

Amazon Brisbane Accessibility Report

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AWS

Brisbane

Introduction

Get Skilled Access (GSA) was invited by Amazon Web Services (AWS/Amazon) to provide an accessibility and inclusion assessment of their Canberra, Brisbane, Auckland, Wellington and Perth office locations.

The purpose of the assessment is to provide recommendations on opportunities to further enhance accessibility, inclusion and dignified access for people with disability working across the assessed office locations and visitors to the office space.

This report includes recommendations for the Brisbane office location (levels 28, 29 & 30). These recommendations include improvements from both a “hardware” and “software” perspective. An understanding of how to embed both elements across the organisation (particularly the software perspective) will position Amazon as an employer of choice for people with disability and also support customers and visitors (with disability) who engage across the many services AWS provides. Hardware generally references the physical and built environment. While software generally encompasses communications, attitudes and other systems and processes across the organisation that support participation of people with disability beyond the physical infrastructure.

GSA rates accessibility across the following interfaces:

- Arriving and leaving
- Approaching and entering
- Moving through building
- Using work areas
- Using amenities
- Using communications systems

An overall silver rating has been achieved by the Brisbane office location. It was noted that the Brisbane office was the only Amazon office to provide a wheelchair accessible shower amenity within its accessible bathroom. It is recommended that this provision is replicated across the various AWS office locations.

The rating criteria is as follows:

Gold rating: Sets a benchmark standard that goes beyond current day accessibility and inclusion (A&I) compliance standards. A gold rating indicates universal design has been embedded across the organisation and technology has been used to provide a more intuitive and efficient outcome for people across physical, sensory and cognitive disability.

Silver rating: Many elements of the accessibility and inclusion design go beyond current day accessibility compliance standards. While many of these A&I design elements are embedded there remains further opportunities for enhancements.

Bronze rating: All accessibility elements meet the minimum compliance standards. A bronze rating can also include elements where beyond compliance A&I has been provided but these elements are inconsistently utilised and not embedded as standard practice across the organisation.

The current accessibility experience where improvements are needed have been identified in this report. It is the aim for these recommendations to support Amazon's strategic goals. Specifically, the championing of a richly diverse culture that engages leaders and all employees in using diversity, equity and inclusion to deliver on their "customer obsession" and ensure Amazon is the "world's best employer".

One of the Amazon Global Affinity Groups that sits under the Amazon Global Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (AGDEI) strategy are People with Disability (PWD).

Under the pillar of AmazonPWD, "Amazon is committed to making Amazon a stronger company by building a community that supports employees and customers who have mental and/or physical disabilities. AmazonPWD welcomes both people with disabilities and their allies. Every year, AmazonPWD is a big part of Amazon's Global Accessibility Awareness Month and supports Accessibility Customer Experience Labs throughout the company".

AWS also partner on multiple customer-facing business initiatives, including Amazon's talking lockers and Alexa programs including captioning and "Tap for Alexa".

We are confident that this report will align to Amazon's commitment in ensuring that all interactions remain equitable, inclusive and dignified for people with disability. The findings from this report and its subsequent accessibility and inclusion (A&I) self-assessment toolkit can be added to Amazon's Global DEI Online Resource.

GSA specialises in sharing innovative approaches to accessibility and inclusion that assists organisations to become not only inclusive but drive productivity and profitability. GSA delivers a "Real life disability experience delivered by real life people with disability".

The recommendations outlined within this review will assist Amazon with delivering the following:

- A more accessible, inclusive and dignified built environment that promotes independent access to premises, goods, services and service delivery. By doing this the built environment won't assume that assistance is required.
- Equitable and fair access to systems and processes: organisational systems and processes should not prevent Amazon staff and clients from reaching their true potential.
- Community participation of people with disability becomes central to the Amazon customer centric service delivery values and are not an "add on" or "extra"- it's business as usual and embedded.
- Amazon's office location/s become a place where all people can be independent, safe and connected and thrive as Amazonians.
- Disability confident - all staff working within Amazon feel at ease when discussing disability and assisting people with disability as requested not as assumed, therefore, removing benevolent discrimination and conscious and unconscious biases towards disability.

This review was conducted via an in-person assessment by a person with disability (qualified in the implementation of universal design and access consultancy) across all locations identified. Feedback from staff with disability or a lived experience was also included and is referenced in the below recommendations. Feedback from GSA and that from Amazon staff closely align. This should provide Amazon with the confidence to make the recommended changes and include ongoing consultation with Amazonians with disability as this work is progressed.

Additional desktop research which references comparable offices and experiences has also been conducted. This report is the final stage-gate report in the review and represents 100 percent completion.

Staff Accessibility and Inclusion Recommendations

- Continue to identify innovative ways for staff with disability and carers to work flexibly from home. Ensure this flexibility provides opportunities for team collaboration broader than current Chime call technology.
- Replacement of current rotating staff doors and manual door (that provides access from reception/meeting room area to staff area) with sliding automatic doors that are swipe card activated.
- Repositioning the height of swipe card readers.
- Providing height adjustable speaking lecterns in allocated meeting rooms.
- Colour contrasting of red/green to indicate toilet stall occupancy.
- Gender neutral bathroom signage.

Scope of Work and Methodology

During the assessment, GSA identified the current experience/scenario with a recommendation for improvement. When the current experience/scenario is optimal a nil recommendation has been assigned.

GSA notes that as part of our scope of work, Amazon's primary focus was to assess the internal office/s tenanted by Amazon. While this direction has been acknowledged, it is important for Amazon to be provided with a brief assessment on the approach to the office location, entry into the building and its general orientation.

This assessment is important because if these general interfaces pose significant barriers for people with disability, it will have an obvious impact on whether a person with disability can arrive at the Amazon office. The impact of this would mean that the benefits from Amazon's accessible and inclusive office environment would be significantly diminished. To gain the most optimal outcomes of accessibility and inclusion, a holistic approach to various interfaces and experiences is recommended for consideration.

Amazon Brisbane Offices – Levels 28, 29 & 30, 300 George Street, Brisbane
Accessibility and Inclusion Review and Recommendations
Date of Review – 25 February 2022
Overall Rating: Silver

Parking - Silver Rating

Current

Long term car parking available via Wilson car park located at the basement of 300 George Street. Registration of mobility parking bays available via Wilson car park bookings.

Recommendations

Consider providing an official 300 George Street parking bay for staff with mobility considerations as part of workplace adjustments policy.

Entry Controls and Security Access into Building - Silver Rating

Current

Staff swipe card access via main entrance is not required during business hours. This option provides dignified and independent access for both staff and visitors when entering the building.

Recommendations

Nil, however, it is recommended that future security access controls can be operated by multiple methods including via a personal device and provide 24hour access.

Turnstile Door Entry to Employee Workspace - Bronze Rating

Current

The current door mechanism to access the employee workspace is via a turnstile door which is swipe card activated. Adjacent to the turnstile door is a push/pull door that also requires swipe card access (the Perth office side door is fully automatic). This door is available to staff who may not have capacity to use the turnstile door.

Recommendations

Ensure ICT hardware and controls are consistently positioned in an accessible location within required reach to all doors, have wheelchair clearance and support a diverse range of access methods to operate controls.

Upgrade all push/pull side doors adjacent to turnstile doors to be fully automatic (per Perth office location example). This recommendation would also support staff feedback that highlighted the turnstile doors are a barrier for some staff to use.

Provide an improvement process for visitors who need to access the employee workspace via the side door that does not rely on security approval.



Upgrade current push/pull manual door to an automatic opening door that activates upon swipe card access.

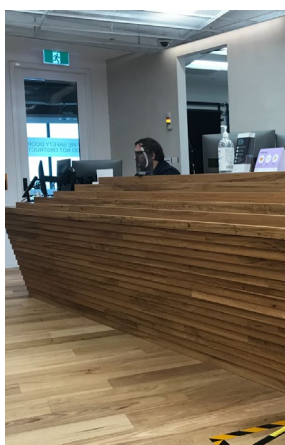


Desk-top research and feedback from AWS staff highlights the use of turnstile doors is a barrier for people with cognitive, sensory and physical disability as well as people with limited mobility.

Reception and Sign-in - Bronze Rating

Current

Reception desk is too high, particularly for a wheelchair user or person of short stature to sign-in or engage with the receptionist. The height of the reception desk also makes it difficult for the reception person to see a wheelchair user.



Recommendations

Provide height adjustable reception counters or provide static counters at a height of between 700-800mm.



AWS reception counters are generally the first interface between AWS staff and visitors. Lower counters could offer a more equitable experience, particularly for wheelchairs or people of short stature to engage.

Sign-in Systems - Bronze Rating

Current

No signage advising of any hearing augmentation.

Recommendations

The provision of hearing augmentation technology across the open area of the reception space. A digital visitor management system is provided and positioned in a location that can be operated from a standing or seated position. Sign-in system capabilities include large, contrasting controls with the ability to resize text, use screen reader support and be accompanied by a high contrast keyboard. Emergency evacuation briefing to be provided by facilities/ reception staff to AWS visitors.

Kitchen Area - Bronze Rating

Current

Accessible circulation to and within the kitchen space is adequate. Food preparation, snack, coffee bench is too high currently at 1010mm. This height should be revised to 700-800mm or made height adjustable. No braille provided on kitchen drawer or door labels indicating contents. Placement of some kitchenware (glasses/crockery) remains too high. Access to coffee machine by a wheelchair user to operate independently is too high (currently at 1025mm).



Recommendations

Placement of appliances and kitchenware in accessible reach ranges (vertical max. 800mm and horizontal max. 500mm) would benefit all staff.

Maintain circulation space and adequate lighting within kitchen area.

Place coffee machine on height adjustable counter.

Labelling on all cupboard doors and drawers with braille to assist staff with low vision in locating kitchen specific items.

Access to a secondary bench which is height adjustable to assist with meal preparation and access to other appliances in the kitchen.

Maintain wheelchair accessible circulation space and visual contrast within kitchen area.

Ensure hot and cold water tap mechanism supports users with limited hand function.

Replicate the kitchen footprint across floors 28, 29 and 30 to provide consistency, equity and dignity of use. Replication of footprint will also promote safety for all kitchen users.



Ensure vertical height and horizontal reach ranges to appliances and equipment within the kitchen area is considered for all users.

Work Areas - Gold Rating



100% of desks in the staff workspace are height adjustable. This provides equitable outcomes for all staff.

Privacy Pods/Telephone Booths (1/2 PAX) - Bronze Rating

Current

Privacy pods/telephone booths are not wheelchair accessible.



Recommendations

Procure privacy pods that offer wheelchair access.



Current privacy pods/telephone booths are not wheelchair accessible.

Quiet/Sensory Room - Bronze Rating

Current

There are no quiet or sensory rooms/spaces available for staff who may be neurodiverse or for staff who may need a quiet space for respite to environmental triggers across levels 28, 29 and 30.

Recommendations

The quiet area on level 29 could be converted into a sensory/quiet space. This room already includes adjustable lighting, soft furnishings and good acoustic properties to support its inclusion.

Meeting Rooms - Silver Rating

Current

Privacy screens across all meeting rooms provide viewing into and outside of rooms for wheelchair users and those of short stature. Varied seating and table arrangements was present across all rooms with varied circulation space. All rooms have adequate space for wheelchair entry.

No internal meeting rooms (of various sizes) have any hearing augmentation except for a large conference room in the common area that also converts to four smaller rooms.

No wheelchair accessible/height adjustable speaking lectern in large meeting room is provided.



Multiple height viewing options are preferred to identify meeting room usage.

Recommendations

Maintain capacity to have wheelchair accessible circulation to and within all meeting rooms and adjust furniture settings as required. Placement of hearing loops in at least 50% of all meeting rooms in both staff and general use areas. Maintain adjustable lighting and glare control systems. Procure wheelchair accessible privacy pod/telephone.

Provide a wheelchair accessible/height adjustable speaking lectern in large meeting room (staff supported recommendation).

Revise the placement of power cable trays and iPad controls in meeting rooms to accommodate better access for wheelchair users.



Height adjustable speaking lecterns are more equitable and inclusive for all staff than the current static assets available.

Collaboration Areas - Silver Rating

Current

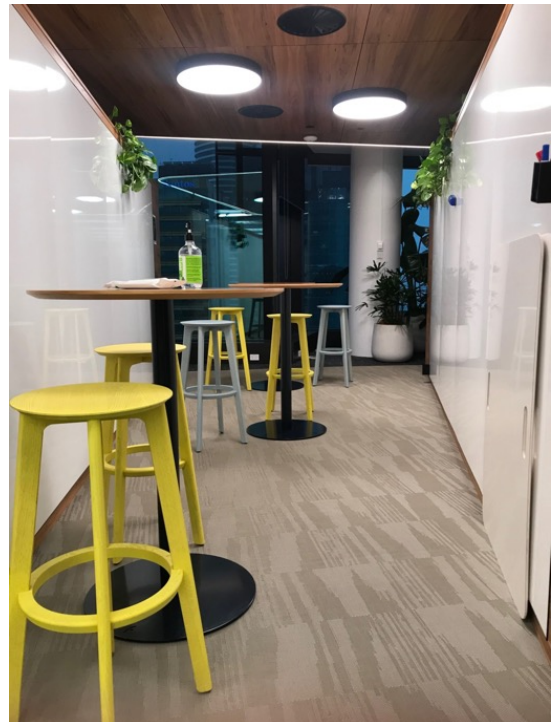
Collaboration areas provide multiple seating options and adequate circulation space.



Recommendations

Increase the number of height adjustable furniture assets in collaboration areas.





Photos 1 and 3: Ensure circulation space is maintained and trip hazards are minimised in collaboration areas.

Photos 2, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8: Height adjustable desks or tables in all collaboration areas will ensure those spaces can be used by all staff at all times.

Utility Areas - Silver Rating

Current

Good wheelchair access to photocopier and circulation space. Stationery is placed at various levels which provides wheelchair access, however, the height of the medical cabinet is too high for a wheelchair user and there is no braille labelling on cupboards or drawers.



Recommendations

Maintain wheelchair accessible circulation to and within utility space. Ensure stationery equipment and storage is within wheelchair accessible reach ranges. Provide braille labelling on doors to identify stationery equipment. Replicate the utility room A&I settings across levels 28, 29 and 30 to provide consistency, equity and dignity of use.



Ensure access to medical equipment and various vending machines within the office space are accessible to all users and consider height ranges.

Moving Through the Building - Silver Rating

Current

Doors and doorways current – some push/pull doors are too heavy to open and above the 20N (Newton rating).

Recommendations

Adjust all the push/pull manual doors to the various meeting rooms and other spaces to 20N or lower. Identify opportunities for the placement of automatic doors in high pedestrian areas.

Toilet Amenity

Current

Accessible toilet facilities provided on all floors where there are toilets, easily identified with well-placed, clear signage denoting ambulant cubicles in non-accessible toilet amenity.

Recommendations

Provide a separate all-gender toilet amenity in the tenancy (staff recommendation). Clearer signage and wayfinding and red/green stall occupancy indicators could be provided (staff recommendation).

Unisex Accessible Toilets - Bronze Rating

Current

Wheelchair circulation to and within accessible toilet. Accessible fittings and fixtures are adequate. The bathroom includes a wheelchair accessible shower. There is no duress alarm.

Recommendations

Automatic sliding door entry to accessible toilet/s. Enhanced operable components that sensor controlled. Provision of duress alarm.



An accessible shower amenity is highly supported and recommended for installation across other AWS office locations. The inclusion of an automatic door and duress alarm to the Brisbane accessible toilet amenity is also recommended.

Ambulant Cubicles - Silver Rating

Current

Adequate ambulant cubicles with ambulant circulation spaces and fittings have been provided within the male and female toilets.

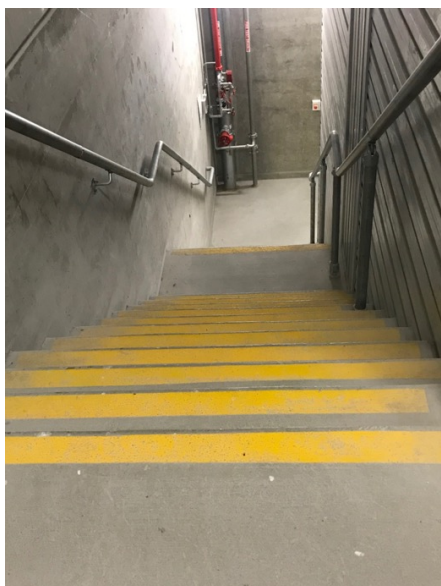
Recommendations

Reach ranges to some fittings (paper towel) need to be revised.

Stairways (General Use) - Bronze Rating

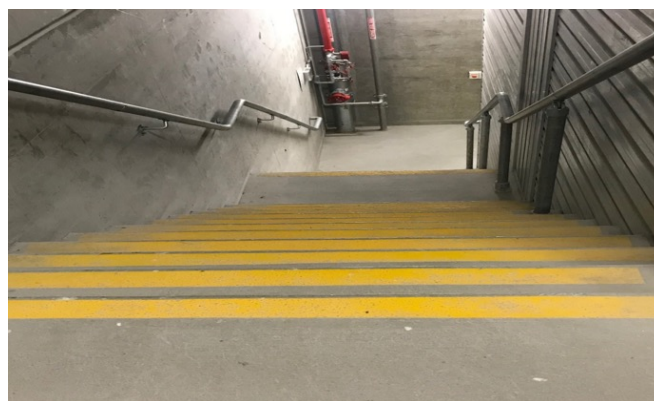
Current

Accessible to all staff with two-sided handrail but no tactile elements.



Recommendations

Add tactile elements to stairways and directional signage. Visual information to aid with orientation of floor level at stair landing could also be provided.



Place TGSi warning strips at top and bottom of stair well to assist people with low vision.

Assistance Animal Facilities - Bronze Rating

Current

No formal animal toileting area provided.

Recommendations

Access to an animal toileting area – this information could be aligned to ‘bring in a pet’ days which would assist with service dog spending (toileting) requirements.

Identification and Directional Signage - Silver Rating

Current

Placement of signage across floor is adequate. Room names are consistent with braille provided.

Recommendations

Nil, however future upgrades could ensure room signage can be viewed from a variety of distances with directional cues, is easily identified through touch and provides contrast, sans serif font and consistent iconography.

Emergency Alerts and Egress - Silver Rating

Current

Ensure a visual and audio egress warning system is in place with additional capacity to accommodate two wheelchair users within stair refuge in emergencies.

Recommendations

Amazon reception staff to provide an emergency egress briefing to visitors with disability upon arrival. All staff with disability and additional mobility requirements should be provided with a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP).

Final Remarks

The Amazon office location in Brisbane provides great opportunities for staff and visitors with disability to access set down areas, public transport and food retail areas in a safe, accessible and dignified way. Brisbane City Council has led significant projects that enhance signage and wayfinding for people who are blind or with low vision to navigate the city easier. Amazon could further utilize this work in promoting its commitment to becoming an employer of choice for people with disability.

Like the Canberra office, further attention could be given to on-site parking options for both staff (as part of a workplace adjustments consideration) and visitors.

Amazon could also consider drafting a Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) with GSA and Amazonian staff that references a workplace adjustments policy and employee Personal Emergency Evacuation Procedure (PEEP) for staff in support of the noted recommendations if not already in place.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this accessibility and inclusion report. Please contact GSA to discuss any recommendations or provide clarifications as needed.

