

# Active Participation South West



A Southwest Advocacy Association & Rural Access Project

## **The Information Bulletin**

**May 2007**

### **Introduction**

Welcome to another edition of the Active Participation Information Bulletin. We now have a number of people with disabilities and organisations listed on the Active Participation Register, but we hope to get many more in the coming months. If you know of any individuals or organisations who may be interested in receiving information through the Active Participation Register please ask them to contact us. At present the project is specific to the municipalities of Warrnambool, Moyne & Corangamite, but we would like to extend it to the Glenelg & Southern Grampians Shires in future, although our capacity to do this will depend on the availability of funding.

The simplest way to explain what the Active Participation Register is all about is to say that it is an information exchange project that focuses on providing information on opportunities for people with disabilities to get involved in consultations, events, forums and committees where decision making takes place. By providing such information we hope to get people with disabilities more involved in their community & to give them more of a voice on a broad range of issues.

We have been doing Active Participation mailouts as information comes to hand. Sometimes it is difficult to know whether people registered with us will be interested in the information on offer, so please accept our apologies if you have received any information that is not particularly relevant to you. We have taken the view that it is better to send information that people may be interested in than to withhold it for fear that they might not be interested.

### **Things that may interest you**

#### **DHS Disability Services Act Policy Consultations**

Department of Human services are currently doing consultations on the development of policies in relation to the new Disability Services Act, which will come into effect in July this year. Consultative groups have been established in relation to service

planning, accommodation services, quality services & compulsory treatment. It is not too late for people with disabilities to have a say on the draft policy documents. Please contact Southwest Advocacy if you would like to be involved.

### **Accessible Transport Watch**

This project is looking to gather information about how accessible public transport is across Victoria and whether public transport is meeting the Standards set out under the Disability Discrimination Act. The Project Co-ordinator is hoping to recruit people with disabilities who are interested in gathering information about public transport in their area to be used in a report that will be produced at the end of the project. Training will be offered to participants. Interested people should contact Glenn Cardwell - ph. 9 654 50 50 or e-mail [glenn.cardwell@vcoss.org.au](mailto:glenn.cardwell@vcoss.org.au) .

### **Review of Disability Discrimination Act Transport Standards**

Allen Consulting Group (ACG) has been contracted by the Australian Government to conduct the 5-year review of the Standards for Transport under the Disability Discrimination Act.

All interested organisations and individuals are invited to attend public hearings for this review. These hearings will be conducted in July and early August & will provide an opportunity to speak directly with members of the review team, and for the review team to ask questions in response.

All individuals or organisations who register their interest will be contacted directly to arrange a time to speak with the review team at the public hearing. We will also provide information on the format of the hearings at that time.

To speak at a public hearing you have to register by 15 June.

Unfortunately, the proposed consultations for Victoria are to be held in Bendigo and Melbourne, which makes it difficult for people in south west Victoria to attend, however an Issues Paper is being released on **Thursday 24 May** and written submissions to the Review can be made until **Friday, August 24 2007**.

Contact Southwest Advocacy Association for details on how to register to attend a public hearing or further information.

### **2007 One & All Festival Committee**

If anyone would like to be part of the 2007 One & All Festival Committee please contact Chelsey Reis Rural Access Ph 55 594

828. The first meeting for 2007 was in March 2007 and the Festival is held early in December.

### **Electoral Commission**

Southwest Advocacy & Rural Access have written to the Victorian Electoral Commission to raise issues about the lack of accessible polling venues in the South West. With a Federal Election due to be held later this year, we would like to encourage people to raise any concerns that they have about the accessibility of polling venues directly with the Electoral Commission or via Southwest Advocacy. The Australian Electoral Commission may be contacted by telephone on - **13 2326** & letters may be addressed to -

**Level 22, Casselden Place  
2 Lonsdale St  
Melbourne 3000**

### **SWAA Committee of Management Vacancies**

Southwest Advocacy Association still has two vacancies on its' volunteer Committee of Management. SWAA is an independent, not-for-profit, community organisation that has been funded by the Commonwealth Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs to provide advocacy and information to people with all types of disabilities throughout south west Victoria since 1993. Under its' Constitution SWAA must try to ensure that at least half of its' Committee is made up of people with disabilities, so people with disabilities are particularly encouraged to apply. For further information, please contact SWAA on 55 614 584.

### **The Next Bulletin**

The next Active Participation Register Bulletin will be sent out in about two months, but, remember, if you want to contact us, you can do so by mail, telephone or e-mail.

**Mail: Robert Dick  
Southwest Advocacy Association  
31 Princess Street Warrnambool 3280**  
**Phone: 55 614 584**  
**Email: [swadvocacy@bigpond.com](mailto:swadvocacy@bigpond.com)**

People with hearing impairments or communication difficulties may contact us through –

**National Relay Service: Ph. - 133 677**