

Dear Sir / Madam,

**RE : Disability Discrimination Act Feedback**

As a manufacturer & producer of 'inclusive fitness equipment' we find that the DDA has been limited in its impact on Commercial organisations in improving access to facilities within both Local government & Commercial fitness operations e.g. fitness centres, YMCA's.

Whilst the issue of access to buildings has been addressed in most cases - access to facilities inside these centres has not. People with disabilities are hindered in their ability to improve their general health & fitness by the lack of suitable equipment to 'workout' on as well as the ever present barrier of access inside e.g. upstairs workout rooms etc.

Acknowledging the cost to improve facilities by owners & operators, be it Local Government or private, is substantial, the DDA has been ineffective in its education to these groups about the benefits of attracting new clientele and increasing business, and needs to place pressure on these organisations that change is necessary by law.

Whilst Australia was one of the first to embrace the DDA other countries have leapt ahead of us in tackling various issues. For example the " Inclusive Fitness Initiative " in the UK, through the Government Lottery program, has raised 20 million pounds, to outfit all local government authority fitness facilities with suitable equipment, and plan to introduce this in the other 3000 commercial & private fitness facilities in the UK. [www.inclusivefitness.org](http://www.inclusivefitness.org)

This is a five year program already well under way. A similar model introduced in Australia would go a long way to minimizing the lack of opportunities for those with a disability to improving their health & fitness. It would also have a positive impact on reducing the ongoing costs of medical care to people with a disability as the link between healthier lifestyles & reduced costs on the medical & government health systems have been well documented.

It is unfortunate that more has not been done by the myriad of " disability" organisations currently in existence throughout Australia to ensure the availability of appropriate health improvement opportunities such as 'inclusive' equipment that meets the needs of all members of society.

As an Australian company our commercial opportunities are limited by the lack of embracing the need for inclusion whereas in the UK & Europe, and the USA, our opportunities are far greater due to their " positive action "

Kind Regards

Tony Hill  
General Manager  
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