

Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA): Mid Term Funding Grant Report June 1998 – January 1999

Women With Disabilities Australia is funded on an annual basis by the Office of Disability – Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services. Every 6 months, WWDA prepares a report on its activities and achievements to the Office of Disability. This is WWDA's mid term report for the period July 1998 – January 1999. The Report outlines WWDA's achievements under each of its 7 goal areas. Written by Carolyn Frohmader, Executive Officer. Copyright WWDA 1999.

Goal 1: To research, analyse and take action on issues of concern to women with disabilities falling within the policy priorities of WWDA.

Over the last 6 months, WWDA's main activities in relation to this goal have been around the areas of violence against women with disabilities; leadership and mentoring; and information technology.

Leadership and Mentoring Project

In 1998, WWDA applied to the Global Fund for Women (based in the United States) for funding to enable the development of a Leadership & Mentoring Program for women with disabilities in Australia. The need for this project had been identified by WWDA members in consultations undertaken by WWDA. The submission was successful and in late 1998 WWDA employed a part time Project Officer to undertake a Leadership and Mentoring Project for women with disabilities. More information about the Project is provided under Goal 4 of this report.

Violence Against Women With Disabilities

Over the last 6 months, WWDA has continued to undertake work in the area of violence against women with disabilities. More detail about activities in this area over the last 6 months have been included under Goal 2 of this report. Some of the work WWDA has undertaken in relation to violence against women with disabilities includes:

- Publishing of the National Women With Disabilities & Violence Workshop Report;
- Funding Submission to the Business Against Domestic Violence Initiative;
- Participation in violence research being undertaken by other agencies/researchers;
- Updating and marketing of the WWDA Violence Against Women With Disabilities Information Kit;
- Development of a WWDA Submission to the National Partnerships Against Domestic Violence Strategy and Taskforce;
- Participation in the Partnerships Against Domestic Violence National Competency Standards Project;
- Assisting in the development of the NSW Women's Refuge Movement Access & Equity Manual;
- Presentation of Paper at the NSW Women's Refuge Movement State Conference;
- Publishing articles about violence against women with disabilities in the WWDA Newsletter.

Information Technology

A significant amount of work has been undertaken by WWDA over the last 6 months in the area of improving access to information technologies for women with disabilities. Detail of this work has been provided under Goal 2 of this report. Some of the work WWDA has undertaken in relation to information technologies and women with disabilities includes:

- Implementation of the Introduction to the Internet Workshop for Women With Disabilities;
- Successful funding submission to the AccessAbility Online Grants Program (National Office of the Information Economy);
- Development, implementation and analysis of a National WWDA Telecommunications Survey;
- Participation in the National Telstra Community Issues Survey;
- Planning and commencement of development of a National WWDA Website;
- Participation in email lists including Pamela's List; Ausfempolnet List; OzAdvocacy List.

WWDA has also undertaken some specific advocacy work in relation to direct concerns and/or complaints of members of WWDA.

Consumers Health Forum Advocacy

In November 98, WWDA was asked by the Consumers Health Forum of Australia to send a representative to a National Consumer's Health Forum Workshop on "Choosing Your Medicines", held in Sydney. A WWDA member from Queensland attended the Workshop. Prior to the Workshop, WWDA liaised closely with the Consumers Health Forum regarding the access requirements of the WWDA rep attending. Despite this, the WWDA representative encountered an extremely traumatic experience at the Workshop, particularly in relation to access and other forms of disability discrimination. As a result of this, WWDA wrote to, and met with the Executive Director of the Consumers Health Forum. WWDA made several recommendations to the Consumers Health Forum in an effort to ensure that no person with a disability participating in Consumer health Forum activities had to experience what the WWDA rep had at the Choosing Your Medicines Workshop.

WWDA's formal recommendations to the Consumers Health Forum included:

- that the Consumers Health Forum develop formalised and specific disability policies and procedures;
- that all Consumers Health Forum staff undertake Disability Awareness Training;
- that Consumers Health Forum work with, and support the WWDA representative to undertake a DDA Action against the venue where the Workshop was held;
- that Consumers Health Forum compensate the WWDA representative for loss of income as a result of being unable to work (in her capacity as Consultant) for 2 days after the incident.

WWDA met with the Executive Director of the Consumers Health Forum in mid December 1998 to discuss these recommendations. The meeting was very positive and the outcomes were:

- Consumers Health Forum has agreed to undertake Disability Awareness Training with all its staff in early 1999. A Training Consultant nominated by WWDA will facilitate the training.
- Consumers Health Forum has agreed to develop specific Disability policies and procedures for its organisation. This will occur in 1999 and WWDA will be consulted in the development of such policies and procedures. WWDA has also provided Consumers Health Forum with names of people with expertise in developing Disability policies.
- Consumers Health Forum has agreed to assist the WWDA representative to take a DDA Action against the venue where the workshop was held. Consumers Health Forum and the WWDA rep will consider a joint action as there were other participants at the Workshop with disabilities who experienced difficulties in relation to access.
- Consumers Health Forum has agreed in principle to compensate the WWDA representative for income lost as result of the incident. Consumers Health Forum is seeking confirmation from their legal advisers that this is appropriate.

Australian Physiotherapy Association Advertising Campaign

In September 1998, WWDA received a number of complaints in relation to an advertising campaign which was being conducted by the Australian Physiotherapy Association. The campaign included television advertisements, printed materials, and a range of products such as t-shirts, mugs etc. The advertisements used the image of a caricature of a person with a spinal disability. The figure in the campaign was apparently meant to be "Quasimodo". Several WWDA members complained about the ads, stating that they found the ads misleading and derogatory of people with spinal disabilities. WWDA acted on these complaints by writing to the Australian Physiotherapy Association, as well as the Disability Discrimination Commissioner, the Advertising Standards Board, and the National Caucus of Disability Consumer Organisations. The outcome was not really very successful for WWDA. The Disability Discrimination Commissioner did not believe that the campaign constituted any breach of the DDA. The Advertising Standards Board stated that the campaign did not breach any of the Advertising Standards. The Australian Physiotherapy Association wrote to WWDA apologising for any distress caused, but stated that they had not received any other complaints and that their market research had indicated a successful campaign.

Goal 2: To initiate systemic change activities in specific areas of concern to WWDA members: a) Increase the accessibility of services for women with disabilities who have been subjected to violence; and b) Promote access to information technology for women with disabilities.

Introduction to the Internet Workshop

In mid 1998, WWDA applied to the Office of the Status of Women for a small amount of funding to enable WWDA to hold an "Introduction to the Internet Workshop" as an addition to the WWDA Annual General Meeting (held in September 98). The request for funding was successful, and the Internet training workshop was conducted at the YNET Training Centre (YWCA) in Melbourne. The members of the WWDA National Executive Committee, along with other WWDA members from Victoria, were introduced to the World Wide Web, Newsgroups and Internet Search tools. One computer was also specifically set up to enable access to the Internet for those who are blind or have visual impairments. The Workshop participants were given an Evaluation Form to complete following the workshop. Feedback from participants was used in writing up the Evaluation Report.

A detailed Workshop Evaluation Report was written and forwarded to the Office of the Status of Women. This report contained, amongst other things, Background; Context; Planning & Organising the Introduction to the Internet Workshop; Workshop Evaluation (Process, Impact & Outcome Evaluation), as well as a statement of expenditure. Photographs were also included in the report.

As well as sending the Evaluation Report to the funding body, WWDA also sent the report to the National Office of the Information Economy, AccessAbility Online Program, and met with staff from that Program to discuss the report. This was considered important by both WWDA and staff of the AccessAbility Online Program, as the Introduction to the Internet Workshop provided a good opportunity to evaluate the experience of Internet training for people with disabilities.

The Introduction to the Internet Workshop for Women With Disabilities was very successful and enabled WWDA to improve its understanding of the issues women with disabilities face in relation to access to information technologies. A challenging component of the Workshop for WWDA was providing a workshop which was accessible to women with different disabilities. For example, as outlined earlier, WWDA was able to enable a blind woman to participate in the Workshop, which

although a challenging thing to organise, was a very rewarding experience for all involved. There were several positive outcomes from the Workshop, and one of these was that WWDA was able to encourage the YWCA to purchase the necessary software for their computers to enable blind and/or vision impaired women to have access to the YNET Training Centre in the future. WWDA was also able to encourage the YWCA to renovate some of their rooms at the Hotel Y in Melbourne so that they are fully accessible to women using wheelchairs. The YWCA has recently invited WWDA to participate in discussions with architects regarding these renovations.

This Workshop was an important event for some of the members of WWDA. It provided participants with an opportunity to access the Internet and associated technologies. For many of the participants, this was the first time they had been able to access such technology. WWDA is hoping to build on the outcomes of this Workshop in its up-coming project "Promoting Access to Information Technology for Women With Disabilities".

The AccessAbility Online Grant

In early 1998, the National Office for Information Economy established a new grants program called "AccessAbility, Online Services for People with Disabilities". The Grants Program is aimed at supporting innovative projects to enhance online access for people with disabilities. The first funding round of the Program commenced in mid 1998.

WWDA submitted two applications to the first round of the AccessAbility Online Grants Program. One application, entitled "Promoting Access to Online Information for Women With Disabilities in Australia" was successful. WWDA received \$64,000 to enable WWDA to promote access to online information for women with disabilities in Australia. The main strategies to achieve this will be:

- to develop an Australian women with disabilities website as a model of best practice in design and content, including the development of a national electronic based women with disabilities discussion group;
- to conduct an Internet Training Workshop for women with disabilities; and
- to provide an Internet access point for each State and Territory branch of WWDA and electronically link these branches.

The contract for the project was finalised in late December 1998, and the implementation of the Project will commence in early 1999.

National WWDA Telecommunications Survey

In late 1998, WWDA developed a National Telecommunications Survey which was distributed to all WWDA members in December 1998. The Survey forms part of a project being undertaken by Blind Citizens Australia. Margaret Cooper represents WWDA on the Steering Committee for the Blind Citizens Australia Project. The results of the WWDA Telecommunications Survey will be fed back to the BCA project, but will also provide valuable information for WWDA in relation to issues and concerns of WWDA members in relation to telecommunications. WWDA has been responsible for all aspects of the survey including: formulation of survey questions; printing of questionnaires and reply paid envelopes; mailout to around 1300 WWDA members and so on. The results of the survey will be collated by WWDA. Survey respondents have been asked to return their survey to WWDA by end January 1999. It is anticipated that the results of the survey will be available early March 1999.

Telstra Community Issues Survey

In Early January 1999, WWDA participated in a national survey being undertaken by Telstra. The Telstra Community Issues Survey is designed to identify key issues and areas of need for community groups. Telstra is also seeking to identify how it can better meet the needs of the community, and how telecommunications can be used to help address issues of community concern.

National Women With Disabilities & Violence Workshop Report

In February 1998, WWDA held the first ever national workshop on Violence Against Women With Disabilities. An Interim Report on the Workshop was written in mid 1998, and forwarded to the Office of the Status of Women who funded the Workshop. A copy was also sent to OOD. The final report from the Workshop has been developed and is currently being printed. The report is very comprehensive and contains a wide range of information relating to violence against women with disabilities. The report includes: context and background information, articles, detailed strategies in key issue areas, areas which require further research, resource information and much more. The report is being published and will be available in January 1999. WWDA is currently investigating the feasibility of having the document publicly launched.

Business Against Domestic Violence Funding Submission

The report from the National Women With Disabilities & Violence Workshop contains a range of detailed strategies which were developed by participants at the Workshop. Two major areas of need identified at the Workshop included:

- the need for accessible domestic violence information resources for women with disabilities;
- the need for Information Seminars on Domestic Violence for women with disabilities.

In early January 1999, WWDA developed a project proposal based on these two areas of need. The proposal was submitted to the Business Against Domestic Violence Program (based within the Commonwealth Office of the Status of Women). The submission proposed a national project which will develop domestic violence information resources for women with disabilities in Australia. Information resources will be developed in alternative formats in order to ensure accessibility for all women with disabilities. These formats will include: braille; large print; audio cassette; electronic based; Compic; in Plain English and so on. Internet based information resources will also be developed and these will be provided using accessible web design for people with disabilities. The resources which are developed will then be used to conduct Domestic Violence Information Seminars around Australia for women with disabilities. The seminars will provide information, education and awareness about women with disabilities and domestic violence, as well as strategies women with disabilities can employ to prevent domestic violence.

WWDA is currently awaiting a decision on the submission.

Violence Research

Over the last six months, WWDA has participated in several research projects on violence. WWDA has been involved in a national survey on Violence and Crime, being undertaken by the National Campaign on Violence and Crime. WWDA has also participated in two State based research projects on violence against women. One of these was specifically on violence against women with disabilities. This project was undertaken by MIMS and Associates in Queensland and the project report was finalised in late 1998. WWDA also reviewed this project in its last Newsletter. Another research project WWDA was involved in was a project being conducted by a PhD student in Queensland. As well as participating in the research, WWDA also disseminated information about the project to WWDA members, as well as other potential key stakeholders.

WWDA Violence Against Women With Disabilities Information Kit

In early 1998, WWDA developed an Information Kit on Violence Against Women with Disabilities. This Kit was prepared for participants at the National Women With Disabilities & Violence Workshop, held in February 1998. Over the last 6 months, WWDA has produced additional materials for inclusion into the Kit, and has started to publicise its availability. Over the last few months, WWDA has sold approximately 15 copies of the Kit at a price of \$50 each. In December 98, WWDA developed a flier promoting the Kit and this was included in the WWDA Newsletter mailout, to around 1400 WWDA members. It is hoped that this advertising strategy will promote further sales of the Kit. Some of the services which have already purchased the Kit include:

- Launceston Women's Health Information Service
- Mackay Domestic Violence Resource Service
- Toowoomba Domestic Violence Regional Service
- Western Sydney Developmental Disability Service
- Queensland Department of Primary Industries
- University of Sydney Social Work Department
- Disability Employment Action Centre Victoria
- People With Disabilities NSW
- Toora Single Women's Shelter ACT
- Townsville Domestic Violence Service
- National Campaign Against Violence and Crime (Attorney Generals Department)
- The Spastic Centre of NSW
- Working Against Violence Support Service Queensland

WWDA Submission to the National Partnerships Against Domestic Violence Strategy

In August 98, WWDA developed a submission to the National Partnerships Against Domestic Violence Strategy, an initiative launched by the Prime Minister in late 1997. Approximately 25 million dollars has been allocated to this initiative, which will run for 3.5 years. The Partnerships Against Domestic Violence National Strategy is coordinated by a National Taskforce, with membership made up of representatives from each State/Territory as well as Commonwealth representatives. The role of the Taskforce is to look at and test new ways of addressing and preventing domestic violence, as well as determining national priorities for domestic violence. The first two national projects of the Partnerships Against Domestic Violence National Strategy will be a Community Education/Awareness Strategy and the Development of National Endorsed Competency Standards for workers with family violence. WWDA's submission provided information and recommendations about how these two projects should be inclusive of women with disabilities. WWDA also met with representatives of the Taskforce in August to lobby for the inclusion of women with disabilities into any projects initiated under the Partnerships Strategy. The Partnerships Taskforce met in late November 98, and WWDA's submission was tabled and debated at this meeting. WWDA is currently awaiting feedback from the Taskforce on WWDA's submission.

Partnerships Against Domestic Violence National Competency Standards Project

The National Competency Standards Project, which is funded under the Partnerships Against Domestic Violence strategy, commenced in late December 1998. The first stage of the Project is a Research Phase, which will be completed by April 99. WWDA will be involved in the research phase, participating in focus groups, information gathering workshops, face to face and telephone interviews. In January 99, WWDA wrote to the Project Management Team, outlining WWDA's work in the area of violence against women with disabilities, and forwarding a number of WWDA documents and resources to inform the project. WWDA also raised a number of issues and requested the Project Team to consider these issues in the implementation of the project. Some of these issues included:

- ensuring information about the project was made available in alternative formats;
- ensuring that all venues for the consultations were fully accessible;
- advocating for women with disabilities who participate as key informants be paid for their expertise and their time;
- requesting that consideration be given to assisting women with disabilities wishing to participate in focus groups etc with transport costs.

WWDA has also requested to meet formally with the Project management Team in the Research Phase of the Project.

Presentation of Paper at the NSW Women's Refuge Movement State Conference

In July 98, WWDA was invited to present a paper at the NSW Women's Refuge Movement State Conference. Karin Swift, a WWDA member from Brisbane who has done some work on violence against women with disabilities, presented a paper on Women With Disabilities and Violence on behalf of WWDA. Karin's presentation provided an overview of WWDA, of women with disabilities and violence; and practical strategies services can implement in order to improve access to services for women with disabilities. This paper was extremely successful, with the Conference organisers requesting permission to distribute the paper to all women's refuges, violence and sexual assault services in NSW.

NSW Women's Refuge Movement Access & Equity Manual

In early 1998, the NSW Women's Refuge Movement received funding to develop an Access and Equity Manual for all women's refuges in NSW. WWDA was involved in the early stages of the development of this manual. WWDA also presented a paper at the NSW Women's Refuge Movement State Conference in July 1998. This paper dealt with the issue of violence against women with disabilities, and contained practical strategies refuges could employ to better meet the needs of women with disabilities escaping violence. The draft manual has recently been formulated and WWDA has been invited to assist with writing the section on women with disabilities. WWDA will meet with the Project Consultants in late January 1999 to begin work on this section of the manual.

Goal 3: To continue WWDA's high quality of input into systemic change initiated by other bodies.

Submission to the Australian Sports Commission Women And Sport Unit on the Draft National Plan for Women and Girls in Sport and Physical Activity 1998-2002

In late 1998, WWDA developed a submission to the Australian Sports Commission Women And Sport Unit on the Draft National Plan for Women and Girls in Sport and Physical Activity 1998-2002. WWDA also met with senior personnel from the Australian Sports Commission to discuss strategies the Women and Sport Unit could employ to better meet the needs of women with disabilities. The submission from WWDA on the Draft National Plan for Women and Girls in Sport and Physical Activity was very well received and all proposed amendments by WWDA were adopted in the Plan. Some of the suggestions WWDA put forward for incorporation into the National Plan included:

- the need for the Plan to include reference to relevant legislation and charters, such as: the Disability Discrimination Act 1992; the Sex Discrimination Act 1984, the Affirmative Action Act 1986; and the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion 1986.
- the need for the Plan to recognise broader factors that impact directly on women's low participation in physical activity and sport, such as lack of information and knowledge about what is available; and lack of access to appropriate, accessible, affordable and acceptable facilities and services.
- the need for the Plan to incorporate principles that take into consideration the needs of women with disabilities; such as: the importance of those responsible for providing physical activity and sport opportunities to recognise the diversity of women and ensure that all women are able to participate in safe, accessible, affordable, acceptable and appropriate environments; and sport and physical activity providers should ensure a safe and supportive environment for girls and women participating in sport at all levels by taking steps to eliminate all forms of harassment, violence, abuse, exploitation, discrimination and gender testing.

Australian Council of Social Services (ACOSS) Budget Submission/Tax Reform Activities

Following the announcement of the Tax Reform Package, WWDA received several phone calls and emails from members who were concerned about the impact of a GST on the lives of people with

disabilities. As WWDA was not resourced to undertake a comprehensive consultation with members on the issue of Tax Reform, WWDA approached the Executive Director of ACOSS to establish a mechanism whereby the concerns of WWDA members could be fed back to ACOSS. This was agreed to by ACOSS and WWDA met with a Senior Policy Officer from ACOSS to outline areas of concern to WWDA members. WWDA also met with ACOSS later in the year to have input to the ACOSS Budget Submission process. Further consultations are planned for early in 1999.

The National Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) Evaluation

The National SAAP Evaluation commenced in mid 1998. WWDA was not informed about this Evaluation, nor was the organisation invited to have input, despite the fact that the Terms of Reference for the Evaluation stated that relevant peak bodies were to be involved in all aspects of the process. After finding out about the SAAP Evaluation, WWDA approached the Project Evaluation Team and requested to be included in the process. WWDA also undertook a significant amount of lobbying work in the early stages of the Evaluation in an effort to ensure that the needs of people with disabilities be considered in all aspects of the Evaluation. Some of this lobbying and advocacy work included:

- writing to the Project Team requesting that information about the Evaluation be provided in alternative formats. WWDA also sought an assurance from the Evaluation Team that all venues for the public consultations be accessible;
- writing to the Project Team; the Commonwealth SAAP; the Office of Disability; the Minister for Disability Services in Queensland (where the Project Team was based) requesting that the needs and issues of people with disabilities be included in the Review process and that the issue of unmet need in relation to access to SAAP services by people with disabilities be addressed as part of the Review;
- writing to the Review Team to request that the SAAP Evaluation Discussion & Issues Papers be made available in alternative formats including on the Internet. Although the Review Team stated they were unable to do this, WWDA was able to obtain a copy of these Papers from the Team and then organised to have them made available on the Internet;
- WWDA developed a written submission to the first stage of the SAAP Evaluation, which was used to inform the development of the SAAP Evaluation Discussion Paper;
- WWDA members participated in the SAAP Evaluation public consultations which were held in each State/Territory capital city in late 1998.

National Disability Advisory Committee Ageing and Disability Survey

In late 1998, WWDA was invited by the National Disability Advisory Council to participate in a survey on issues for people with long term disabilities and age related disabilities. The survey was undertaken by NDAC in an effort to ensure that the needs of people with long term disabilities and age related disabilities are reflected in the National Strategy for an Ageing Australia.

WWDA participated in the Survey, which dealt with the following areas:

- Independence and Self Provision (eg: affordable and appropriate housing and transport; education and employment; financial security; including income support);
- World Class Care (for all govt and non-govt provided services and care);
- Attitudes, Lifestyle and Community Support (eg: being respected and valued; participation in community life; participation in social activities; access to affordable communications technology);
- Healthy Ageing (eg: access to appropriate preventative health and medical care; access to therapy and equipment; nutritional and exercise/recreational issues).

Consultations for Older People with Long-term Disability

WWDA also participated in consultations being undertaken by the National Disability Advisory Council on older persons with a long term disability. Consultations were held in Victoria, South Australia, and the Northern Territory and a WWDA representative attended each of these.

National Women's Forum for the International Year of Older Persons

In late 1998, the Office for the Aged (Department of Health & Aged Care) held a day long Women's Forum to inform the development of government response to the International Year of Older Persons. The Forum was held at Parliament House in Canberra and WWDA was able to send a representative. The report from the Forum should be available in early 1999.

National Work to Retirement for People with Disabilities Research Project

The Commonwealth Department of Health & Family Services (as it was known) funded a research project in 1998 to look at the issues facing people with disabilities in the transition from work to retirement. A WWDA representative (Sue Large) was nominated via the Caucus of Consumer Disability Organisations, for a position on Project Steering Committee. Sue's nomination was successful. WWDA met with the Project Consultant (Tony Stevenson) in mid December 98 to discuss the project, the methodology, and the need for the project to consider gender issues in its implementation. WWDA was able to provide the Project Consultant with a range of resource materials to inform the project.

The Advocacy Program Review (Office of Disability)

The Report of the Advocacy Program Review (Office of Disability) was released in late 98. A consultation phase was organised to enable organisations to comment on the report and the recommendations it contains. The consultation phase was recently extended until February 99. WWDA developed a comprehensive submission to the first stages of the Advocacy Program Review, and is currently in the process of developing a response to the Review Report. WWDA has distributed the Report to all State/Territory WWDA groups as part of the consultation process.

National Workshop on the Theory and Practice of Representation on Australian Politics

In December 1998, WWDA participated in a National Workshop on the Theory and Practice of Representation on Australian Politics. This Workshop was conducted by the Australian National University and was coordinated by Professor Marian Sawyer. A WWDA member (Helen Meekosha from the University of NSW) presented a paper at the Workshop, and another member of WWDA (Ms Christina Ryan) participated in a panel to debate disability issues in relation to theory and practice of representation on Australian politics.

WWDA Representation

WWDA has continued to advocate for the inclusion of the needs and issues concerning women with disabilities through representation on a number of Advisory bodies, Committees and so on. Committees where WWDA is represented currently include:

- National Caucus of Disability Consumer Organisations – WWDA EO and WWDA Chairperson
 - DDA Standards Project – Joyce Deering
 - Ministerial Committee on Employment, Education Training and Youth Affairs, Task Force on DDA Education Standards – Joan Hume
 - Australian National Training Authority Disability Forum – Pamela Menere
 - AUSTEL Consumer Consultative Forum – Robin Wilkinson
 - Consumer Telecommunications Network – Robin Wilkinson
 - Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Data Reference Group – Di Temby
 - Attorney General's Human Rights Forum – Helen Meekosha
 - Work to Retirement Research Project Steering Committee – Sue Large
 - Blind Citizens Australia Telecommunications Project Steering Committee – Margaret Cooper
 - Round Table (with Minister Assisting the Prime Minister on the Status of Women) – WWDA Chair
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Goal 4: Promote leadership skills of women with disabilities.

Leadership is a major issue for women with disabilities in Australia. Lack of training opportunities, employment and education mean that women with disabilities have few chances to develop leadership skills. In most states of Australia, education for women with disabilities is not compulsory. As an organisation, WWDA is very committed to promoting leadership and mentoring for women with disabilities in Australia. Enabling women with disabilities to acquire new knowledge and skills, and by providing them with opportunities for self-development and increased confidence, is one way WWDA can work towards achieving equality for women with disabilities in this country.

Leadership and Mentoring Project

In 1998, WWDA applied to the Global Fund for Women (based in the United States) for funding to enable the development of a Leadership & Mentoring Program for women with disabilities in Australia. The need for this project had been identified by WWDA members in consultations undertaken by WWDA. A Leadership Workshop conducted by WWDA in October 97, raised a number of important issues where WWDA members felt leadership training and mentoring was required. The outcomes and recommendations from the Leadership Workshop were used to formulate WWDA's submission to the Global Fund for Women. This submission was successful and in late 1998, WWDA received \$15,000 US dollars to undertake the Project.

A Position Description for the job was developed in late 98, and the position was advertised in the Canberra Times as well as through word of mouth, email and fax to a range of organisations and relevant email lists. Over 45 Expressions of Interest were received for the Position, although only 5 written applications were received. This was attributable partially to the salary, which was relatively low for a Project Officer (due to funding constraints). Applicants were shortlisted and 2 women were interviewed for the Position.

The successful applicant (Ms Lea Hackett) was appointed to the position of Project Officer in December 1998 for a 12 month period to undertake the Leadership & Mentoring Project. The objectives of the Project include:

- to assist State/Territory WWDA groups to develop skills for self-management, and implement activities based on the identified local needs of women with disabilities;
- to assist State/Territory WWDA groups to foster leadership and mentoring opportunities for women with disabilities;
- to develop, implement and evaluate a Leadership and Mentoring Training Package for State/Territory WWDA groups;
- to develop community participation strategies for WWDA in accordance with a community development approach;
- to develop strategies for strengthening and motivating State/Territory WWDA groups;
- to target particular groups of women with disabilities who may be marginalised for their involvement in and membership of WWDA.

Fourth International Conference on Leadership and Mentoring

In December 1998, the President of WWDA, Ms Vicki Toovey, presented a paper at the Fourth International Conference on Women and Leadership which was held in Perth. For several months prior to the Conference, WWDA had lobbied the Conference organisers to apply for Conference funding from the Office of Disability to enable women with disabilities to attend the Conference as delegates. It proved very difficult to get the Conference organisers to write and submit the application for funding. Eventually, WWDA ended up writing the application for the organisers, however despite this, they neglected to submit the application in time for it to be assessed. This meant that WWDA was unable to send more than one delegate to the Conference.

Work to Retirement Research Project Steering Committee

The Commonwealth Department of Health & Family Services (as it was known) funded a research project in 1998 to look at the issues facing people with disabilities in the transition from work to retirement. The Project requested that the Caucus of Consumer Disability Organisations provide a representative for the Steering Committee. The Caucus sent out requests through its member organisations seeking nominations. The WWDA Executive Officer worked with one of WWDA's members to assist her in developing an application for nomination. Sue's nomination was successful. Following Sue's appointment to the Project Committee, Margaret Cooper (previous WWDA Chairperson) worked with Sue in a mentoring capacity as this was Sue's first experience on a national Committee. Sue found the Mentoring Process to be very helpful.

Other activities and strategies WWDA has undertaken in the area of leadership include:

- Implementation of the Introduction to the Internet Workshop for Women With Disabilities;
- securing funding for additional Internet Training opportunities for women with disabilities through the AccessAbility Online Program;
- employment of a woman with a disability to undertake the Leadership Project;
- providing opportunities for women with disabilities to participate in forums, seminars, and other consultative processes;
- assisting women with disabilities to develop and present Conference papers;
- providing opportunities for women with disabilities to represent the organisation at launches, workshops and so on.

Goal 5: To continue to establish and support WWDA groups and national WWDA Networks around the country.

Over the last 6 months, the WWDA State and Territory groups have continued to develop and strengthen. This is a significant achievement, since none of the State/Territory WWDA groups are funded, and operate essentially on a voluntary level.

Two important achievements for WWDA during 1998 will see the State/Territory WWDA groups develop further in 1999. The Leadership and Mentoring Project, and the Promoting Access to Information Technology for Women with Disabilities Project, will assist in developing the infrastructures necessary to strengthen and better support the WWDA State and Territory groups.

The implementation of a Leadership and Mentoring Project in late 1998 (funded through the Global Fund for Women USA) will aim to provide opportunities for women with disabilities to develop new knowledge, skills and self-esteem. The objectives of the Project include:

- to assist State/Territory WWDA groups to develop skills for self-management, and implement activities based on the identified local needs of women with disabilities;
- to assist State/Territory WWDA groups to foster leadership and mentoring opportunities for women with disabilities;
- to develop, implement and evaluate a Leadership and Mentoring Training Package for State/Territory WWDA groups;
- to develop community participation strategies for WWDA in accordance with a community development approach;
- to develop strategies for strengthening and motivating State/Territory WWDA groups;
- to target particular groups of women with disabilities who may be marginalised for their involvement in and membership of WWDA.

The Promoting Access to Information Technology for Women with Disabilities Project, funded under the AccessAbility Online Grants Program, will be implemented in 1999. The main components of the project are:

- to develop an Australian women with disabilities website as a model of best practice in design and content, including the development of a national electronic based women with disabilities discussion group;
- to conduct an Internet Training Workshop for women with disabilities; and
- to provide an Internet access point for each State and Territory branch of WWDA and electronically link these branches.

The first stage of the Project will see the purchase of computers with Internet access for each WWDA State and Territory group, including a regional group in Newcastle.

In late 1998, the National WWDA Office developed a WWDA Orientation Kit and each State and Territory WWDA group was issued a copy of this Kit. The information was developed in such a way that will enable the State and Territory groups to copy and distribute the information as required.

WWDA State, Territory and Regional Groups

Victoria

Over the last 6 months, the Victorian Women With Disabilities Network (VWDN) has concentrated its efforts in a number of key areas and collective members have shared responsibility to network and co-ordinate specific task groups to ensure members efforts are most effectively placed. A small co-ordinating collective meets monthly and receives reports back from a representative of the different task groups. The Victorian Women With Disabilities Network currently has around 250 members.

Activities of the group have included:

- production and circulation of 4 Newsletters per year;
- participation in State based activities on violence against women with disabilities, including: representation on the Woorarra Refuge Working Group to oversee the implementation of the Woorarra Women's Refuge Disability Action Plan; representing women with disabilities at the Victorian InterDepartmental Committee Consultation on Violence and the Victorian Taskforce on Violence Against Women; holding ongoing meetings with the Victorian Department of Human Services re the findings of the report and the government's response to these findings; a submission to the State SAAP Evaluation regarding the needs of women with disabilities.
- development of a proposal for a series of books of women's experiences of disabilities;
- implementation of a series of workshops on writing;
- representation at State based Conferences, including the Victorian Women's Health Conference;
- development of submissions including a submission to the People Together Social Justice Audit
- co-ordination of meetings with the Queen Victoria Women's Centre to improve access for women with disabilities
- development of , and participation in forums such as the forum for women on 'Public Transport, Women and Safety.

Queensland

In the past, WWDA has had a network of representatives based in Brisbane and Townsville. However, the WWDA Queensland group was formalised and launched in December 1998. Karin Swift, Queensland's representative on the WWDA National Executive Committee, is the Convenor of the group. Over the last 6 months, Karin has undertaken a significant amount of work in networking with

Queensland based women's organisations and organisations in the disability sector. Karin has also widely promoted the Queensland WWDA group to potential new members. In late 98, Karin met with Minister Anna Bligh (Queensland Minister for Disability Services) to discuss the issues concerning women with disabilities in Queensland. Karin has also represented WWDA nationally at a number of forums and Conferences.

Tasmania

The WWDA Tasmania group continues to grow. Although based in Southern Tasmania, the group now has a representative from the Northern region of Tasmania. The group has undertaken a wide range of activities and some of these include:

- development of a pamphlet and letterhead for the group;
- social outings;
- participation in the Tasmanian Community Expo, including the running of an Information Stall for women with disabilities;
- development of a funding submission to the Tasmanian Health Promotion Council;
- representation on the Optus' Consumer Liaison Forum Meeting;
- representation on the National Work to Retirement Research Project Steering Committee;
- successful funding submission to the Tasmanian Cancer Screening and Control Service to assist women with disabilities to take up cervical and breast cancer screening.

Northern Territory

The Northern Territory WWDA Network has been involved in a wide range of activities and some of these include:

- participation in forums and consultations concerning accessible transport in the Northern Territory;
- participation in the launch of the five year Strategic Plan for Disability Services in the Northern Territory;
- participation in the Festival of Darwin, including a march in the Festival Parade;
- recognition of achievements in the disability and women's fields, with one of WWDA's representatives receiving the Chief Minister's Achievement award;
- representation on the Disability Discrimination Act Standards Project Steering Committee;
- participation in consultations regarding accessible buildings in Darwin.

New South Wales

Although there is no formal WWDA group in Sydney, WWDA has a network of women in that city who represent the organisation and meet on an ad hoc basis. Some of the activities of the network have included:

- participation in the Go Girl Festival in Sydney, including the running of an Information stall;
- participation in the consultations for the National SAAP Evaluation;
- representation at the Australian Council of Business Women Leadership Forum;
- presentation of a paper at the National Workshop on the Theory and Practice of Representation on Australian Politics at the Australian National University;
- representation on the Attorney-General's Human Rights Committee;
- presentation of papers on women and disability in higher education in the Winds of Change International Conference held in July at the University of Technology, Sydney.

South Australia

The South Australian WWDA group continues to grow. The group has been involved in a number of activities including:

- participation in the consultations of the National SAAP Evaluation;
- representation at the South Australian Human Rights Seminar;
- participation in South Australian consultations on Older People with Long-term Disability;
- facilitating network meetings with violence services in South Australia to promote the needs of women with disabilities escaping violence;
- working with the Migrant Women's Emergency Support Service to assess accessibility for women with disabilities of newly established housing ;
- development of a resources collection for women with disabilities within the South Australian Disability Information Resource Centre;
- representation on the Working Women's Centre Inc Management Committee;
- representation on the WorkCover Corporations Disability Focus Group;
- working with the University of South Australia Student Union to lobby universities to create better access for students with disabilities and their carers.

Australian Capital Territory

Although a relatively small group, the ACT WWDA group has undertaken some significant activities during the past 6 months. Some examples of these include:

- a successful funding submission to the ACT Health Pact (Health Program ACT);
- the development and implementation of a series of Workshops for women with disabilities, including: assertiveness, group dynamics, stress, public speaking;
- the implementation of a research project on the impact of stress and fatigue on women with disabilities;
- working with women's refuges in the ACT to improve accessibility for women with disabilities escaping violence;
- representation at the launch of the Centrelink Service Delivery Statement on Violence;
- representation at the Prime Ministers Employee of the Year Awards;
- representation at the National Women's Forum for the Year of Older Persons;
- development and implementation of a needs survey of women with disabilities in the ACT.

Western Australia

Activities of the Western Australian WWDA Group have included:

- participation in State based seminars on domestic violence;
- working with women's refuges in Western Australia to promote access for women with disabilities;
- participation in the Older Person's Rights Forum;
- participation in the National Council of Women's Forum on Sterilisation of Disabled Women;
- working with State based accommodation services to promote the needs of women with disabilities;
- working with State based organisations to improve transport services and parking facilities;
- development and running of fortnightly Craft Days for women with disabilities.

Newcastle

The Newcastle WWDA Group continues to grow. Activities of the Newcastle Group have included:

- development of a submission for funding to the NSW Department for Women;
- development and implementation of an Oral History Research Project, utilising creative writing and video camera;
- participation in the International Women's Day activities and the Reclaim the Night March, which saw the Newcastle WWDA Group featured in the Hunter Regional Newspaper;
- participation in consultations relating to violence against women with disabilities;
- organising and running of a disco for women with disabilities;
- production of a 3 monthly Newsletter;

- accepting referrals from service providers and individual women with disabilities.
-

Goal 6: To increase the membership and public profile of WWDA.

The public profile of WWDA has continued to increase substantially over the last 6 months. This is reflected in the increasing number and diversity of phone calls, faxes, correspondence and e-mails coming into the organisation. WWDA receives a large number of requests for information – these requests come from individual women with a disability; from organisations; from government agencies; from voluntary groups; from the private sector and also from people studying at schools, colleges and universities.

WWDA has had over 200 new members in the period July 1998 – December 1998.

Representing the Issues of Women with Disabilities in Consultative and Other Processes

WWDA's increasing profile can be evidenced by the number of forums, consultations and processes WWDA is invited to have input into. Due to resource constraints, there are only so many of these invitations WWDA can take up, and those which WWDA does participate in, reflect the organisations priority areas and members concerns. Just some of the government, non-government and voluntary processes WWDA has been involved in over the last 6 months include:

- National Consumer's Health Forum Workshop on "Choosing Your Medicines"
- Participation in violence research being undertaken by other agencies/researchers;
- The National Partnerships Against Domestic Violence Strategy;
- The Partnerships Against Domestic Violence National Competency Standards Project;
- The NSW Women's Refuge Movement Access & Equity Manual Development;
- The National Telstra Community Issues Survey;
- The Draft National Plan for Women and Girls in Sport and Physical Activity 1998-2002
- ACOSS Budget Submission/Tax Reform Activities
- The National Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) Evaluation
- National Disability Advisory Committee Ageing and Disability Survey
- Consultations for Older People with Long-term Disability
- National Women's Forum for the International Year of Older Persons
- National Work to Retirement for People with Disabilities Research Project
- The Advocacy Program Review (Office of Disability)
- National Workshop on the Theory and Practice of Representation on Australian Politics

WWDA Annual General Meeting and Annual Report

In September 1998, WWDA held its Annual General Meeting in Melbourne. More than 30 people attended the AGM and approximately another 50 registered their apologies. This is a substantial increase on last years AGM. Apologies were also received from the Prime Minister, the Federal Opposition Leader, the Federal Treasurer, along with several other politicians.

Following the AGM, WWDA developed an Annual Report which detailed the organisations activities for the 97-98 year. This report was distributed to WWDA State & Territory groups, as well as a number of government departments, non-government organisations and Federal Ministers. The availability of the report was publicised in the December edition of WWDA News.

International Links

WWDA has continued to raise the public profile of the organisation at an international level. In January 99, WWDA participated in a survey being undertaken by Mobility International USA, and also provided

information about WWDA to be included in the 1998 Edition of the International publication for women with disabilities, entitled: Loud, Proud & Passionate.

At the international level, some of the major organisations with which WWDA has established links include:

- Disabled Women's Network Canada;
- Commission on Gender Equality, Johannesburg, South Africa
- Canadian Women's Health Network
- Global Fund for Women
- World Institute on Disability
- The Assembly of People With Disabilities New Zealand
- Disability Awareness in Action (UK)
- Mobility International USA
- Beijing Platform on Women

WWDA Newsletter

The latest edition of the WWDA newsletter was mailed out in late December. The WWDA office has received several phone calls, emails and letters from recipients of the December edition congratulating WWDA on the quality of the Newsletter. The Newsletter also contained an Evaluation Survey which readers could fill out, giving suggestions for ways WWDA can continue to improve the Newsletter. The Newsletter also contained a Membership Form and several individuals and organisations have taken up membership since seeing the Newsletter. This has included a number of violence services and women's health services.

Conference Presentations

Over the last six months, WWDA has presented papers at the following Conferences:

- NSW Women's Refuge Movement State Conference;
- National Workshop on the Theory and Practice of Representation on Australian Politics;
- Fourth International Conference on Women and Leadership.

In late 98, WWDA received information about an International Women's Health Conference to be held in July 1999. Two WWDA members prepared abstracts for this Conference. The papers are around issues relating to violence against women with disabilities; and women with disabilities and ageing. If these abstracts are accepted, WWDA will need to secure funding to enable the women to attend. WWDA has already approached the Office of Disability for funding assistance for this Conference, however this was unsuccessful.

International Day of People With Disabilities

Several of the WWDA State and Territory groups participated in activities for International Day of People With Disabilities, held on December 3rd. The WWDA National Office provided resource materials for the groups to distribute within their State/Territory. WWDA also distributed several resources to other organisations who were conducting activities on the Day.

Email Lists and Networks

WWDA has joined a number of email lists and networks in order to promote the organisation, distribute information, and seek input to various activities and processes being undertaken by WWDA. Some of the email lists WWDA participates in include:

- the OZADVOCACY list, which deals with issues relating to advocacy;
- the AUSFEMPOLNET list, which deals with feminism and politics in Australia;

- PAMELA'S LIST which is administered by the Pamela Denoon Trust and is made up of the majority of national women's organisations;
- DDA LIST which is administered by the DDA Standards Project.

American Embassy Women's Association

In mid 98, WWDA was contacted by the American Embassy Women's Association based in Canberra who asked if they could assist in fundraising for WWDA. In late 98, WWDA attended a function organised by the American Embassy Women's Association, where they handed over a cheque for WWDA to the tune of \$1400. WWDA will continue to keep in touch with the Association to let them know how WWDA makes use of their generous donation.

Other Profile Raising Activities and Strategies

As well as those activities already discussed, other profile raising activities and strategies have included:

- development and distribution of fliers promoting WWDA reports etc;
- publishing reports, journal articles, newsletter articles, conference papers etc;
- subscribing to relevant organisations;
- developing mailing lists and databases of relevant agencies and organisations and mailing out promotional material about WWDA;
- participating in relevant Information Days; community expos etc;
- having promotional materials about WWDA available at national conferences;
- inserting WWDA promotional material into mailouts of other organisations;
- distributing WWDA pamphlets and membership forms to key points in the community;
- distributing WWDA materials to schools and tertiary institutions.

Goal 7: To further improve the organisational system and structure so as to best serve WWDA's membership and its aims and objectives.

Development of Operational Policies and Procedures

Over the last 6 months, WWDA has developed a range of operational policies and procedures to support and guide the work of the organisation. The Policies developed to date have included:

- Personnel Policy
- Conflict Resolution Policy
- Access and Equity Policy
- Policy on Volunteers
- Occupational Health and Safety Policy
- Equal Employment Opportunity Policy
- Industrial Democracy Policy
- Termination of Employment Policy

Review and Development of Position Descriptions

In late 1998, WWDA undertook a review of the Position Descriptions for the organisation. Several new Position Descriptions were developed, which better reflect the needs of the organisation and are in keeping with the Social And Community Services Award under which WWDA staff operate. Position Descriptions have been developed for the Executive Officer; WWDA Bookkeeper; Administrative Assistant; and Project Officer. Position Descriptions now cover:

- Position Title
- Organisation
- Classification
- Award
- Employment Conditions
- Function
- Primary Tasks
- Level of Responsibility
- Knowledge and Skills/Selection Criteria
- Desirable Knowledge and Skills

Development of WWDA Human Resources Package

In late 98, WWDA updated and further developed a Human Resources Package for the organisation. Information in this Package included:

- Roles and Responsibilities of WWDA National Executive Committee Members (including Legal Obligations; Financial Management; Industrial Relations; Ethical Issues; Operational Issues; Policy Development)
- Roles and Responsibilities of NEC Office Bearers
- Roles and Responsibilities of the WWDA Executive Officer
- Reporting Procedures and Techniques
- Sample Quarterly Reporting Process
- Appraisal System
- Annual Appraisal Proforma
- Examples of Position Descriptions and Selection Criteria
- Example of a Contract of Employment
- Policies

The Human Resources Package was sent to all WWDA National Executive Committee members in late 1998.

Development of WWDA Orientation Kit

In late 1998, WWDA developed an Orientation Kit for the organisation. This Kit was also provided to all State and Territory WWDA groups for their use. The Orientation Kit contains the following:

- WWDA National Office Contact Information
- Background to WWDA
- About Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA)
- Membership of WWDA
- Funding
- WWDA Auditors
- Management of Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA)
- WWDA National Executive Committee Members
- WWDA Policy and Program Areas
- WWDA Organisational Affiliations
- National Peak Disability Organisations
- Orientation to the WWDA National Office (including location; meeting rooms; car parking; office hours; telephone system; office equipment; staff meetings; progress reports; policy and procedure manual; position descriptions; time sheets; performance review & development; etc).

Development of WWDA Resources

In late 1998, WWDA was fortunate to acquire the services of a volunteer via the ACT Volunteer Association. The volunteer is working with the National WWDA Office to catalogue existing resource materials and develop new resources for the organisation. This will include undertaking literature reviews on specific issues and collecting and collating relevant articles, reports etc.

WWDA Staffing

During the last 6 months, the WWDA National Office has had some changes in relation to staffing. Di McGowan, WWDA's bookkeeper for over 3 years, resigned in November 98. Following Di's resignation, WWDA undertook a review of the financial systems of the organisation. In December 98, a new bookkeeper, Ms Helen Mattick was employed to assume the responsibility for bookkeeping. In November 98, WWDA began the process of appointing a Project Officer to undertake the Leadership and Mentoring Project, which was funded through the Global Fund for Women. Interviews for the Project Officer position were conducted in November 98, and Ms Lea Hackett was appointed to the position for a 12 month period. A Performance Review and Development process will be conducted after 3 months and if satisfactory, Ms Hackett will be offered a further 9 months employment with WWDA.

As Ms Hackett has a hearing impairment, WWDA has had to undertake some workplace modifications to enable her to carry out her job. WWDA applied to the Department of Family & Community Services Workplace Modification Program for a volume control telephone and a modem for Ms Hackett. The Department rejected the application for a modem, and WWDA is still awaiting the outcome of its application for costs of the volume control, telephone (which WWDA has purchased and if the application is successful, the costs will be reimbursed by the Department).

Ms Eddie Wadick continues to work approximately 4 hours per week in the National WWDA Office. Unfortunately, WWDA was unable to find any funding assistance to keep Eddie on following the end of her Jobstart placement, so her hours had to be significantly reduced.

Office space has become a problem for the National WWDA Office. With 4 WWDA staff, plus volunteers, it is becoming difficult to accommodate staff in optimal working conditions. An additional problem is the fact that WWDA has grown so much as an organisation that it has essentially run out of room for housing the equipment and resources materials it needs to operate effectively. WWDA simply does not have the funds to pay additional rental costs, however the lack of office space is going to continue to be a problem as the organisation continues to expand. Also, the lack of office space restricts WWDA from being able to secure more Project staff (through Project funding) as there is simply no where to house additional staff.

Best Practice and Quality Improvement

WWDA is committed to striving towards best practice operations, both in organisational and operational practices, and also in the development of best practice approaches to projects and activities. At the organisational and operational level, WWDA's commitment to best practice can be evidenced by:

- the development of a Strategic/Business Plan which sets out key and continuing strategies, targets and timelines, resource implications and indicators of performance for each goal area. Each goal area is supported by a goal statement.
- the development of organisational and operational policies and procedures to support and guide the work of the organisation.
- staff selection, staff training and staff performance review and development are other areas where WWDA is committed to best practice operations. WWDA has a commitment to providing employment and training opportunities for women with disabilities, including volunteers. This means that where possible, WWDA employs women with disabilities to conduct projects, undertake consultations etc. Women with disabilities manage WWDA projects and programs and provide consultancy services to the organisation as required. In this area, WWDA is able to demonstrate a model of best practice by linking its philosophical position on employment of women with disabilities to its practice. WWDA undertakes

Performance Review and Development of its paid staff on an annual basis. This process enables staff to identify their training requirements and paths for future career development.

- the development of roles and responsibility statements for members of the National Executive Committee. This provides role clarification and delineation for the NEC, particularly the Office Bearers and facilitates communication between NEC members.

WWDA is very committed to the development of models of best practice in its work with, and for, women with disabilities. Just some of the examples of approaches towards models of best practice in projects and other activities can be demonstrated by:

- the establishment of Project Steering and Management Committees which are made up of women with disabilities;
- the employment of women with disabilities as Project Consultants and Project Managers;
- the provision of information in alternative formats in order to provide and promote equity of access to information for women with disabilities;
- the development of a Model Process for the development of Disability Discrimination Act Action Plans – to be used by women’s refuges and other services as a model of best practice;
- the development of strategic alliances with the Women’s Emergency Services Network (WESNET) to develop best practice guidelines for domestic violence sector workers when dealing with women with disabilities who have experienced violence (or who are at risk of experiencing violence);
- the establishment of a National Women With Disabilities and Violence Reference Group, made up of women with disabilities;
- conducting National issue based workshops which demonstrate models of best practice in relation to participation of women with disabilities;
- the development of consultative structures and mechanisms which facilitate maximum participation by women with disabilities;
- the commitment by WWDA to developing a website which is a model of best practice in design and content (including compliance with Website Accessibility Guidelines developed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) and the AUS Standards for Web Design, both endorsed by the Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission);
- the development of a funding submission to the Business Against Domestic Violence Initiative to undertake a project which will educate women with disabilities about domestic violence and its prevention by developing a model of best practice in education.