

MEDIA RELEASE



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Standards Australia and Department of Finance combine to provide greater access to technology for Australians living with a disability

Standards Australia in conjunction with the Department of Finance, Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN) and other stakeholders, are pleased to announce Australia will be adopting an internationally aligned standard for ICT accessibility in procurement.

Standards Australia CEO, Dr Bronwyn Evans, said that the new Australian Standard is to be used as guidance for all levels of government when determining technical specifications for the procurement of accessible ICT products and services.

“The standard will ensure that websites, software, digital devices are more accessible – so they may be used by persons with a wide range of abilities.

“It will provide a framework for developing and procuring a wide range of applications that will make ICT products and services more accessible for the 4.2 million Australians who are living with various types of disability,” said Dr Evans.

ACCAN CEO, Teresa Corbin, said it is intended in particular for use by public authorities and other public sector bodies during procurement.

“While the standard is suitable for use in public procurement, it could also be used in the private sector.

“The standard will help industry and operators avoid creating technologies that exclude users from the information society.

“This way everyone can access information and use services that are being delivered electronically,” said Ms Corbin.

The Australian Disability Discrimination Commissioner, Alastair McEwin, has welcomed the move by Standards Australia to adopt an internationally aligned Australian Standard for ICT Accessibility Procurement.

“Accessibility in ICT for all people, including those with disabilities, is critical if they are to be able to use technology on a level playing field. This includes, for example, enabling employees with disability to use accessible technology in their workplace.

“The Australian Human Rights Commission’s recent report on discrimination issues in the workplace for people with disability recommended that Australian governments implement strategies to ensure their ICT procurement and development is fully accessible.

“I commend Standards Australia for their work in this area and look forward to seeing ICT products and services become more accessible for Australians with disability,” said Mr McEwin.

Minister for Finance, Senator the Hon Mathias Cormann, [issued a statement](#) welcoming the adoption of an internationally aligned standard for ICT accessibility in procurement.

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