

GYMNASTICS AUSTRALIA



DISABILITY ACTION PLAN 2006



Australian Government

Australian Sports Commission

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INTRODUCTION

Gymnastics Australia (GA) is the peak body for gymnastics in Australia: it has eight State Associations and encompasses seven Gymsports. GA's national office is located in Melbourne and has developed rapidly over the past two Olympic cycles to cater for the growth of the sport.

In 2003, the national office operational areas were divided into five business units – Governance, Business, Services, Sport and Events. Staff within these units support not only the large network of Gymsport Volunteers but also the eight State Associations, the then 558 affiliated clubs, 3000 Technical Members and 95,000 participants.

Gymsports

Gymnastics Australia controls and regulates the following Gymsports;

- Men's Artistic Gymnastics
- Women's Artistic Gymnastics
- Rhythmic Gymnastics
- Gymnastics for All (formerly General Gymnastics including General, Cheerleading and Kindergym)
- Trampoline Sports
- Sport Aerobics
- Sport Acrobatics

Through the delivery of these Gymsports gymnastics occurs in a variety of environments including clubs, schools, community leisure centres and major event venues. In addition, gymnastics occurs in participation-based activities at a club to regional, State, National and International events, titles and championships.

Strategic Plan

GA's Strategic Plan clearly requires the sport to be inclusive. This objective will be achieved through good governance, support to the community of members, effective resourcing of the Gymsports, and various strategies to increase participation in gymnastics; including recreational gymnasts.

Vision

"Gymnastics...healthy and active lives for everybody"

Project CONNECT

Project CONNECT has provided the impetus and resources to focus GA's attention on action that will specifically address the barriers to participation in gymnastics by people with disabilities. Through Project CONNECT GA has formalised its' Policy Statement on Disability and prepared the Disability Action Plan. Achieving access and inclusion is now an everyday activity of GA.

WHERE HAVE WE BEEN?

Historically, GA has 'dabbled' with inclusion. In the early 1980s there was an impetus to assist coaches, in particular, with training to work with participants with a disability.

GA accredited a Coaching Athletes with a Disability (CAD) Level One Course within the National Coach Accreditation Scheme in 2003. Course Presenters were identified and for a number of years courses were held annually in each State. As gymnastics developed, servicing such a broad community became more challenging. Maintaining a quality Course Presenter network to deliver the face-to-face courses servicing a relatively small community became near impossible to sustain. A few extremely dedicated individuals have continued with their programs, mostly independent of GA. It would seem that these individuals have sought out external stakeholders, such as Special Olympics, to service their needs when working with gymnasts with an intellectual disability.

Special Olympics have over the past 10 years been the most active provider of gymnastic competitions, primarily for people with intellectual disabilities. GA has indirectly supported Special Olympics in this time. Special Olympics coaches and judges must be accredited gymnastic coaches and judges to instruct people with disabilities.

GA was actively involved with the review of the CAD Course and sought direction from the Australian Sports Commission as to the most appropriate training program for coaches working with participants with a disability. The direction that GA has undertaken to promote to our community that training for working with participants with a disability is best currently serviced through the Disability Education Program workshops. Coaches have over recent years attended the Disability Education Program workshops and these have been recognised by GA as approved updating to maintain Gymsport accreditations.

Project CONNECT will provide the impetus for Gymnastics Australia to re-establish education and training delivered to our members, coaches, judges, club committees and volunteers!

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

GA's Policy Statement on Disability commits GA to ensuring gymnastics practice is inclusive at all levels. This is a significant undertaking requiring sound planning and considerable financial investment. The Disability Action Plan identifies the initial strategies GA will undertake to achieve and support participation by people with disabilities.

Four months of consultation with clubs, State Associations, Technical Members and external stakeholders have given GA a picture by participation of people with disabilities, existing and potential competition opportunities, the experiences of coaches, club needs and use of communication media. The consultation has helped identify the further commitments we needed to make to clubs, coaches and judges. GA has found examples of better practice that will benefit the community as a whole. Not surprisingly participation by people with disabilities was higher than initial expectations; various factors affected clubs' formal recording of gymnasts. By GA asking them directly, clubs realised that participation by people with disabilities could indeed be unnoticed.

GA's Disability Action Plan identifies three Foundation outcomes and 24 additional Sustainable outcomes to be achieved. These outcomes, which GA strongly believes are underpinned by education and resourcing through innovative media, contribute to the long-term inclusion of people with disabilities in gymnastics.

For people with disabilities, Gymnastics Australia has, through consultation, determined to seek to:

- support the ability of personnel through education and sharing better practice to deliver an accessible program;
- ensure a welcoming and accessible environment; and
- support the establishment of productive relationships with participants.

The Disability Action Plan captures GA's commitment and outlines the strategies to achieve these goals.

A review of the Disability Action Plan is scheduled for 2008, which will bring it into line with Gymnastics Australia's Strategic Plan (2005-08).

KEY FOCUS AREAS

GA has focussed on Environment, Program, Personnel and Participants in determining where actions are to be taken. GA believes that participation by people with disabilities can be assisted through these four focus areas.

Environment

The venue and physical environment.

Program

The Gymsport or gymnastics program delivered.

Personnel

The coaches, judges, volunteers, etc. involved in the delivery of gymnastics.

Participants

People with disabilities; where they come from and how they participate in gymnastics programs.

POLICY

Gymnastics Australia Disability Policy

1. STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Gymnastics Australia (GA) is the primary body for Gymnastics within Australia with eight State Associations under its banner. GA is responsible for managing seven Gymsports within this framework; Men's Artistic Gymnastics, Women's Artistic Gymnastics, Rhythmic Gymnastics, General Gymnastics, Sport Aerobics, Sports Acrobatics and Trampoline Sports.

GA is committed to ensuring that the objectives in this Policy and the supporting strategies within the Disability Action Plan (DAP) are implemented to reflect inclusive practices in all participation (General Gymnastics) levels in gymnastic clubs.

2. POLICY APPLICATION

- GA will take reasonable steps to identify and eliminate unlawful direct, indirect, and systemic discrimination from its structures and practices and will ensure that people with disabilities are afforded reasonable opportunity to participate in all participation (General Gymnastics) aspects of gymnastics.
- All GA employees and volunteers shall, within their areas of responsibility, take reasonable steps to remove any barriers which exist to programs and services, and the physical, social, and virtual environment in accordance with GA's DAP.
- GA will provide reasonable adjustments to General Gymnastics programs to ensure that people with disabilities can successfully participate in all aspects of gymnastics.
- People with disabilities who require services or modifications have a responsibility to specify requirements to be met to assist GA and its' Members to meet their commitments.
- This policy will be regularly evaluated and revised through consultation to maintain continuous improvement in programs, services and facilities for people with disabilities.

3. POLICY COVERAGE

This Policy and the DAP do not cover all aspects of provision within gymnastics for people with a disability. They cover areas mostly concerned with grass roots participation, including:

- Disability Education – the provision of non-accreditable awareness programs for officials, administrators, coaches within Gymnastics Australia, State Associations and clubs;
- Accreditation – the provision of accredited education programs for coaches so that they have the confidence and coaching competencies to teach inclusively;
- Accreditation/Technical Membership – the provision of accredited education programs for coaches and officials who have a disability
- Club 10 – develop a quality assurance profile that raises the awareness and clubs' ability to respond to participants with a disability

DISABILITY ACTION PLAN

Foundation Outcomes

	ACTION			
KEY RESULT AREA	Environment	Program	Personnel	Participant
OUTCOMES				
1. Commitment to inclusiveness in GA Disability Access Policy registered with HREOC	Commitment to achieving accessible & inclusive environments identified in GA Disability Policy	Commitment to achieving accessible & inclusive programs identified in GA Disability Policy	Commitment to achieving accessible & inclusive activities delivered by committed personnel identified in GA Disability Policy	Commitment to achieving access & inclusion of participants with a disability identified in GA Disability Policy
2. Commitment to inclusiveness in GA Policy shared by State Associations	Commitment to achieving accessible & inclusive environments identified in State Disability Policy	Commitment to achieving accessible & inclusive programs identified in State Disability Policy	Commitment to achieving accessible & inclusive activities delivered by committed personnel identified in State Disability Policy	Commitment to achieving access & inclusion of participants with a disability identified in State Disability Policy
3. Actions to achieve access and inclusion identified in GA DAP	Strategies to achieve accessible & inclusive environments identified in GA DAP	Strategies to achieve accessible & inclusive programs identified in GA DAP	Strategies to achieve accessible & inclusive activities delivered by committed personnel identified in GA DAP	Strategies to achieve accessible & inclusive participation by people with disabilities identified in GA DAP

DISABILITY ACTION PLAN cont.

Sustainable Outcomes

KEY RESULT AREA	ACTION			
	Environment	Program	Personnel	Participant
OUTCOMES				
1. Provide gymnastics environments that comply with Australian Standards for access (AS 1428)	<p>Use Club 10 resources to introduce standards of access in Star 2 (Awareness - 2007), Star 3 & Star 4 Checklists (Recognise compliance - 2009)</p> <p>Develop Star 3 Workshop Series resources that includes information on Australian Standards 2007-09</p>		<p>Educate State Associations about National Standards for access 2006</p> <p>Educate Club 10 Officers about National Standards for access 2007</p> <p>Develop an online resource to help clubs recognise & implement National Standards for access 2008-09</p>	

KEY RESULT AREA	ACTION			
	Environment	Program	Personnel	Participant
OUTCOMES				
2. Sustain gymnastics environments that comply with Australian Standards for access (AS 1428)	Recognise attendance at forums on Australian Standards of access for updating of Club 10 ranking 2007		Conduct forums for club administrators that include information on Australian Standards of access 2007	
3. Introduce Australian Standards for access in club development workshops; e.g. in person, tele-web-conference resource, online, etc	Utilise Star 3 Workshop Series to educate & inform club personnel; i.e. Star 2 Clubs articulating to Star 3 2007		Deliver forums for club administrators that include information on Australian Standards of access 2007	

KEY RESULT AREA	ACTION			
	Environment	Program	Personnel	Participant
OUTCOMES				
4. Provide access for people with disabilities at National events	Where practical, ensure National events are hosted in venues that provide a level of access that meets community expectation 2007		Educate and resource GA Event personnel to identify and host national events in accessible venues; e.g. through use of the Event Risk Register identifying compliance with Australian Standards for access 2007	
5. Address cost barriers to participation				Address issues that inhibit GA membership by people with disabilities; e.g. resolve dual insurance requirement for Special Olympics & GA membership 2007

KEY RESULT AREA	ACTION			
	Environment	Program	Personnel	Participant
OUTCOMES				
6. Address club membership compliance that create barriers to participation				<p>Improve GA's ability to identify gymnasts outside GA registered membership; e.g. Special Olympics</p> <p>Create a GA membership category that recognises external organisations that use Club facilities</p> <p>2008</p>
7. Promote gymnastics as open to people of all abilities		<p>Develop inclusive promotional resources; e.g. Website (2006), Audio visual (2007), Printed [(2007) (Club 10 poster series 2008)] & GA resource publications ((2008))</p> <p>2008</p>	<p>Develop a resource to support coaches deliver inclusive practice</p> <p>2007-08</p>	

KEY RESULT AREA	ACTION			
	Environment	Program	Personnel	Participant
OUTCOMES				
8. Promote new programs designed to be inclusive of people of all abilities		Develop inclusive resources; e.g. GymMix & GymSkools 2007	Educate coaches on inclusive practice using new resources 2008 Recognise attendance at inclusive education forums for NCAS accreditation 2007	
9. Support external stakeholders (e.g. Special Olympics, schools, etc) who deliver gymnastics to people with disabilities		Develop inclusive resources; e.g. National Levels Program for people with disabilities (GymMix extension) 2008-09		

KEY RESULT AREA	ACTION			
	Environment	Program	Personnel	Participant
OUTCOMES				
10. Provide a participation/competition framework to ensure articulation between GymSports for people with disabilities		Matrix of gymnastics skills across GymSports for participants with and without disabilities 2007-08		
11. Develop inclusive promotional material		Develop a template for generic promotional material for use by clubs; e.g. GymMix, GymSkools & NLP promotional materials 2007		

KEY RESULT AREA	ACTION			
	Environment	Program	Personnel	Participant
OUTCOMES				
12. GA endorsement of competition for people with disabilities		Recognition and support of external stakeholders (e.g. Special Olympics) in delivery of competition for athletes with disabilities; e.g. post results on GA website 2008		
13. Capture examples of better practice to promote inclusiveness		Delivery of inclusive gymnastics programs in non-club environments; e.g. GymSkools being delivered to students in special schools 2008-09		

KEY RESULT AREA	ACTION			
	Environment	Program	Personnel	Participant
OUTCOMES				
14. Survey gymnastics personnel to ascertain level of preparedness for commitment to, & execution of, GA Disability Action Plan			Develop DAP to support service to people with a disability who seek participation in gymnastics; e.g. electronic survey, phone, face-to-face 2006	
15. Recognise the contribution of external stakeholders to gymnastics			Recognise the work of volunteer coaches/judges working with people with disabilities; e.g. Include Special Olympics National Awards 2008	

KEY RESULT AREA	ACTION			
	Environment	Program	Personnel	Participant
OUTCOMES				
16. Sanction disability events as updates for NCAS/NOAS			<p>Maintenance of judging accreditation via sanctioned disability events (2008)</p> <p>Include GA sanctioned disability competitions/events within GA National Updating Policy</p> <p>2008</p>	
17. Ensure articulation amongst GymSports for people with disabilities			<p>Educate coaches regarding competition/ participation pathways for people with disabilities</p> <p>2009</p>	

KEY RESULT AREA	ACTION			
	Environment	Program	Personnel	Participant
OUTCOMES				
18. Coach & judge accreditation ensures inclusive practice		<p>Improve NCAS/NOAS framework to be more inclusive; e.g. new coaching competencies reflect principles of access & inclusion (lesson plans accommodate individual needs)</p> <p>2007-08</p>	<p>Recognise Disability Education Program forums as contributing to coaches accreditations</p> <p>2009</p>	
19. Formalise relationships, where relevant, with peak National & State bodies representing people with disabilities				<p>MOU agreements established with key stakeholders; e.g. Australian Sport & Recreation Association with an Integration Difficulties (AUSRAPID), Australian Paralympic Committee, Special Olympics, etc</p> <p>2006-07</p>

KEY RESULT AREA	ACTION			
	Environment	Program	Personnel	Participant
OUTCOMES				
20. Identify gymnastic events for participants with a disability delivered by external stakeholders				<p>Provide links between organisations e.g. event promotion, participant profiles etc</p> <p>2007</p> <p>Commence GA regular representation at events for people with disabilities</p> <p>2006</p> <p>Participants are rewarded e.g. GA event trophy</p> <p>2008</p>
21. Identify gymnastic participants with a disability as 'National Squad'				<p>Participants become members of GA/SO National Squad for Athletes with a Disability</p> <p>2008</p>

KEY RESULT AREA	ACTION			
	Environment	Program	Personnel	Participant
OUTCOMES				
22. Clubs attract participation by non-traditional participants				<p>Develop a range of resources to support clubs to establish relationships with disability-specific services; e.g. introductory letter [(Star2 & Star 3 – Awareness) & (Star 4 & Star 5 recognise compliance)]</p> <p>2007-08</p>
23. Increase coaches' awareness of inclusion of people with disabilities			<p>Provide a range of resources that support coaches to include people with disabilities; e.g. Tips on Coaching Participants with a Disability</p> <p>2006</p>	

KEY RESULT AREA	ACTION			
	Environment	Program	Personnel	Participant
OUTCOMES				
24. Develop services for existing & potential members, including participants with a disability				<p>Record & utilise annual affiliation statistics on participation by people with disabilities; e.g. eligibility for competition at State & National events</p> <p>2007</p> <p>Establish competition pathways at regional, State & National level</p> <p>2008</p>