

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Ms Walker to the Minister for Public Employment:

Disability Employment Program

1. How many people are employed under the Disability Employment Program as at 31 March 2016?
2. What were the outcomes of the review of the program?
3. What strategies are being implemented to improve public sector employment of people with a disability?

-
1. Nine people were employed under the Disability Employment Program (DEP) in the 2015/16 funding period.
 2. A review of the DEP took place to reposition the program and governing policy to include additional obligations for agencies to provide individualised training and development plans for each participant. Following these changes program participation increased more than 60% and funding to support employment of people with disability was fully committed before the commencement of the employment period for the first time since 2003.
 3. OCOPE manages the sector wide *EmployAbility: A strategy for the employment of people with disability in the Northern Territory Public Sector 2013- 2017*. This strategy recognises the ability of and aims to increase employment opportunities for people with disability, and position the NTPS as a disability confident employer. The Strategy focuses on four key areas:
 - nurturing an inclusive workplace culture
 - supporting attraction and retention practices
 - supporting skills acquisition and career development
 - promoting accessibility

Initiatives delivered under EmployAbility, include:

- The Disability Employment Program (DEP). DEP offers temporary employment (up to two years) to people with disability as a pathway to ongoing employment.
- A sector wide membership with the Australian Network on Disability. Through this membership OCPE have facilitated disability confidence training for agencies and published guides for all NTPS staff to access: '*Managers Guide to Employing Staff with Disability*' and '*Beyond Recruitment – a guide to retaining staff with disability in your organisation*'.

EmployAbility is due to expire at the beginning of 2017. A comprehensive review will be undertaken to ensure that the many complex issues impacting disability employment in the NTPS, including voluntary disclosure and pathways for students with disability, are addressed. This review will be undertaken in conjunction with the Australian Network on Disability.

Special Measures in Recruitment are also available to agencies who wish to recruit a person/s with disability to specific position/s. Uptake to date has been low as there are a range of complexities with this option. However, increasing uptake will be examined as part of the EmployAbility review.