

Cinema Access

Implementation Plan



Australian Government
Department of Families, Housing,
Community Services and Indigenous Affairs



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On 18 May 2010 a demonstration of the latest digital technology, audio description and captioning devices was presented by the four major cinema chains: Hoyts, Village Cinemas, Event Cinemas (Greater Union Birch Carroll and Coyle), and Reading Cinemas.

During this presentation, these four major cinema chains put forward a proposal for the future rollout of accessible technology.

However recognising the need to ensure people with disability were consulted in this process, the cinema chains also proposed that an Advisory Group including representatives of the disability sector be convened to provide advice and assist the cinema industry in meeting its goals.

These goals are outlined in the following Cinema Access Implementation Plan.

1. By the end of 2014 captions and audio description will be available in at least one screen in every one of the 132 cinema complex run by Hoyts, Village Cinemas, Event Cinemas, and Reading Cinemas.
2. In addition captions and audio description will be available in:
 - » one screen for every complex with 6 or less screens;
 - » two screens for every complex with 7 to 12 screens;
 - » three screens for every complex with 13 or more screens.

This will equate to captions and audio description being provided at 242 screens in 132 complexes compared to the current situation where only 12 screens in 12 complexes run by these cinemas provide captioning.

3. The timetable for achieving this goal is:
 - a. By the end of 2010, access will be provided in 24 screens (10% of target).
 - b. By the end of 2011, access will be provided in 73 screens (30% of target).
 - c. By the end of 2012, access will be provided in 145 screens (60% of target).
 - d. By the end of 2013, access will be provided in 194 screens (80% of target).
 - e. By the end of 2014, access will be provided in 242 screens (100% of target).
4. Captions and audio description will be available at every session of a movie where the screen is caption and audio description equipped. For example, the initial rollout of 10% of screens will result in 840 shows per week of closed captioning and audio description content (i.e. 24 screens at 35 sessions per week).

ACCESSIBLE CINEMA ADVISORY GROUP (ACAG)

The Accessible Cinema Advisory Group was proposed by the four main cinema chains to advise and assist the cinema industry in meeting its goals to improve cinema accessibility for people who are Deaf or hearing impaired, blind or vision impaired.

The ACAG (the Group) which includes representatives of the disability sector, will advise and assist the cinema industry to reach the overall goals, as proposed by cinema representatives and included in the Cinema Access Implementation Plan, for a new approach to cinema accessibility in Australia.

Functions of the Group include, but are not limited to:

- » Providing advice and assistance to cinemas to facilitate timely implementation of accessible technology.
- » Providing feedback on proposed technology solutions and evaluating developments in technology.
- » Providing advice and assistance on specific promotional and communication issues around advertising of accessible sessions, including ensuring that the information is accessible to audiences who are Deaf or hearing impaired, blind or vision impaired.
- » Providing feedback on the provision of accessible movies to encourage implementation of agreed minimum standards of service and communications across all cinemas.
- » Providing advice on the development of appropriate channels for complaints/problems to be addressed and resolved quickly and efficiently.
- » Assisting in the development, review and distribution of accessible cinema training material to staff within accessible cinemas.

Membership of the Group

Representatives from the following organisations will form the core membership of the Group:

- » Action on Cinema Access
- » Arts Access Australia
- » Australian Federation of Disability Organisations
- » Australian Human Rights Commission
- » Blind Citizens Australia
- » Deaf Australia
- » Deafness Forum of Australia
- » Event Cinemas
- » Hoyts Cinemas
- » Media Access Australia
- » Motion Picture Distributors Association of Australia
- » Reading Cinemas
- » Village Cinemas
- » Vision Australia

Observers:

Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy