 - 2005

1. Introduction

The following report aims to monitor performance and review progress of the Optus Disability Action Plan (the Plan) in the period from January 2003 to June 2005. It is the fourth formal Review that has been completed since the Plan was launched in December 1999. Performance has been monitored and evaluated in two ways:

(i) **Implementation of Strategies**

The progress of the Plan has been monitored against the activities undertaken for each stated objective.

(ii) **Outcomes of the Plan**

The efficacy of the Plan in achieving key outcomes has been assessed against the following performance indicators:

<i>Performance Indicator 1:</i>	Low percentage of customer complaints / staff grievances relating to disability matters.
<i>Performance Indicator 2:</i>	Ability to provide services to a growing number of customers with a disability
<i>Performance Indicator 3:</i>	Continued positive feedback from disability stakeholders with regards to Optus' initiatives for people with disabilities.

2. Background

The Optus Disability Action Plan was launched in December 1999. The Plan aims to remove barriers to access for customers, potential customers and staff and was developed having regard to, and consistent with, Optus' Vision, Values and corporate policies such as Equal Employment Opportunity and Occupational Health and Safety. The key objectives of the Plan are:

- Corporate Culture
- Accessible Communications
- Confidentiality
- Physical Environment
- Products & Services

In implementing this Plan, Optus affirmed its commitment to minimising, and where possible, eliminating discrimination, notably in the provision of products and services, employment practices and community interaction. The ongoing nature of this commitment has been reflected in the process of monitoring and evaluating the Plan against measurable criteria.

2.1 Previous Reviews

Initially launched Dec 1999
First review May 2000
Second review December 2000
Third review December 2002

Details of these reviews are available at www.optus.com.au/disability

3. Implementation of Strategies January 2003 – June 2005

Section three of this Review summarises the key activities that have been undertaken since the last Plan review in December 2002.

Objective 1: Corporate Culture

The aim of this objective is to achieve a responsive non-discriminatory culture within Optus.

Optus' attitude towards people is reflected in its dealings with customers, its employment practices, and in its dealings with the broader community. Such an attitude is the key component to a non-discriminatory corporate culture. Optus will ensure that its staff at all levels of the company are informed of and feel confident to respond to the needs and expectations of people with disabilities.

Strategy	Status	Comments
<p>1.1 Internal Communications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disability Awareness 	Ongoing	Continued maintenance of Optus' internal staff website which details regulatory and policy issues, equipment options and customer service processes to ensure awareness of those matters impacting on customers with disabilities.
<p>1.2 Employee Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EEO Training • Disability Awareness 	Complete	Given our commitment to a harassment and discrimination free workplace, in April 2005 Optus required every person across Optus to complete the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) on-line training module. This training included a segment on disability awareness.
	Complete	Successful continuation of customer service processes for handling disability related enquiries and escalation to a specialist disability customer service team.
	Ongoing	Training for new customer facing employees and refresher training for existing employees.
1.3 Reinforce Positive Behaviour	Ongoing	Excellence displayed by staff when handling disability related matters continues to be recognised in on-the-spot awards and Optus' quarterly/ annual Reward and Recognition program for customer facing staff.
<p>1.4 Employer Responsibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amendment of Optus' Anti-Discrimination/ Harassment/ Bullying 	In progress	Optus remains committed to an environment free of harassment and discrimination. To

<p>Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EEO and OH&S Procedures 	<p>Completed and Ongoing</p>	<p>that end, the current Anti-Discrimination/ Harassment/ Bullying Policy is being reviewed and amended. Feedback on the proposed amendments was sought from the members of the Consumer Liaison Forum.</p> <p>EEO and OH&S policies are regularly monitored to ensure that they are maintained to remove barriers to access for people with disabilities.</p>
<p>1.5 Externally Focussed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction of Optus' Workplace Giving Program, "Answering the Call". This program enables Optus people to actively contribute to and build strong relationships with community organisations. Sponsorship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Family Dog Circus - Australian Wheelchair Tennis Team AMTA Accessibility Committee TATA Committee HREOC's 2003 Discussion Paper and Forum 	<p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p>	<p>The Program provides Optus employees with the opportunity to make donations, through regular payroll deductions, to a selected community organisation chosen from a list of nine charities. This list includes Assistance Dogs Australia.</p> <p>Family Dog Circus, which is an inclusive youth physical theatre program and includes young adults with intellectual and multiple disabilities, enjoyed the beauty and skill of Cirque du Soleil's show QUIDAM by attending a dress rehearsal arranged by Optus Sponsorship.</p> <p>The Optus Team Tennis Australia partnership continues to support wheelchair tennis by providing recognition and financial support for wheelchair players. This is achieved through the Wheelchair Ranking Awards.</p> <p>Optus is a participant in AMTA's Accessibility Committee, which was established to raise awareness amongst AMTA members of disability issues and to improve accessibility to mobile services by people with disabilities. The Committee is currently finalising a Good Practice Guide for its members, which seeks continuous improvements for customers with disabilities in accessing mobile equipment, services and information.</p> <p>Optus was a participant in ACIF's Any to Any Text Working Group and assisted with the finalisation of the group's report to Government. We await Government's response to this report.</p> <p>Optus provided a submission to HREOC's</p>

		“When the Tide Comes In: Towards Accessible Communications for People with Disabilities in Australia”. Optus also participated in HREOC’s forum to further discuss the issues raised in this paper.
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Objective 2: Accessible Communications

The aim of this objective is to improve accessibility to information about Optus’ products and services.

Strategy	Status	Comments
2.1 Identifying the information needs of people with disabilities		
Restructure of Optus website	In Progress	A program is currently underway to redesign the Optus Website. All matters related to disability information will now be easy to find under the newly created Community & Environment site. The new website meets Website Accessibility Guidelines.
Large Font Bills for LAT and Optus Mobile	Complete	In November 2004, Optus developed the functionality to produce bills in large font. Large font bills are available to customers who are vision impaired and have an Optus Mobile or Optus Local Telephony on the cabled network. Braille Bills have been available since May 2001.
TTY Customer Service	Complete	TTY Customer Service numbers continue to be included on all bills and all relevant customer collateral.
Website Accessibility	Complete	Processes continue to be in place to ensure that all Optus websites meet Website Accessibility Guidelines.
Downloadable files in alternate formats	Complete	Files that can be downloaded from the website are available in alternate formats i.e. word, PDF.
Online Billing	Complete	Online billing continues to be available for Mobile customers.
2.2 Adequacy of Third Party Access	Complete and Ongoing	TPA procedures are regularly reviewed to ensure Third Party Access remains adequate while protecting customers from illegitimate access. The Regulatory group and Disability customer service specialists advise staff on these requirements.
2.3 ACIF Consumer Codes		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compliance with ACIF Consumer Code requirements continues to be a key focus in order to meet this objective for disability related provisions, which have regard to information provision. 	<p>Complete and Ongoing</p>	<p>Optus is currently a signatory to the following ACIF Consumer Codes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complaint Handling - Credit Management - Calling Number Display - Customer Transfer - Prices, Terms and Conditions <p>Optus is currently participating in the review of the Credit Management and Customer Transfer Codes.</p> <p>A revised Prices, Terms & Conditions Code has recently been registered with the ACA. Optus is in the process of commencing a compliance readiness assessment before signing up to this revised version of the Code.</p>
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Objective 3: Confidentiality

The aim of this objective is to ensure that privacy and confidentiality is maintained in the handling of customer and employee personal information.

Strategy	Status	Comments
Compliance activities with the <i>Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000</i>		
Optus continues to be represented on the ACIF Privacy Advisory Group (PAG)		

Objective 4: Physical Environment

The aim of this objective is to ensure that Optus' physical environment is as free as possible from impediments or barriers which unduly constrain the access of people with disabilities.

Strategy	Status	Comments
4.1 Design of new premises	Ongoing	The building designers for the new Optus campus at North Ryde have utilised the Facility Assessment checklist when capturing design requirements. This checklist includes disability provisions. Regulatory has provided a significant amount of information and feedback on the proposed building requirements to ensure disability standards are met.

Objective 5: Products and Services

The aim of this objective is to enhance access to Optus products and services.

Strategy	Status	Comments
5.1 Disability Equipment Program		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optus' Disability Equipment Program 	Complete	<p>Optus fully launched its Disability Equipment Program after a 'soft launch' of TTY equipment 2001 and successful trials of volume control handsets.</p> <p>Two models of TTY equipment are now readily available – the Uniphone 1150 and the Superprint 4425, and volume control handsets are available upon request.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment offerings for Optus' Local Access Resale customer base 	Complete	<p>Optus successfully negotiated an arrangement with Telstra that enables Optus' Local Access Resale customers to have access to a range of Telstra's disability equipment, provided by Telstra under agreement with Optus. This was officially launched in June 2004.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobile equipment for customers with vision impairments 	Complete	<p>Optus made available mobile phones that support TALX software.</p>
5.2 Product & Service Initiatives		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SMS Offers 	Complete	<p>Both pre-paid and post-paid mobile pricing plans now include SMS as part of the Plan's rewards. That is, the pricing plans now include cheaper or free SMS in addition to cheaper or free voice calls.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calls to the National Relay Service 	Complete	<p>In July 2004, calls made to the NRS by our directly connected local telephony customers were re-rated as a standard local call, in line with the customer's selected local call rate. These calls were previously charged at 25c.</p>
5.3 Staff Awareness of Program		
	Complete	<p>Information regarding the Disability Equipment Program and available equipment is included on the internal website. This website also includes the process for ordering equipment from Telstra for our Resale customers.</p>
5.4 Design Principles		
	Complete and Ongoing	<p>As new Optus products are assessed, researched or developed for the residential consumer market, Universal Design Principles continue to be factored into the Product Development process.</p>
5.5 Research & Development		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Testing of mobile text telephony 	Complete	<p>Optus has sponsored useability testing of</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Testing of the Owasys22C mobile on our network 	Complete	<p>three types of mobile text telephony, including cellular text modem, PDA and Nokia 9000 series. This was conducted by the University of Newcastle.</p> <p>The Owasys22c mobile phone was tested for a number of months free of charge to assess its compatibility with the Optus network. This phone was developed specifically for customers who are blind or vision impaired as it interacts with the user through text to speech. Unfortunately the testing highlighted a number of consistent software problems with the phone and the manufacturer decided not to launch it.</p>
<p>5.6 Technical options for Pay TV</p>	Ongoing	<p>Optus continues to work closely with ASTRA (The Australian Subscription and Radio Television Association) to discuss the expansion of captioning on pay television in Australia.</p>

4. Outcomes of the Plan

- (i) Low percentage of customer complaints / staff grievances
- (ii) Increased ability to provide service to customers with a disability
- (iii) Positive feedback from disability stakeholders