



**RI GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON
DISABILITIES**



FY 2006 Annual Report

and

FY 2007 & 2008 Operational Plan

Donald L. Carcieri, Governor

Paul Choquette, Chair

John J. MacDonald, Vice Chair

Bob Cooper, Executive Secretary

For Presentation at the September 6, 2006 Annual Meeting

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Goal I. To include (integrate) people with disabilities in all aspects of society

Objective A. To enact into law the Commission's Legislative Package and the enactment of legislation that would have a beneficial impact on people with disabilities, and the defeat of harmful legislation.

Authority: RI General Law 42-51-6 Governor's Commission on Disabilities. – Duties. – It shall be the duty of the commission to work in cooperation with the national council on disability and other interested federal, state, and local agencies, organizations, and employers in:

(1) Promoting on behalf of the people with disabilities and assuring, on behalf of the state, that people with disabilities are afforded the opportunities to exercise all of the rights and responsibilities accorded to citizens of this state;

42-51-9 Definitions – (6) "Promoting on behalf of the people with disabilities and assuring, on behalf of the state, that people with disabilities are afforded the opportunities to exercise all of the rights and responsibilities accorded to citizens of this state" means the authority to act and appear on behalf of the people with disabilities to present evidence and make arguments before any federal, state or local agency or public body regarding matters pending before that agency or public body that may have an adverse effect on persons with disabilities.

Policy and Oversight by:	Manager:
Legislation Committee	Executive Secretary
Paul Choquette, Chairperson (7/1/05 to 7/17/06) R. Timothy Flynn, Chairperson (Appointed 7/17/06)	Bob Cooper

Measurement

Percentage of State Legislation Affecting Persons with Disabilities that is Favorably Disposed This performance indicator measures the favorable disposition of state legislation affecting persons with disabilities. The measure is related to the commission's stated role of advocating for the concerns of people with disabilities. Commission staff keeps records of the disposition of legislation.

The commission's objective is a favorable disposition rate for state legislation of one hundred percent.

FY 06 Activities

The Legislation Committee, reviewed 233 bills, took no position on 163, monitored 5 bills, in case they were amended in a manner that would impact people with disabilities and issued legislative impact statements on 65.

The Commission supported 18 bills, of those:

3 were signed by Governor

06 H-7120 Article 34 Sub A as Amended Insurance - Mandated Benefits Sponsor: Rep. Watson Public Law 2006 Chapter -246

06 H-7226 Sub A Criminal Offenses -- Assaults Sponsor: Rep. Naughton Public Law 2006 Chapter -175

06 S-2378 Sub A Criminal Offenses -- Assaults Sponsor: Sen. McCaffrey Public Law 2006 Chapter -268

4 were incorporated into Budget Act

06 H-7159 Health Care Services - Utilization Review ACT Sponsor: Rep. Story

06 S-2209 Health Care Services - Utilization Review ACT Sponsor: Sen. Pichardo

06 S-2840 Housing Resources - Neighborhood Opportunities Program Sponsor: Sen. Pichardo

06 H-7262 Housing Resources - Neighborhood Opportunities Program Sponsor: Rep. Fox

3 became effective without the Governor's signature

06 S-2604 Sub A as Amended Human Services -- Traumatic Brain Injuries Sponsor: Sen. Blais Public Law 2006 Chapter -363

06 H-7546 Sub A Motor and Other Vehicles -- Adjudication of Traffic Offenses Sponsor: Rep. McNamara Identical as Sub A to S 2604 Sub A as Amended Public Law 2006 Chapter – 456

06 H-7081 Sub A Motor And Other Vehicles -- Stopping, Standing And Parking Restrictions Sponsor: Rep. Naughton

1 resolution was adopted

06 S-2627 Sub A Senate Resolution Respectfully Urging The Department of Administration To Use Environmentally-Safe and Health-Friendly Cleaning Products in State Facilities and Workplaces Sponsor: Sen. Perry Senate Resolution 2006 -276

1 passed in concurrence, but was never transmitted from the House to the Governor

06 S-2879 as Amended State Affairs and Government -- Open Meetings Sponsor: Sen. Ciccone

4 of the bills that died had their “companion” bills enacted

The other 2 bills that died were:

06 S-2334 Towns and Cities -- Zoning Ordinances Sponsor: Sen. Levesque and

06 S-2269 Civil Rights of People With Disabilities Sponsor: Sen. Polisena

Supported if amended 4 bills, they were not amended as the Commission recommended, none were enacted into law.

The legislation committee monitored 5 bills, incase they were amended in a manner that would impact on people with disabilities, all 5 become effective without governor's signature, and will have no negative impact on people with disabilities

The legislation committee reviewed but took no position on 163 bills, 14 were signed by governor, 6 became effective without governor's signature, 2 were vetoed by governor, 14 resolutions were adopted, 8 were transmitted to governor, 4 withdrawn by their sponsors, 4 were defeated, 6 had a recommendation of “no passage” from a house of representative committee, and the other 105 died.

FY 06 Difficulties or Problems

No major problems were encountered during the past fiscal year in terms of the Legislation Committee. Tim Flynn the Vice-Chair presided over the majority of the meetings this past year and showed excellent leadership. The only issue was the instances when health issues prevented the Committee’s staff person from being as involved in Legislative efforts as he wanted to, and there was not a clear plan in place for such a contingency.

Luckily other staff at the Commission was able to perform some of the duties of the Executive Secretary in terms of Legislative work, and Commissioners and Committee members were able to testify on key pieces of legislation.

Recommendations to avoid these difficulties in the future

Now that the legislative session has ended there is no need to take immediate action.

A plan on delegating responsibilities amongst members of the Committee, Commissioners and other Commission staff should be drawn up to provide better continuity in the event that staff is unavailable in the future.

Activities Planned for FY 07 & 08

Coordinate a series of Public Forums on the Concerns of People with Disabilities and their Families with other agencies and advocacy organizations. From the testimony at those forums develop a legislative package and work for its enactment.

Diversify the Committee’s membership

Identify members of the Committee who can take the lead on specific areas of legislation

Objective B. To provide technical assistance to agencies, businesses, and citizens in complying with federal & state laws protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities.

Authority: RI General Law 42-51-6 Governor’s Commission on Disabilities – Duties. – It shall be the duty of the commission to work in cooperation with the national council on disability and other interested federal, state, and local agencies, organizations, and employers in:

(4) Providing technical assistance to public and private agencies, businesses, and citizens in complying with federal and state laws protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities;

42-51-9 Definitions:

(5) "Providing technical assistance to public and private agencies, businesses, and citizens on complying with federal and state laws protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities" means information dissemination and training designed to encourage the voluntary compliance with laws protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities; conducting disability accessibility surveys and providing advice on how to overcome any barriers to accessibility; and a mediation service to assist parties who voluntarily chose to utilize that service to resolve allegations of discrimination on the basis of disability.

The Commission is the RI Affiliate to the New England ADA and Accessible Information Technology Center and has a grant from the Center to provide general Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):

1. Training to audiences upon request and to targeted populations¹;
2. Public awareness to audiences upon request and to targeted populations;
3. Technical assistance to audiences upon request and to targeted populations; and
4. Materials upon request and to targeted populations.

1. Equal Employment Opportunities for Individuals with Disabilities (ADA Title I)

Policy and Oversight by:	Manager:
Employment Committee	Assistant ADA Coordinator (Employment)
Victoria Ferrara, Chairperson (7/1/05 to 4/17/06) Patricia Ryherd, Chairperson (Appointed 4/17/06)	Christine Rancourt

Measurement

These indicators measures the number of, up-to-date, and useful technical assistance provided to people with disabilities and their friends and family; businesses; employers; public and private agencies; merchants; realtors and property managers that seek our assistance. Technical assistance is provided in a variety of forms: ADA trainings; information provided upon request via phone; email or mail; on site accessibility surveys and advice on overcoming any barriers; building plan reviews; public awareness events; and resolution of complaints through mediation and/or advice on barrier removal.

These measures are related to the commission’s stated role of providing technical assistance to people with disabilities, their families, businesses and agencies on issues related to people with disabilities. The data is from commission records.

The commission’s objective is to expand awareness of the availability of technical assistance by increasing by 10% over the prior year, assistance provided.

¹ Target populations include: State and Municipal ADA Coordinators; Librarians; the Hospitality Industry; ILC staff, board and consumers; ILC staff, Developmental Disabilities groups; and Museums, immigrants, other ethnic minorities, building inspectors, African Americans, college students, Hispanic population, human resource personnel, architects, distribute 800 # through libraries to library patrons

Goal I Objective B 1	FY 05	FY 06	FY 07	FY 08
Title I Assistance	Actual	Actual	Proposed	Proposed
Objective 10% increase over prior year	110%	110%	110%	110%
Actual/Estimated	576	Plan 634	697	697
# of Participants attending ADA Employment Training	56	#		
# of Technical Assistance	90	#		
# of ADA Awareness Events	10	#		

FY 06 Activities

The Employee Committee successfully completed the work plan, including requirements of the funding sources, i.e. the Adaptive Environments of Boston ADA contract.

- 1.) ADA Awareness Able Too.. shows were completed and aired.
- 2.) Two half-day ADA trainings were organized for state ADA coordinators, with Kathy Gips of Adaptive Environments as keynote speaker. Approximately 100 coordinators attended. Training to other organizations was provided on demand, including the annual training for real estate agents.
- 3.) Technical information and information dissemination was provided by telephone and by exhibiting at a number of conferences and workshops, including the RTI job fair.
- 4.) An ADA webcast was developed with Bryant University, utilizing several resource people. The target audience is officials in cities and towns. It is anticipated this will be aired in the next fiscal year.
- 5.) An ADA and Law Enforcement two day conference was held in June, with Approximately 100 law enforcement staff attending. The keynote presenter was Liz Stanosheck from Nebraska Department of Corrections.
- 6.) Chris Rancourt attended two national training conferences on ADA in St. Louis, Mo. and San Francisco. One immediate result of these was the connection with the Nebraska Corrections Department resource.
- 7.) Chris attended Regional meetings of the Adaptive Environment ADA Technical Assistance grant program to share results and keep up-to-date on contract requirements
- 8.) Short-term-Update and Revise GCD exhibit-Long term- Request GCD identify funding to develop a professional exhibit and materials.
- 9.) Coordinate NEADA teleconference Outreach and Conference Calls
 - o June 21- Getting on the Bus: Update on accessibility of our public transportation systems. (currently not participating)
 - o July 19- ADA update:14 years later
 - o August 16- Gaining Access to the Doctor's Office: What is the state of the art of accessible medical equipment?
 - o September 20, Readily Available Barrier Removal: What does it mean 15 years later?

FY 06 Difficulties or Problems

- 1.) GCD was required to submit an RFP for a contract for ABLE TOO... Production which delayed production of the cable TV shows. It was not realized at that time that the shows required travel to remote sites and transportation funding was required for the producer.

2.) The five year ADA grant ends September 30, 2006 and Adaptive Environments must compete for a new grant which requires a research component. GCD is a subcontractor of Adaptive Environments so future funding is uncertain.

Recommendations to avoid these difficulties in the future

Change purchase order to include travel reimbursement

Activities Planned for FY 07 & 08

To accomplish the ADA Technical Assistance Grant’s employment related activities:

2. Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability in State and Local Government Services (ADA Title II)

Policy and Oversight by:	Manager:
State Coordinating Committee on Disability Rights	State ADA Coordinator
Paul Choquette Chairperson	Harvey O. Salvas

Measurement

These indicators measures the number of, up-to-date, and useful technical assistance provided to people with disabilities and their friends and family; businesses; employers; public and private agencies; merchants; realtors and property managers that seek our assistance. Technical assistance is provided in a variety of forms: ADA trainings; information provided upon request via phone; email or mail; on site accessibility surveys and advice on overcoming any barriers; building plan reviews; public awareness events; and resolution of complaints through mediation and/or advice on barrier removal.

These measures are related to the commission’s stated role of providing technical assistance to people with disabilities, their families, businesses and agencies on issues related to people with disabilities. The data is from commission records.

Goal I Objective B 2	FY 05	FY 06	FY 07	FY 08
Title II Assistance	Actual	Actual	Proposed	Proposed
Objective 10% increase over prior year	110%	110%	110%	110%
Actual/Estimated	576	110	697	697
# ADA Coordinators Trained	56	220		
# Technical Assistance	90	10		
# ADA Awareness Events	10	110		

FY 06 Activities

Conducted training for 220 State ADA Coordinators

A web cast for city and town personnel/human resource managers was designed by Bryant College with the assistance of the NE ADA & Accessible IT Center, and municipal officials to ensure the information on the web cast met the needs of the target audience.

The State Building Commissioner arranged for 3 continuing education credits training of state/local building officials / inspectors on ADA Accessibility Code, this fall. Trainers included the Commission staff and the NE ADA & Accessible IT Center.

Two day of training (4 different training audiences each attending .5 days of training) for RI Department of Corrections and numerous other state agencies that work with inmates as well as representatives from the privately owned and operated federal penitentiary located in RI. Training was designed after meetings with DOC personnel to ensure the materials presented met their needs.

The State Coordinating Committee on Disability Rights continues to provide support to the Commission's staff in the provision of ADA Training opportunities. Two trainings of note in the past year were: ADA Webcasts produced in cooperation with Bryant University and training conducted for law enforcement and corrections on ADA issues.

FY 06 Difficulties or Problems

No major difficulties or problems occurred during the past year

Recommendations to avoid these difficulties in the future

None

Activities Planned for FY 07 & 08

- The State Coordinating Committee on Disability Rights will continue to meet regularly to coordinate ongoing training activities and to identify needs for future trainings and resources to carry them out.
- To accomplish the ADA Technical Assistance Grant's training and public awareness related activities:
- Coordinating Policy Development and Dissemination of the state board and commission liaisons:
 - a) **The adoption by federal, state and local agencies/public bodies of policies that would have a beneficial impact people with disabilities, and the defeat of harmful policies:**

(i) National Organization on Disability

Liaison, Kate McCarthy-Barnett, EdD.

FY 06 Activities

The National Organization on Disability (N.O.D) continues to promote the full and equal participation and contribution of people with disabilities in all aspects of life. The most recent annual report is not available at this time.

The N.O.D initiatives included the following programs:

Community Partnership Program – Helping mayors and their communities to become disability-friendly

Accessible America Award – Recognizing America's most disability-friendly communities

National Partnership Program – Partnering with major organizations to carry out disability programs

Emergency Preparedness Initiative – Ensuring inclusion of disability issues in preparedness planning

N.O.D./Harris Surveys – Gathering benchmark data on state of disability in America

Religion and Disability Program – Encouraging faith communities to remove barriers to full religious participation

World Committee on Disability – Strengthening the U.N. World Program of Action Concerning Disabled Persons

FDR International Disability Award – Recognizing nations' progress toward expanding disability participation

FDR Wheelchair Statue Campaign – Celebrating FDR's source of strength: his disability

FY 06 Difficulties or Problems

No problems or difficulties have been reported.

Activities Planned for FY 07 & 08

The N.O.D will continue to promote the full and equal participation and contribution of people with disabilities in all aspects of life. The N.O.D website and e-newsletter will continue to provide updates on recent developments, disability-related news, statistics, information and resources (www.nod.org).

(ii) Rhode Island Emergency Management Advisory Council

Authority: RI General Law 30-15-6. Emergency Management – Advisory council.

(a) There is hereby created the Rhode Island emergency management advisory council (hereinafter in this chapter called the "council"). The council will consist of thirty-two (32) members as follows:

(1) Seventeen (17) ex officio members as follows:

(xiii) The chairperson of the governor's commission on disabilities;

(b) It shall be the duty of the council to advise the governor and the adjutant general on all matters pertaining to disaster preparedness. The lieutenant governor shall serve as chairperson of the council and the adjutant general shall serve as vice-chairperson. In providing advice to the governor and the adjutant general, the council shall, among other matters reasonably related to their authority, do the following:

- (1) Establish a regular meeting schedule and form subcommittees as may be appropriate;
- (2) Review emergency management plans and other matters as may be acted upon or otherwise provided for in this chapter;
- (3) Establish priorities and goals on emergency management matters on an annual basis;
- (4) Study emergency management plans in conjunction with the adjutant general, and otherwise conduct such other studies as may be deemed appropriate;
- (5) Review the coordination of the state's emergency management programs with appropriate authorized agencies and conduct studies on the programs as may be necessary;
- (6) Review the plans and operations of the various cities and towns in disaster preparedness in conjunction with the director and his or her office as required or necessary; and
- (7) [Deleted by P.L. 2000, ch. 170, § 2];
- (8) Provide an annual report on its activities in conjunction with the adjutant general.

Liaisons, Binyamin I. Efreom & Harvey O. Salvvas

FY 06 Activities

The Emergency Management Advisory Council - Have only attended 3 meetings and starting to get some cooperation for working with people with disabilities i.e., how to assist should a disaster occur such as Hurricanes, Blizzards as well as Terrorist involvement.

Emergency Management Advisory Committee & Task Force - Just finished a Terrorist attach training at the Airport and many other agencies which we found many deficiencies in the procedures on how to deal with people with disabilities as well as not paying attention to persons who may have had information on the attack on the plain,

FY 06 Difficulties or Problems

Also getting some head way in the committee paying attention to announcements made on television without captioning and no way for persons being deaf or hearing impaired.

Recommendations to avoid these difficulties in the future

The Task Force is going to set up a Captioning Subcommittee to address the issues at its next meeting.

(iii) Elderly and Disability Work Group

Liaison, Paul Choquette

FY 06 Activities

The Commission Chairperson has taken over the responsibility for representing the Commission on the EMA Domestic Preparedness subcommittee from recently retired GCD staff. Also during the year, this subcommittee established a “Special Needs” work group, which the Chair leads. This group is charged

with providing assistance to EMA in terms of issues surrounding people with disabilities. This group meets on a monthly basis and is currently working on enhancements to the “Special Needs Registry”.

FY 06 Difficulties or Problems

The retirement of the Commission staff member has placed more responsibility on the Chair in terms of coordination of activities for the “Special Needs Workgroup”

It could cause some activities of the group to be delayed as there is not as much support available.

Recommendations to avoid these difficulties in the future

At this point there is not a need for any action as the core functions of the group are being met.

Activities Planned for FY 07 & 08

The workgroup will complete it’s work in redesigning the registry form and assist in developing an outreach plan for the Special Needs Registry and then move on to reviewing the Emergency plans of individual cities and towns in terms of addressing the needs of people with disabilities.

*(iv) Department of Human Services’ Center for Adult Health
Consumer Advisory Committee*

Liaison, Kate McCarthy-Barnett, EdD

FY 06 Activities

The CAC meets on a quarterly basis. The CAC is working to provide the beneficiaries of the Medicaid program in RI with updates on the Medicaid program. In addition, the Committee is gathering input from beneficiaries on their experience with the program and provides updates on related grant activities, policy issues, etc.

FY 06 Difficulties or Problems

The main challenge that the CAC identified is the limited involvement of consumers. The CAC has several agencies that represent and advocate for consumers but few consumers consistently attend the meetings. In addition, the Committee members do not submit suggested agenda items (e.g., questions or requests). It is critical to have the consumer involvement to meet the goals of the Consumer Advisory Committee.

Recommendations to avoid these difficulties in the future

Continued outreach to consumers to increase attendance at the meetings.

Request the submission of agenda items from members to guarantee that specific questions and topics are addressed.

*(v) Department of Elderly Affairs’ Health Care Resource
Center Advisory Committee*

Liaison, Arthur M. Plitt

FY 06 Activities

The Health Care Resource Center is creating partnerships with groups from MS Society to International

FY 06 Difficulties or Problems

Publicizing the potential for the Resource Center has been difficult due to limited funding.

Has been delayed in some areas but expanded with more partnerships.

Recommendations to avoid these difficulties in the future

Good learning from some errors.

Expectations not realized but modified plans up.

*(vi) Department of Health’s Arthritis State Plan Advisory
Committee*

Liaison, Teresa Carr-Hopkins

FY 06 Activities

The committee approved the adoption of the *Rhode Island State Arthritis Action Plan* is modeled after the *National Arthritis Action Plan: A Public Health Strategy*. The ultimate aims of this initiative are to:

Increase public awareness of arthritis as the leading cause of disability and an important public health problem.

Prevent arthritis whenever possible.

Promote early diagnosis and appropriate management for people with arthritis to ensure them the maximum number of years of healthy life.

Minimize preventable pain and disability due to arthritis.

Support people with arthritis in developing and accessing the resources they need to cope with their disease.

Ensure that people with arthritis receive the family, peer, and community support they need.

<p><i>(vii) Housing Resource Commission's Policy Strategic Housing Planning Committee</i></p>

Liaison, Kate McCarthy-Barnett, EdD

FY 06 Activities

The Five Year Strategic Housing Plan 2006-2010 is a planning document required by the "Comprehensive Housing Production and Rehabilitation Act of 2004." The Five Year Strategic Housing Plan is the result of a collaborative effort by the state's key housing agencies and housing interest groups.

Over the last year, the planning process to create the Strategic Housing Plan involved the assessment of the state's housing need, recent development trends, housing affordability and strategic planning recommendations and guidelines for inclusion. The Strategic Housing Plan describes the current status of Rhode Island's housing development needs and resources and proposes strategies and actions to be completed during 2006-2010. The guiding principles for the plan include the following:

- Preserve Assets
- Minimize Costs
- Promote Economic Development
- Encourage Diversity
- Target Populations

The following provides a brief overview of the approval process:

- January, 2006: Introduction of draft to the State Planning Council
- February, 2006: Preliminary Review Completed by the Technical Review Committee
- February, 2006: Additional comments/edits completed at Technical Committee Workshop
- March, 2006: Recommendations are made to the State Planning Council
- April, 2006: Statewide Planning Council holds a public hearing for comments and review
- April, 2006: Statewide Planning Council reviews public comments
- May, 2006: Statewide Planning Council approved the Plan

FY 06 Difficulties or Problems

The following were identified as difficulties/problems with the Housing Plan:

1. Plan points out that there are no silver bullets; to answer the goal of "Five Thousand in Five Years" will only be achieved with a combination of solutions.
2. The challenge of overcoming "the attitude barrier" is significant. The fact that the overwhelming majority of cities and town in RI have not achieved their 10% affordability factor is not a coincidence.

3. The largest cohort who, according to the Plan, will increase the most dramatically over the next five years will be the “empty nesters” whose space requirements by definition will change significantly.
4. Create an ongoing, relatively predictable source of funds, so that when the cry and the need is for “Five Thousand in Five Years” it has an independent, private mechanism available to achieve it.
5. While it makes sense for universities to do more to create housing for their students, is it realistic to suggest that municipalities have the legal authority to require universities to house all of their students?
6. Committee members identified multiple barriers to affordable housing development

The planning committee has addressed each of these issues and has provided recommendations in the final plan so they will not impact the original goals.

Recommendations to avoid these difficulties in the future

None

Activities Planned for FY 07 & 08

The Strategic Housing Plan identifies multiple strategies, action plans, lead parties and dates for completion of activities. A more detailed review of the specific actions schedule to be completed during this timeframe can be reviewed at www.planning.state.ri.housing.

(viii) State Planning Council’s Transportation Advisory Committee

Liaison, John J. MacDonald

FY 06 Activities

The Transportation Advisory Committee spend much of the year addressing issues that arose during the MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization) recertification process as well as reviewing and acting on proposed amendments to the Transportation Improvement Plan.

This year’s efforts have concentrated on amendments to the State Transportation Improvement Plan. After two years of working through hundreds of proposals to develop the plan, the committee was surprised by changes brought about by changes in the rules regarding “earmarked funding”. In the past, earmarked funding was above and beyond formula funds. Under the latest transportation funding law, known as SAF-T-LU, earmarked funds are taken out of formula funds causing states to reprogram funding plans. In Rhode Island we have not had to cancel projects, but we have had to move some into out years of our plan.

FY 06 Difficulties or Problems

None

Recommendations to avoid these difficulties in the future

None

(ix) Special Legislative Commission to Study Transit Services in RI

Liaison, John J. MacDonald

FY 06 Activities

The commission chaired by Senator Dan Connor and Representative Ed Pachecco met on eight occasions over twelve weeks this spring hearing testimony from nearly a dozen interested parties including; the Department of Elderly Affairs, the Department pf Transportation, this commission, the Statewide Planning Program, the American Public Transportation Association and the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority. The culmination of this effort was a draft report to the general assembly that was reviewed by the commission at its last meeting. The report has yet to be approved for final publication.

FY 06 Difficulties or Problems

Time of the Commission ran out before completion of its final report.

Recommendations to avoid these difficulties in the future

Extension of time by the General Assembly

(x) RI Public Transit Authority’s Accessible Transportation Advisory Committee

Liaison: Teresa Carr-Hopkins

FY 06 Activities

For the past year and before, the main focus of the Accessible Transportation Advisory Committee has been on shortening response time for lift failures and increasing stop announcements. Bill Inlow, RIPTA’s ADA Paratransit Manager, also does a good job keeping the Committee informed of GCD Legislative activities, when I’m not there, which unfortunately has been often this year. Complaints about service issues have been voiced by members and for the most part, responded to by RIPTA officials.

(xi) Paratransit Task Force

Liaison, Bob Cooper

FY 06 Activities

The Task Force has not met for several years.

FY 06 Difficulties or Problems

Nothing was accomplished during the year; there is not external monitoring of the RIdE system. Without an independent monitor of the RIdE, the isn’t any mechanism to ensure quality of service nor cost effectiveness of the program

Recommendations to avoid these difficulties in the future

Establish by law an independent monitoring body

Add a representative of paratransit rider to the RIPTA Board of Directors, by statute

Activities Planned for FY 07 & 08

The Governor on June 13th issued Executive Order 06-9 Continuation of Paratransit Task Force, is only slightly modified from a draft provided by the Commission.

Task Force is charged as follows:

- a. Improve the mobility of Rhode Islanders, with particular emphasis on the elderly and disabled;
 - b. Promote the collaboration among all statewide entities involved directly or indirectly in paratransit services;
 - c. Effective coordination of both the RIPTA fixed route and RIdE paratransit services;
 - d. Develop initiatives to expand and improve services to under-served populations;
 - e. Ensure conformance to funding mandates and state transportation plans;
 - f. Seek all possible revenue streams to strengthen the statewide system and insure cost-effective and cost-efficient operation; and
 - g. Monitor the services provided by paratransit carriers to ensure an appropriate level of customer service.
2. The Task Force shall consist of eight members and one non-voting ex-officio member. The Secretary of the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, or designee, will serve as chair, the Director of Department of Elderly Affairs, or designee; the Executive Secretary of the Governor’s Commission on Disabilities, or designee; the Director of the Department of Mental Health, Retardation and Hospitals, or designee; the Director of the Department of Human Services, or designee; a consumer of paratransit services to be appointed by the Governor; two public members to be appointed by the Governor, and the General Manager of the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority, or designee, shall serve ex-officio.

3. The Task force shall develop an annual report to the Governor of procurements and program performance.
4. A Paratransit Carrier Procurement Subcommittee shall be appointed, by the Chair of the Task Force, consisting of three or more members of the Task Force who do not represent either the paratransit broker or paratransit carriers. The Subcommittee shall be responsible for:
 - a. Monitoring compliance with the terms and conditions of all paratransit contracts and, where necessary, making recommendations for the termination or modification of such contracts.
 - b. Coordinating with the Bureau of Audits in its regular review process.
5. All state agencies and departments that procure paratransit services shall utilize the RIde system, unless the Task Force or Governor determines it is in the best interest of the state to do otherwise. Each state agency or department that procures paratransit services shall be solely responsible for establishing eligibility criteria for those services.
6. All participating agencies and departments shall cooperate fully in providing staff and technical support as required by the Task Force.

3. To ensure that every state and local police entity has an effective program for enforcement of the state's disability parking laws.

Authority: RI General Law 31-28-7.3 Parking Facilities and Privileges – Disability parking enforcement program (a) The state police, department of environmental management, airport corporation, capitol police, department of mental health, retardation and hospitals, and the state operated colleges shall establish a disability parking enforcement enhancement programs no later than January 1, 2000. The program will be designed to improve enforcement of disability parking laws on state-owned property and in parking facilities serving space leased or owned by the state, including state departments, agencies, boards, commissions, and quasi-governmental corporations. Citations issued in conjunction with this program shall be submitted to the traffic tribunal or its successor entity for collection pursuant to §§ 31-28-7 and 31-28-7.1 and the fines collected through shall be paid over to the state agency or college that issued the citation.

(b) The several cities and towns shall establish disability parking enforcement enhancement programs. Citations issued in conjunction with local enforcement programs shall be submitted to the municipal court, where established, or to the traffic tribunal or its successor entity. Fines collected through citations issued in accordance with local enforcement program specifications shall be paid over to the city or town or pursuant to §§ 31-28-7 and 31-28-7.1.

(c) Disability parking enforcement enhancement plans.

(1) The state police, department of environmental management, airport corporation, capitol police, department of mental health, retardation and hospitals, and the state operated colleges shall submit a disability parking enforcement enhancement plan to the governor's commission on disabilities.

(2) Cities and towns shall submit a disability parking enforcement enhancement plan to the governor's commission on the disability.

(3) The disability parking enforcement enhancement plans shall describe the enforcement program which the state police, department of environmental management, airport corporation, capitol police, department of mental health, retardation and hospitals, the state operated colleges or the municipality intends to establish.

(4) The disability parking enforcement enhancement plan shall be reviewed by governor's commission on disabilities within sixty (60) days of receipt and suggest improvements to the disability parking enforcement enhancement plans, that shall not be construed as required amendments.

(d) Beginning January 1, 2001 and on each January 1 thereafter, cities and towns and the state police, department of environmental management, airport corporations, capitol police, department of mental health, retardation and hospitals, and the state operated colleges shall be required to submit to the

governor's commission on disabilities an annual progress report chronicling the collections of fines, procedures used, convictions, and any problems or successes which result from the disability parking enforcement enhancement program. Following receipt of an annual program report, the governor's commission on disabilities may suggest improvements to a disability parking enforcement enhancement program.

Policy and Oversight by:	Manager:
Disability Parking Committee	Assistant ADA Coordinator
Ronald McMinn, Chairperson	Nicholas Capobianco, Jr.

Measurement

Performance Measurement: Percentage of the 48 municipal and state law enforcement agency disability parking enforcement annual reports received; reviewed by the Disability Parking Committee and recommendations send back to those law enforcement agencies.

This indicator measures the percentage of disability parking enforcement plans received, reviewed and recommendations send back to the law enforcement agencies. The measure is related to the Commission's responsibility to annual review the results of municipal and state enforcement of disability parking laws. The Commission's objective is to receive the annual disability parking enforcement reports from 100 % of the municipal and state agencies and review all those reports and send recommendations for improving enforcement back to those municipal and state agencies. The data is from commission records.

Goal I Objective B 3	FY 05	FY 06	FY 07	FY 08
Disability Parking	Actual	Actual	Proposed	Proposed
Objective	100%	100%	100%	100%
Actual/Estimated	85.42%	90.00%	95.00%	95.00%
# Plans Reviewed	41 of 48	45 of 48	46 of 48	46 of 48

FY 06 Activities

Over 90% of the public safety agencies submitted their annual reports, thanks in no small part to the staff's letters and follow-up with the police departments and state agencies.

FY 06 Difficulties or Problems

The Committee planned to complete its review of the Annual Disability Parking Enforcement Reports for calendar year 2005, by the end of March 2006. Due to problems getting a quorum, the Committee was not able to meet for several months. The Committee's chair left the committee and the commission in April.

Recommendations to avoid these difficulties in the future

Recruiting members, and get the members more active in reviewing the programs,
Increasing staff time devoted to the program.

Activities Planned for FY 07 & 08

Identify exemplary enforcement programs & publicize those.
Meet with enforcement program coordinators to identify the problems with enforcement
Mass mailing to current placard holders on changes in the law.

4. Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability by Public Accommodations and in Commercial Facilities (ADA Title III)

a) Accessibility

Policy and Oversight by:	Manager:
Accessibility Committee	State ADA Coordinator

Policy and Oversight by:	Manager:
Binyamin Efreom	Harvey O. Salvas

Measurement

These indicators measures the number of, up-to-date, and useful technical assistance provided to people with disabilities and their friends and family; businesses; employers; public and private agencies; merchants; realtors and property managers that seek our assistance. Technical assistance is provided in a variety of forms: ADA trainings; information provided upon request via phone; email or mail; on site accessibility surveys and advice on overcoming any barriers; building plan reviews; public awareness events; and resolution of complaints through mediation and/or advice on barrier removal.

These measures are related to the commission’s stated role of providing technical assistance to people with disabilities, their families, businesses and agencies on issues related to people with disabilities. The data is from commission records.

The commission’s objective is to expand awareness of the availability of technical assistance by increasing by 10% over the prior year, assistance provided.

Goal I Objective B 4 a	FY 05	FY 06	FY 07	FY 08
Title III Accessibility Assistance	Actual	Actual	Proposed	Proposed
Objective	2,178	110%	110%	110%
Actual/Estimated	4,611	1,729	1,902	2,092
# People Trained	361	387		
# Technical Assistance	3,892	963		
# On Site Access Technical Assistance	217	224		
# Building Plans Reviewed	18	25		
# Public Awareness Events	45	68		
# Successful Resolution of Complaints	78	62		

FY 06 Activities

In FY 2006 the Commission worked with the Commission for Human Rights, the Department of Health’s Food Protection Office, and the Department of Environmental Management to address implementation of RI General Law 40-9.1-5. Family therapy pets in public places.

Technical assistance is consumer and business generated; the Commission responded as quickly as possible to assist both the business and disability communities overcome barriers to full inclusion. Technical assistance requests decreased during the fiscal year, the staff responded to an average of five telephone calls per day regarding plan review or ADA code relevant questions.

The Commission is working with other state regulatory bodies to harmonize our overlapping responsibilities to ensure compliance with both life safety and accessibility code compliance in cost effective manners.

On-site assistance has also been provided to facility owners/managers as a result of informal consumers’ complaints. In the absence of a formal written complaint, the Commission provides advice to the facility owners/managers to encourage cost effective voluntary compliance. Voluntary compliance has increased as a result of the establishment of the Hearing Board, to the point that no formal complaints needed to be referred to the Board for hearing, this year

FY 06 Difficulties or Problems

The increased level of technical assistance requests from businesses has stretched resources, to the point

that the staff isn't always able to respond quickly to requests for assistance. The nature of technical assistance requests does not have a planned work load, since they are generated by the public and should be handled as quickly as possible to avoid litigation.

The increased requests for technical assistance have so far been offset by not having to devote staff resources to the Hearing Board. If the time lag continues to grow between the date of the request and on-site assistance to the business, consumers may, out of frustration convert their informal complaints into formal ones, forcing hearings/litigation which, in turn, will consume more resources, and create more delays and litigation.

Recommendations to avoid these difficulties in the future

Additional staff that are knowledgeable in construction, life safety and accessibility codes, would allow the Commission to provide assistance quicker.

Activities Planned for FY 07 & 08

By January 1, 2007 a MOU with the RI Department of Elementary & Secondary Education adopted to ensure the Commission's staff participates in the design, review and approval of all (public & private) school housing renovation/alteration building plans for existing school buildings and new school construction.

On an as needed of "as built" on-site access surveys, of school housing and state funded construction.

Seek an amendment to the state building code to ensure the Commission's staff participates in the design, review and approval of all construction/renovation/alteration building plans for facilities paid in whole or in part with state funds and all elementary & secondary school construction.

b) Customer Service

Measurement

These indicators measures the number of, up-to-date, and useful technical assistance provided to people with disabilities and their friends and family; businesses; employers; public and private agencies; merchants; realtors and property managers that seek our assistance. Technical assistance is provided in a variety of forms: ADA trainings; information provided upon request via phone; email or mail; on site accessibility surveys and advice on overcoming any barriers; building plan reviews; public awareness events; and resolution of complaints through mediation and/or advice on barrier removal.

These measures are related to the commission's stated role of providing technical assistance to people with disabilities, their families, businesses and agencies on issues related to people with disabilities. The data is from commission records.

The commission's objective is to expand awareness of the availability of technical assistance by increasing by 10% over the prior year, assistance provided.

Goal I Objective B 4 b	FY 05	FY 06	FY 07	FY 08
Title III Customer Service Assistance	Actual	Actual	Proposed	Proposed
Objective				
Actual/Estimated				
# People Trained				
# Technical Assistance				
# Public Awareness Events				
# Successful Resolution of Complaints				

FY 06 Activities

Presentations were made to the East Providence Lions Club? and Newport Chamber of Commerce on customer service and employment responsibilities of small businesses.

FY 06 Difficulties or Problems

No major difficulties or problems occurred during the past year

Recommendations to avoid these difficulties in the future

The Commission should allocate more time for one of the staff to make presentations to the hospitality industry, and business associations, chambers of commerce.

Activities Planned for FY 07 & 08

Outreach and Technical assistance to the business community, regarding customer services will be at least ½ of a staff person's time.

c) New England ADA & Accessible IT Advisory Board

Liaisons, Harvey O. Salvas & Christine Rancourt

FY 06 Activities

We participated in two Advisory Board meetings that include representatives from all the New England state affiliates to the NE ADA and Accessible IT Center. The Regional Board's June 7, 2005 meeting took place at the Eisenhower House and included a guided tour of the accessibility renovations at Fort Adams.

During the year, three articles from RI were published in the Center's Newsletter; RI Families PLAN for Quality of Life; Rhode Island's Public Art Law; and Rhode Island: First to Make All Voting Places Accessible.

FY 06 Difficulties or Problems

The Commission will continue to participate on the Regional Advisory Board, sharing information on which strategies work and what doesn't, as well as promote RI as an accessible place to vacation.

Objective C. HAVA (Help America Vote Act) Grant

Authority: State Grants for Election Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities (EAID) funds set aside by Section 261 of the Help America Vote Act. The Commission has been designated the recipient of Rhode Island's Section 261 of the Help America Vote Act funds, which require that the some portion of the funds be used in the following four ways:

- 1.) "Making polling places, including the path of travel, entrances, exits, and voting areas of each polling facility, accessible to individuals with the full range of disabilities,
- 2.) Provide the same opportunity for access and participation (including privacy and independence) to individuals with a full range of disabilities,
- 3.) Train election officials, poll workers, and election volunteers on how best to promote the access and participation of individuals with a full range of disabilities, and
- 4.) Provide individuals with the full range of disabilities with information about the accessibility of polling places."

RI General Law 17-9.1-31. Elections – Registration of Voters – Voter registration advisory board.

(a) The state board of elections shall establish a voter registration advisory board, subsequently referred to as the advisory board, to assist in the drafting of regulations and the monitoring of implementation of the National Voter Registration Act of 1993, 42 U.S.C. § 1973gg et seq., and to help recruit and train the volunteer registrars. The advisory board shall issue an annual report to the state board, governor, and general assembly on its activities.

(b) The advisory board shall consist of eighteen (18) members. The governor shall appoint one member from the League of Women Voters, one member of the Urban League, one member of Common Cause, one member of Ocean State Action, one member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, one member of the R.I. Black Caucus of State Legislators, and one representative of a state employees' union. The speaker of the house shall appoint two (2) members, not more than one from the majority party. The president of the senate shall appoint two (2) members, not more than one from the majority party. In addition, the following shall be members: the secretary of state or her or his designee;

the directors or their designees of the division of motor vehicles, the department of human services, the department of health, and the department of mental health, retardation, and hospitals; and the chairpersons or their designees of the governor's commission on disabilities and the governor's commission on Hispanic affairs. The members shall annually elect a chairperson and other officers as are necessary.

(c) Of the number of members originally appointed under this section, one-third (1/3) shall be appointed for a term of one year to be chosen by lot; one-third (1/3) shall be appointed for a term of two (2) years, to be chosen by lot; and one-third (1/3) shall be appointed for a term of three (3) years, to be chosen by lot. Thereafter, vacancies created by expiration of terms shall be filled with appointments for terms of three (3) years. Members whose terms expire may be reappointed to succeed themselves. The members of the advisory board shall receive no compensation for their services, but may, at the discretion of the governor, be reimbursed for traveling and other expenses actually incurred in the performance of their official duties.

17-9.1-8. Elections – Registration of Voters – Registration at designated agencies.

(a) Every person who is or may be by the next general election qualified to vote may register to vote when applying for services or assistance at any of the following offices:

- (1) Any office in the state that provides public assistance;
- (2) At or through any offices in the state that provide state funded programs primarily engaged in providing services to persons with disabilities;

(c) (1) Persons must be provided this opportunity to register to vote not only at the time of their original application for services, but also when filing any recertification, renewal, or for a change of address relating to those services. Agencies providing voter registration assistance must offer the same degree of assistance to individuals in completing a voter registration form as they offer to individuals in completing the agency's own forms, unless the applicant refuses the assistance.

(2) Any person who provides voter registration assistance services in an agency is prohibited from:

- (i) Seeking to influence an applicant's party preference or party registration;
- (ii) Displaying any political preference or party allegiance;
- (iii) Making any statement or taking any action whose purpose or effect is to discourage the applicant from registering to vote; or
- (iv) Making any statement or taking any action whose purpose or effect is to lead the applicant to believe that a decision whether or not to register has any bearing on the availability of services or benefits.

Policy and Oversight by:	Manager:
Election Assistance Committee	State ADA Coordinator
Rosemary C. Carmody, Chairperson	Harvey O. Salvas

Measurement

Performance Measurements: Percentage of polling places used in elections that conform to the US Department of Justice’s ADA Checklist for Polling Places.

These indicators measure the percentage of:

- polling places that conform to the ADA Checklist for Polling Places;
- election officials and poll workers trained in how best to promote the access and participation of individuals with a full range of disabilities; and
- citizens with disabilities provided with information on accessibility of polling places, as well as their responsibility as citizens to register and vote.

The measures are related to the Commission's responsibility as the designated recipient of State Grants for

Election Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities.

The Commission's objectives are to ensure 100 % of the polling places used in every election conforms to the ADA Checklist for Polling Places; 100% of election officials and poll workers are trained in how best to promote the access and participation of individuals with a full range of disabilities; and increasing the number of citizens with disabilities who are registered and voting. The data is from commission records and voter list enhancement records.

Goal I Objective C	FY 05	FY 06	FY 07	FY 08
Election Assistance	Actual	Actual	Proposed	Proposed
Objective	100%	100%	100%	100%
Accessible Polling Places (as of 6/30/06)	NA	85%		
Election Officials Trained	NA	100%		
# Citizens with Disability Registered to Vote	NA	NA		
# Newly Registered Voting	NA	NA	4,600	9,200

1. Making polling places, including the path of travel, entrances, exits, and voting areas of each polling facility, accessible to individuals with the full range of disabilities

FY 06 Activities

E Each polling place has (or is scheduled) to be surveyed using the Department of Justice’s ADA Polling Place Checklist. Surveys were completed for 488 of which only 96 need renovations.

The Elections Assistance Committee reviewing applications from the Boards of Canvassers to assist in making accessibility renovations to some of their polling places. Applications and Guidelines were sent out approximately 2 weeks ago and have a deadline of July 31st 2006, so we can act on applications. The Committee awarded Polling Place Accessibility Renovation grants to Pawtucket, Westerly, North Smithfield and Woonsocket.

FY 06 Difficulties or Problems

Scheduling 568 polling place access surveys, that included a representative from both the state board of canvassers and the local in a relatively short time span (local boards of canvassers often have to find new locations, when past locations are no longer available).

Recommendations to avoid these difficulties in the future

Offer to conduct surveys of potential polling place sites prior to the local boards of canvassers’ selection

Activities Planned for FY 07 & 08

- Complete the polling place accessibility surveys and
- Award funding and complete the renovation projects prior to the 2006 primary and general elections
- Process additional applications from locals boards of canvassers to address barriers found during the completion of the surveys for the 2006 election cycle.
- Undertake surveys through out the year at the request of the local boards of canvassers.

2. Train election officials, poll workers, and election volunteers on how best to promote the access and participation of individuals with a full range of disabilities

FY 06 Activities

Developed video for poll worker training that will be used by the State Board of Elections during their election officials and poll worker training.

FY 06 Difficulties or Problems

None

Recommendations to avoid these difficulties in the future

None

Activities Planned for FY 07 & 08

- Recruit and train people with disabilities to be poll workers
- Update and localized election officials training video.

3. Provide individuals with the full range of disabilities with information about the accessibility of polling places.

a) RI Disability Vote Project

Liaison, Bob Cooper

FY 06 Activities

RI Disability Vote Project was created by the Commission, the RI Disability Law Center, the Community Partners of RI, and the American Association of People with Disabilities to perform the disability community voter outreach, registration, and education. The RI Disability Vote Project has hired a disability vote project organizer, James deBoer, last winter, has established a governing structure and in the process of adopting bylaws. These meet the Commission's funding condition that at least 50% of the governing board (steering committee) would be people with disabilities. This steering committee would meet quarterly. On a more frequent basis a smaller group the "Managing Directors" will be in charge of the project. The major funding organizations, the Commission, the RI Disability Law Center and Community Provider Network of RI are members of this group along with a small number of consumers. Again at least 50% of the managing directors have to be people with disabilities. Since all decisions of this group have to be by consensus, the Commission can veto any actions it feels are not consistent with the HAVA funds. The Disability Vote Project will be strictly non-partisan and will not take positions on disability issues, except those related to access to the voting process. It will provide organizations with the tools and training needed for them to be more effective advocates for whatever issues are important to them.

On May 12th Hans Johnson, President of Progressive Victory and a consultant for the American Association of People with Disabilities, will present on the technical aspects of voter registration and get out the vote planning, including Voter List Enhancement. List Enhancement allows organizations to keep better track of your members and donors; sort members, staff, and volunteers by state legislative districts, to streamline advocacy efforts; identify who the consistent voters are, and recruit them for your voter registration drives; target who is not yet registered or who doesn't vote consistently to get them registered and to the polls. Many of the organizations that joined the project have submitted their lists which are being electronically matched with the state's central voter registry and the Post Office's change of address lists and returned to the individual organizations (in a manner consistent with RI and federal health insurance confidentiality regulations).

As of the end of June the following organizations had joined the project: Advocates in Action; ARC of Northern Rhode Island; Community Living of Rhode Island; Community Provider Network of RI; Cranston Arc; Governor's Commission on Disabilities; J.A. Trudeau Memorial Center; Mental Health Advocate; Mental Health Consumer Advocates of RI; National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, Rhode Island; New England RMS; Ocean State Center for Independent Living; Opportunities Unlimited; PARI Independent Living Center; Rhode Island Parent Information Network; RI Developmental Disabilities Council; RI Disability Law Center; Spurwink/RI; and United Cerebral Palsy of RI.

In addition several organizations are considering membership: Easter Seals – RI; RI Association of the Deaf; Kent House; and Fogarty Center.

FY 06 Difficulties or Problems

The RI Disability Vote Project went through the initial “growing pains” and is slowly add new groups to the initiative.

Not having enough staff available to carry out some of the goals, time, always a shortage, including for the volunteers/chairs

Perhaps in getting the polling places reviewed and assessed for accessibility, sustaining the RIDVP project (depending on membership and grants)

Recommendations to avoid these difficulties in the future

The RI Disability Vote project should be allowed to grow, add new groups and evolve into an independent self directed entity. In time it will be able to track voters and provide them with information about upcoming elections, candidate profiles, access to the polls and assistance as needed in getting to their voting places

Activities Planned for FY 07 & 08

- Create a polling place video for voters with disabilities
- Dedicate HAVA funds as needed for ongoing voter outreach, registration, training, education, etc.
- Purchase an Automark voting system to conduct training with throughout the year
- The RI Disability Vote project would continue to grow and add new groups to the initiative. We would be able to track voters and provide them with information about upcoming elections, candidate profiles, access to the polls and assistance as needed in getting to their voting places

b) State Board of Elections' Voter Registration Advisory Committee

Liaison, Rosemary C. Carmody

FY 06 Activities

The Voter Registration Advisory Committee' Liaison was shifted to the Election Assistance Committee Chair or her designee, to bring all election related activities under that committee.

The Voter Registration Advisory Committee has not met in a number of years.

FY 06 Difficulties or Problems

Unless the Committee meets its difficult to determine if the RI Agency Voter Registration Law is understood and fully complied with.

Recommendations to avoid these difficulties in the future

The State Board of Elections should call a meeting to review the status of compliance with the RI General Law 17-9.1-31.

Goal II. To ensure full participation in state government services, activities and benefits by people with disabilities

Authority: RI General Law 42-51-6 Governor's Commission on Disabilities – Duties. – (3) Coordinating compliance with federal and state laws protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities by state agencies”

42-51-9 Definitions – (4) “Coordinating compliance” means the authority to:

- (i) Issue guidelines, directives, or instructions that are necessary to effectuate compliance with federal and state laws protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities;
- (ii) Establish a grievance procedure to promptly and equitably resolve complaints of noncompliance with federal and state laws protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities involving state agencies, including the power to investigate possible discrimination and eliminate unlawful practices by informal methods of conference, conciliation, and persuasion;
- (iii) Initiate complaints against any state agency that willfully fails to comply with federal and state laws protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities to the appropriate state or federal agency; and

(iv) Develop, make periodic revisions to, and oversee the implementation of a transition plan for the removal of environmental and communication barriers in state-owned facilities.

Objective A. To ensure state employees with disabilities, students with disabilities attending state operated colleges and schools, and residents of state operated institutions are able to fully participate in state programs and services.

1. Assistive Technology for people with disabilities, who are state employees, state operated schools & college students, and residents of state operated institutions

Policy and Oversight by:	Manager:
Information and Assistive Technology Committee	State ADA Coordinator
Regina Connor, Chairperson	Harvey O. Salvas

Measurement

The time processing assistive technology reasonable accommodation applications

This performance indicator measures the processing time for handling assistive technology reasonable accommodation applications and scheduling a review by the Information & Assistive Technology Committee's next meeting. The measure is related to the commission's role in coordinating compliance with the ADA and other state/federal disability rights laws. Commission staff keeps records of the assistive technology reasonable accommodation applications.

The commission's objective is to process assistive technology reasonable accommodation applications within 10 business days of receipt of all necessary information, one hundred percent of the time.

Goal II Objective A	FY 05	FY 06	FY 07	FY 08
Assistive Technology Provided	Actual	Actual	Proposed	Proposed
Objective	100%	75%	100%	100%
Actual/Estimated # Equipment Requested & Distributed	5 of 5	4 of 5		

FY 06 Activities

The Committee approved 5 requests form State agencies

Three have been delivered and are in use:

2 CCTVs

1 Computer

1 specialized computerized hearing system for the Courts.

The fourth request was approved to be paid as a reimbursement; the agency had not requested payment as of the end of FY 06.

The fifth request was pending receipt of additional information.

FY 06 Difficulties or Problems

Placing orders for equipment through the Central Business Office, in a timely manner has been extremely difficult, with some purchase orders taking over 5 months to execute.

Recommendations to avoid these difficulties in the future

The Commission/s staff should be responsible for the financial processing of all equipment requests.

Activities Planned for FY 07 & 08

- Review and approve requests for assistive technology

- Secure funding for assistive technology
- Outreach out to state webmasters, especially at smaller agencies to provide technical assistance and training.
- Coordinate policy development and dissemination regarding state IT procedures

2. The adoption by federal, state and local agencies/public bodies of policies that would have a beneficial impact people with disabilities, and the defeat of harmful policies:

Webmasters Committee

Liaison, Harvey O. Salvas

FY 06 Activities

The Committee has continued to meet mostly to provide information and technical “stuff” for webmasters.

FY 06 Difficulties or Problems

None

Department of Administration's Information Resources Management Committee

Liaison, Harvey O. Salvas

FY 06 Activities

The Committee did not meet in FY 06.

FY 06 Difficulties or Problems

Issues of concern had no forum to be raised in.

Recommendations to avoid these difficulties in the future

DOIT (Division of Information Technology) needs to reconvene the committee.

Objective B. To ensure that programs and employment opportunities in facilities leased or owned by the state are accessible and usable by people with disabilities

Authority: RI General Law 37-8-15. Public Property and Works – Access for people with disabilities.

The design of all public buildings to be constructed, leased, or rented by the state or any municipality of the state must be in compliance with all the standards promulgated by the Rhode Island State Building Code, chapter 27.3 of title 23, which make buildings and facilities accessible to and usable by people with disabilities.

§ 42-51-6. Governor’s Commission on Disabilities. – Duties. – (3) Coordinating compliance with federal and state laws protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities by state agencies;

§ 42-51-9. Definitions. – (2) "Federal and state laws protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities" means, but is not limited to, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 USC § 12101 et seq.; title V of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 USC § 794; R.I. Const., art. I, § 2; the provisions of chapter 87 of title 42 and §§ 23-6-22, 37-8-15, 37-8-15.1 and 42-46-13.

Policy and Oversight by:	Manager:
Accessibility Committee	Assistant ADA Coordinator
Binyamin Efreom, Chairperson	John Desautel

1. Accessibility Renovation Projects

Measurement

Percentage of State-Owned or Leased Buildings which are Accessible to Persons with Disabilities

This indicator measures the percentage of state-owned or leased property which is accessible to persons with disabilities.

The commission’s standard is one hundred percent accessibility to state owned and leased buildings to persons with disabilities. The data is from commission records.

Goal II Objective B 1	FY 05	FY 06	FY 07	FY 08
Accessible State Facilities	Actual	Actual	Proposed	Proposed
Objective	100%	100%	100%	100%
Actual/Estimated	75.53%	76.94%	85%	90%
Accessible Leased Facilities	50 of 50	50 of 50		
Accessible State Owned Facilities	271 of 375	277 of 375		
# of state facilities w/ program access	321 of 425	327 of 425		

State Agency Renovation Projects

FY 06 Activities

DEM Stillwater Dam: Path of travel and access to the disabled for fishing located at the head and rear of the dam was completed with GCD bond funds.

DEM Jerusalem ADA Dock Access: Awaits FY ‘07 GCD Bond funds.

Rhode Island College ADA Lifts: 3 new lifts were installed in Horace Mann (1) & Roberts Hall (2)

Rhode Island School for the Deaf ADA Restroom renovations: Renovated restrooms to provide accessibility in vicinity of gymnasium completed.

Pasteur Restroom Renovations: ADA renovation of six restrooms throughout the Pasteur facility for the Department of Human Services is completed.

FY 06 Difficulties or Problems

The Commission was unable to shift RICAP funding for FY 06 to project design, which would have shortened the turn around time for utilizing free balances available when projects are completed under budget. The above accessibility projects evolved from a larger list of projects. Commission’s Chairperson wrote to the chairman of the House Finance committee requesting the \$112,000 of accessibility funds obligated in FY 05 be refunded for accessibility projects.

Delays in renovations were caused by restricted access to the state’s financial management system’s accessibility renovation accounts during the first quarter of every fiscal year which result in reduction in RICAP Accessibility allocations in the following fiscal year.

The transfer of purchasing administration to the Central Business Office caused lengthy delays in awarding of contracts (i.e. a requisition for a renovation project at RI College submitted in December 2004 was not authorized for payment by the middle of June 2005).

Recommendations to avoid these difficulties in the future

In FY ‘05 the GCD lost the FTE which provided a fiscal person which among many other financial responsibilities included the GCD renovation projects. GCD staff worked ceaselessly to develop ADA projects authorized and prioritized by the Accessibility Committee only to lose capital funding sources due to untimely or lack of submittal by Central Business Office.

There is also a lack of effective communication between the Budget Office and the GCD staff assigned with the task of committing and expending state funds through a very small window of opportunity. Budget has also failed to incorporate accessibility capital fund availability on a timely basis.

It would appear that without a full time fiscal person assigned to the GCD communication with CBO and Budget is highly fragmented and unlikely to provide a seamless continuity of administrative process required with the quirky capital funding process. However, RIFANS, the State of Rhode Island's new fiscal management system, purports to enable even small agencies like the GCD with an integrated system thereby allowing staff to initiate, track and complete the capital funding process on a timely basis. I look forward to successfully utilizing RIFANS in FY'07.

Activities Planned for FY 07 & 08

Establishing a procedure (MOU between the Commission and the State Property Committee) to ensure the Commission conducts on-site access survey of prospective facilities to lease (prior to the selection of the lessor).

Propose an accessible bond referendum for the FY 2008 capital budget

2. State Building & Design Plan Reviews

Measurement

Percentage of building and design plans, submitted to the Commission for review to ensure Accessible to Persons with Disabilities, that the review is completed within 65 business days.

This indicator measures percentage of building or design plans that the review is completed within 65 business days of submitted to the Commission.

The commission's objective is to complete the plan reviews within 65 business days of receipt of the building or design plans, one hundred percent of the time.

Goal II Objective B 2	FY 05	FY 06	FY 07	FY 08
State Building Plans Reviewed	Actual	Actual	Proposed	Proposed
Objective	100%	100%	100%	100%
Actual/Estimated	70.59%	100%	100%	100%
# of Building Plans Reviewed	12 of 17	20 of 20		

FY 06 Activities

The Commission completed reviews of all the plans submitted. The **G. Frank Hanaway (Architectural Accessibility) Fellow**, Alex Gomes, from New England Institute of Technology began his internship on March 21, 2005. Alex worked in the summer of 2005, under the direction of the Compliance Coordinator specifically organizing a process to receive and review architectural plans. Plan reviews were completed under the supervision of the compliance coordinator and architects contacted for ADA compliance on plans. Alex assisted in the development of a plan review intake process.

FY 06 Difficulties or Problems

The lack of a room to meet with architects to review their plans, with a drafting table and other necessary facilities to provide technical advice.

Recommendations to avoid these difficulties in the future

A room has been allocated to the plan review staff, equipped to allow plan reviews and consultation visits by architects.

Activities Planned for FY 07 & 08

Review all plans submitted.

3. The adoption by federal, state and local agencies/public bodies of policies that would have a beneficial impact people with disabilities, and the defeat of harmful policies:

(i) John O. Pastore Center Advisory Committee

Liaison, John M. Desautel

FY 06 Activities

At the last meeting GCD staff reported that disabled parking is needed at the GCD office located at 41 Cherry Dale Court, Cranston. The GCD provided funding to complete disabled parking at their office location.

GCD staff person also reported that approximately 29 million dollars in bond funds was requested through the Governor's Office to provide accessibility to all occupied state owned facilities in the November 2006 ballot. This request was rejected by the Governor's Office.

GCD staff person requested that all state owned facility project plans be submitted to the GCD for ADA plan review. The Chairman indicated that efforts would be made to provide all state plans at the Pastore Center to the GCD. The GCD has requested and awaits plans for the new Youth Assessment Correctional Facility constructed adjacent to the GCD office.

The Chairman has suspended all committee meetings through the summer months.

FY 06 Difficulties or Problems

Recommendations to avoid these difficulties in the future

Assign a permanent Chairman and Secretary to the Pastore Center Council. This responsibility revolves among several assigned personnel. Active involvement of the City of Cranston Planning Department and Pastore state department personal is suggested in an effort to promote interagency communication relative to long range planning regarding state and city projects on and in the vicinity of the John O. Pastore Center.

Objective C. To ensure that open meetings are accessible to people with disabilities

Authority: RI General Law 42-46-13 Open Meetings - Accessibility for persons with disabilities. –

(a) All public bodies, to comply with the nondiscrimination on the basis of disability requirements of R.I. Const., Art. I, § 2 and applicable federal and state nondiscrimination laws (29 U.S.C. § 794, chapter 87 of this title, and chapter 24 of title 11), shall develop a transition plan setting forth the steps necessary to ensure that all open meetings of said public bodies are accessible to persons with disabilities.

(f) Each municipal government and school district shall, with the assistance of the state building commission, complete a transition plan covering the location of meetings for all public bodies under their jurisdiction. Each chief executive of each city or town and the superintendent of schools will submit their transition plan to the governor's commission on disabilities for review and approval. The governor's commission on disabilities with assistance from the state building commission shall approve or modify, with the concurrence of the municipal government or school district, the transition plans.

RI General Law 42-51-6. Governor's Commission on Disabilities. – Duties. – (3) Coordinating compliance with federal and state laws protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities by state agencies;

RI General Law 42-51-9. Definitions. – (2) "Federal and state laws protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities" means, but is not limited to, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 USC § 12101 et seq.; title V of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 USC § 794; R.I. Const., art. I, § 2; the provisions of chapter 87 of title 42 and §§ 23-6-22, 37-8-15, 37-8-15.1 and 42-46-13.

Policy and Oversight by:	Manager:
Hearing Board	State ADA Coordinator
John J. MacDonald, Chairperson	Harvey O. Salvas

Measurement

The Percentage of local public bodies meeting sites that are resurveyed annually, to ensure no barriers have been inadvertently been created. The measure is related to the Commission's responsibility to monitor compliance with the Open Meeting: Accessibility for People with Disabilities law.

The Commission's objective is to conduct open meeting accessibility surveys in 25% of the municipalities each year.

Goal II Objective C	FY 05	FY 06	FY 07	FY 08
Accessible Open Meetings	Actual	Actual	Proposed	Proposed
Objective	100%	100%	100%	100%
# Municipalities Surveyed	5 of 39	5 of 39		
% of Total Surveyed Actual/Estimated	13%	13%	15%	15%
# of Surveyed sites accessible	4 of 5	5 of 5		
# of sites with public address systems and assistive listening systems	5 of 5	5 of 5		
# of Open Meeting Notices containing accommodation request information	5 of 5	5 of 5		
% of Surveyed Accessible Actual/Estimated	93%	100%	100%	100%

FY 06 Activities

The staff was able to review all the open meeting facilities in 5 municipalities. All of those facilities were accessible.

FY 06 Difficulties or Problems

The goal had been to review sites in 10 communities, but polling place accessibilities surveys became a priority for the 2nd half of FY 06.

Recommendations to avoid these difficulties in the future

Allocation of more staff resources (time) to conduct open meeting facility accessibility surveys.

Activities Planned for FY 07 & 08

Complete open meeting facility accessibility surveys of all the open meeting locations in 6 cities & towns.

Objective D. To investigate and resolve disability discrimination complaints

Authority: RI General Law 42-87-5 Civil Rights of People with Disabilities – Enforcement of anti-discrimination provisions. – (b) (1) The governor's commission on disabilities is empowered and directed to investigate and hear all complaints relating to alleged violations of this chapter relating to the physical inaccessibility of buildings and structures.

42-51-6.1. Governor's Commission on Disabilities. – Hearing boards. – (1) The commission's chairperson shall appoint five (5) commissioners as the hearing board for the purpose of conducting hearings and rendering decisions on matters relating to the provisions of chapter 87 of this title and §§ 37-8-15.1 and 42-46-13 within the jurisdiction of the commission.

(2) Three (3) commissioners shall constitute a quorum of a hearing board.

(3) The hearing board is empowered to:

(i) Receive, investigate, and act upon charges of unlawful practices within its jurisdiction; and

(ii) In connection with any investigation or hearing held on any matter within its jurisdiction to hold hearings, administer oaths, take the testimony of any person under oath, and to require the production for examination of any books and papers relating to any matter under investigation or in question before the hearing board.

Policy and Oversight by:	Manager:
Hearing Board	State ADA Coordinator
John J. MacDonald, Chairperson	Harvey O. Salvas

Measurement

The percentage of disability discrimination investigations that are initiated within 60 business days of receipt of the complaint by the Commission

This indicator measures percentage disability discrimination complaints that the investigation is initiated within 60 business days of being submitted to the Commission. The measure is related to the Commission’s responsibility to provide investigate disability discrimination complaints regarding the physical inaccessibility of buildings and structures.

The commission’s objective is to complete the plan reviews within 60 business days of receipt of the building or design plans, one hundred percent of the time.

Goal II Objective D	FY 05	FY 06	FY 07	FY 08
Resolution of Complaints Against the State	Actual	Actual	Proposed	Proposed
Objective	100%	100%	100%	100%
Actual/Estimated	%	Plan 100%	100%	100%
# Complaints resolved informally	#	#		
# Hearing Board Findings and Corrective Orders	0	1		
Total	0	0	0	0

FY 06 Activities

Conducted a hearing on the status of the Traffic Tribunal expired waiver (allowing the tribunal to remain on Harris Avenue Providence) during the construction of the new Cranston Traffic Tribunal Complex.

FY 06 Difficulties or Problems

None

Recommendations to avoid these difficulties in the future

None

Activities Planned for FY 07 & 08

- Training of new Hearing Board Members & refresher for the current members.
- Outreach and Awareness of the Commission’s complaint, hearing and resolution procedure.

Goal III. To expand economic opportunities for people with disabilities

Objective A. To assist rehabilitation agencies, small business owners with disabilities and businesses employing workers with disabilities win state contracts for goods and services

Authority: RI General Law 37-2.2. Disability Business Enterprises.

§ 37-2.2-1 Short title and purpose. – This chapter shall be known as the "Disability Business Enterprises Act." The purpose of this chapter is to carry out the state's policy of supporting the fullest possible participation of small disadvantaged businesses owned and controlled by persons with disabilities or where sixty percent (60%) of the work hours or direct labor is performed by employees who are persons with disabilities, or non-profit rehabilitation facilities in state funded and state directed public construction, public projects, and in state purchases of goods and services. This includes assisting disadvantaged disability businesses and non-profit rehabilitation facilities throughout the life of contracts in which they participate.

§ 37-2.2-3. Preference for products and services produced by persons with disabilities. – (a) Whenever any products made, manufactured by, or services provided by nonprofit rehabilitation facilities, or in profit making facilities where sixty percent (60%) of the work hours or direct labor is performed by employees who are disabled, meet the requirements of any department, institution, or agency supported, in whole or in part, by the state as to quantity, quality, and price, those products shall have preference over products or services from other providers.

(b) All departments, institutions, and agencies supported, in whole or in part, by the state shall purchase articles made or manufactured and services provided by persons with disabilities. Any political subdivision of the state may purchase those articles and services directly from those agencies.

(c) A list describing the styles, designs, sizes, and varieties of articles made by persons with disabilities and describing all available services and subcontract work which can be provided by those persons shall be prepared by the governor's commission on disabilities, disability business enterprise committee in cooperation with the state office of rehabilitation services. The governor's commission on disabilities shall cooperate with various facilities for persons with disabilities by submitting necessary information concerning the products and services to the state purchasing agent.

§ 37-2.2-3.1. Policy and applicability. – It is the policy of the state of Rhode Island that small disadvantaged disability businesses shall have the maximum opportunity to participate in the performance of procurements and projects as outlined in this chapter. This chapter shall apply to any and all state purchasing, including, but not limited to, the procurement of goods and services, construction projects, or contracts funded in whole or in part by state funds, or funds which, in accordance with a federal grant or otherwise, the state expends or administers or in which the state is a signatory to the construction contract. The director of administration, in consultation with the governor's commission on disabilities, is authorized and directed to establish rules and regulations for awarding contracts to small disadvantaged businesses owned and controlled by persons with disabilities in the procurement of goods, services, construction projects, or contracts funded in whole or in part by state funds, in accordance with § 37-2-9(b)(14).

Policy and Oversight by:	Manager:
Disability Business Enterprise Committee	Disability Business Enterprise / Public Information Coordinator
Bill Nieranowski, Chairperson	Christine Botts

Measurement

This performance indicator measures the percentage growth in the number of certified disability business

enterprises/rehabilitation facilities. The measure is related to the Governor's Commission on Disabilities' responsibility to certify disability business enterprises/rehabilitation facilities. The Commission's staff keeps records of the applications and certifications for the disability business enterprise law.

The commission's objective is for a 10 % increase in the number of certified disability business enterprises/rehabilitation facilities, in each of the next several years.

Goal III Objective A	FY 05	FY 06	FY 07	FY 08
Disability Business Enterprises	Actual	Actual	Proposed	Proposed
Objective	110%	110%	110%	
Actual/Estimated	\$505,000	\$555,500	\$611,050	?
Certified Disability Business Enterprises	7	?		
Certified Rehabilitation Facilities	11	?		
Total # of Certified Disability Business Enterprises and Rehabilitation Facilities	18	0	0	
# of Contracts Awarded to Disability Business Enterprises and Rehabilitation Facilities	2	?		
Total \$ of Contracts Awarded to DBE/RFs	\$505,000	Plan \$555,500	\$611,050	
Average Contract Awarded	\$252,500			

FY 06/07 Planned activities

Meet with each Disability Business Enterprise to assess their business environment and capabilities, review the findings, and revisit the Disability Business Enterprises with information and training tailored to their needs.

Implement regulations to allow guidelines for the Division of Purchasing to choose Disability Business Enterprises when awarding State contracts.

Sponsor a Disability Business Enterprise Expo to bring together the Disability Business Enterprises and the State's buyers.

Conduct training on how to effectively present at a business expo.

Develop and Practices and Procedures manual for the Disability Business Enterprise program.

Adjust the budget, staff time and complete as many of the grant's "deliverables" within the current grant extension July 1, 2005 to Dec. 31, 2005.

FY 06 Activities

Certified 19 businesses as Disability Business Enterprises (one still pending, one chose to not recertify)

Met with the Division of Purchases to discuss a draft of a regulation to support the purchasing preference accorded to DBEs in the RIGL. We supplied a proposed draft of the regulation written by Bob Cooper.

Conducted two training sessions for DBEs with Jim Jackson from the Essex Group. The first was titled "What Are You Selling...Really?" with 18 attendees, the second "Secrets to Trade Show Success" with 10 attendees.

FY 06 Difficulties or Problems

Meeting Quorums -- Had to cancel the June meeting due to the lack of a quorum. Attempting to reschedule the meeting. Looking into the steps necessary to allow for substitute designates.

Waiting for the Division of Purchasing to come back to us with the DBE Regulation.

Division of Purchasing resources are tied up bringing a new purchasing system on line.

Getting State contracts awarded to DBEs.

Prompt payment to the training vendor.

Recommendations to avoid these difficulties in the future

Activities Planned for FY 07 & 08

- Most importantly, increase the number of contracts awarded to DBEs. Would like to see 7 contracts awarded in FY '07?
- Offer a follow-up training to DBEs on Trade Shows before the Division of Purchasing has their vendor fair this fall.
- Develop a training plan for future DBE training.
- Increase program awareness with State agency buyers.
- Increase awareness of the State agencies and their buyers with the DBEs.
- Increase the dollar volume of contracts awarded to DBEs.
- Increase the number of DBEs.

Objective B. To promote work as a life choice for people with disabilities

1. Promoting Work and Work Incentives

Authority: RI General Laws:

§ 28-5.1-9. Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action – State employment services.

(d) The department of labor and training, the governor's commission on disabilities, the advisory commission on women, and the Rhode Island economic development corporation shall fully utilize their knowledge of the labor market and economic conditions of the state, and their contacts with job applicants, employers, and unions, to promote equal employment opportunities, and shall require and assist all persons within their jurisdictions to initiate actions which remedy any situations or programs which have a negative impact on protected classes within the state.

§ 42-51-7. Governor’s Commission on Disabilities – Gifts, grants, and donations.

The commission is authorized to receive any gifts, grants, or donations made for any of the purposes of its program, and to disburse and administer them in accordance with the terms of its program.

The Commission was the recipient of a grant from the Rhode Island Human Resource Investment Council to promote work as a lifestyle choice for individuals with disabilities.

Policy and Oversight by:	Manager:
Employment Committee	Assistant ADA Coordinator (Employment)
Victoria Ferrara, Chairperson (7/1/05 to 4/17/06) Patricia Ryherd, Chairperson (Appointed 4/17/06)	Christine Rancourt

Measurement

This performance indicator measures the percentage growth in the number of events and activities promoting employment as a lifestyle option for people with disabilities. The measure is related to the Governor’s Commission on Disabilities’ responsibility to implement the Human Resource Investment Council’s Promoting Work Grant. The Commission’s staff keeps records of the events and activities.

The commission’s objective is for a 10 % increase in the number of events and activities in each of the next several years.

Goal III Objective B	FY 05	FY 06	FY 07	FY 08
Promoting Work	Actual	Actual	Proposed	Proposed
Objective	110%	110%	110%	%
ABLE TOO Programs	2	12	2	3
Promotional Events	4	12	4	5
Exhibited at conferences and workshops	4	4	5	6
Total Actual/Estimated	10	28	11	14

FY 06 Activities

The Employee Committee successfully completed the work plan, including requirements of the funding sources, i.e. the Human Resource Investment Committee Promoting Work grant.

Twelve employment awareness Able Too... shows were completed and aired which portrayed individuals with disabilities in a variety of occupations.

Two Promotional netWORKri events were conducted; the Job Fair November 05 and the Job Developer Training in March 06.

Staff assisted the Paul V. Sherlock Center on Disabilities and the Office of Rehabilitation Services with logistics for the 2005 Employer Honor Roll.

Four competitive mini-grants were awarded to R.I. colleges to improve the job search skills of students with disabilities. Brown and Johnson & Wales combined to have the national Job Accommodation Network present information on reasonable accommodations. URI had a job fair and one on one coaching.

Technical information and information dissemination was provided by telephone and by exhibiting at a number of conferences and workshops, including the RTI job fair.

FY 06 Difficulties or Problems

The Human Resource Investment Council grant ended June 30, 2006. Continued funding is questionable.

Were unable to reach the FY 06 objective of recruiting 30 high school students with disabilities for the Disability Mentoring Day, many students were uncomfortable with being labeled and students, their parents and teachers did not value work experiences, placing greater stress on the importance of gaining academic experience instead.

Recommendations to avoid these difficulties in the future

Commission decides that the promotion of work activities is a priority that should be funded with its general revenue.

Promoting the value of work activities including internships and work experience.

Activities Planned for FY 07 & 08

- Promoting work and work incentives:
 - Medicaid Buy-in
 - "IWork" Incentives
 - Work Related Transportation options
- Coordinating Policy Development and Dissemination of the employment related liaisons:

a) The adoption by federal, state and local agencies/public bodies of policies that would have a beneficial impact people with disabilities, and the defeat of harmful policies:

(i) US Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy & National Association of Governors' Committees on People with Disabilities

Liaison, TBA

FY 06 Activities

The Commission designated one of the Commissioners and a staff member to regularly conducted teleconference calls amongst the states and the US Department of Labor's Office on Disability Employment Policy, to share experiences that could be duplicated (or avoided) in RI. Staff attended the May National Association of Governor's Committees on People with Disabilities annual training conference.

FY 06 Difficulties or Problems

There were occasional difficulties in connecting to teleconference call network. In addition the failure of the national association to update its emailing list resulted in RI missing the opportunity to participate in several activities.

The National Association has updated its distribution lists, so last year's problems shouldn't reoccur.

(ii) National Organization on Disability

Liaison, Kate McCarthy-Barnett, EdD.

FY 06 Activities

The National Organization on Disability (N.O.D) continues to promote the full and equal participation and contribution of people with disabilities in all aspects of life. The most recent annual report is not available at this time.

The N.O.D work related initiatives included the following programs:

CEO Council – Recognizing CEOs and companies committed to the employment of people with disabilities

Start on Success - Providing paid internships to high school students with disabilities

FY 06 Difficulties or Problems

No problems or difficulties have been reported.

Activities Planned for FY 07 & 08

The N.O.D will continue to promote the full and equal participation and contribution of people with disabilities in all aspects of life. The N.O.D website and e-newsletter will continue to provide updates on recent developments, disability-related news, statistics, information and resources (www.nod.org).

(iii) RI Business Leadership Network

Liaison, TBA

FY 06 Activities

Describe activities that took place during the past fiscal year.

RIGCD offered RIBLN \$3000 in funds to support training. RIBLN also received \$15,000 in funds to support the establishment of RIBLN.

RI Business Leadership Network - The development of a RIBLN Chapter is developing at a steady pace. I am pleased with the progress the RIBLN has made to date and encourage the continue support of the RIGCD. The members of the Formation Committee, made up of ten companies, meet monthly and have established short term and long term work plan. On June 29, 2005 they are sponsoring a seminar -Hiring

and Retaining Good Employees- Job Accommodation Workplace Solutions- with the RIGCD and the RI State Council of the Society of Human Resource Management - Also in development are RIBLN promotional materials, a Business Survey, affiliation with the U.S. BLN, representation at the national USBLN conference in November and development of an event calendar for Fall 05 and 2006. The RIBLN appreciated RIGCD's support for training.

FY 06 Difficulties or Problems

Group has had some growing pains, determining leadership protocols, creating infrastructure, choosing priorities and scope. Attendance at the USBLN conference is hoped to clarify questions and connect members with resources. RI GCD Funds will support 2 RI BLN members to attend the US national in November 05.

Members have demonstrated some frustration but seem committed to making the RI BLN a meaningful organization.

Recommendations to avoid these difficulties in the future

Write RIBLN a letter congratulating them on their effort to date and reinforcing the RI GCD support of a RI BLN. Outline how RIGCD could be a resource to RIBLN. Consider inviting a RIBLN representative to a Commission meeting to report on progress.

(iv) Rhodes to Independence Steering Committee

Liaison, Arthur M. Plitt

FY 06 Activities

Good efforts with success on new grants and continuation and with the efforts in Housing Success and Youth efforts a good direction for more successes as the 2nd Job Fair kicks in on even more attendees on Oct 25th and the Medicaid buy in works out the wrinkles as well as the Job Guide Book successfully received by many.

(v) Youth Leadership Forum

Liaison, Arthur M. Plitt

FY 06 Activities

Good enrollment at about 12 and still difficulties in getting youth referrals from schools especially with non profound type of disabilities. An ongoing effort to form a separate 501c3 is onboard and with Susan Shapiro retired and still willing to help direct, it should get even stronger legs for the future especially if efforts are made to educate on all disabilities. There was one excellent student that I was part of the interview team that may indicate more of those youth from the school district(s) if we help to promote especially with a dinner with companies and schools.

(vi) Mentoring Day

Liaison, Arthur M. Plitt

FY 06 Activities

This has been a successful program and with earlier efforts this year for the Oct 18th event and the Social Security endorsement as the key supporter, it is felt this will help enroll more youth for the employers willing to offer a mentoring shadowing option to students for career choices. We will be embarking on a Mentoring Promotion with less emphasis on disabilities and more on mentoring abilities and career choices. Efforts towards and thru the colleges and the RI Mentoring Partnership should also give it significant strength for much more success. I will be attending the Boston Mentoring Conference in Sept for Youth with disabilities and am also part of the planned RI Mentoring Partnership Summit planned for RIC in Oct/Nov this year

***(vii) Department of Education's Comprehensive System of
Personnel Development Advisory Committee***

Liaison, Arthur M. Plitt

FY 06 Activities

This committee has met once with the past director of special ed, but there was a postponed meeting and then cancelled until fall sometime with some reports being assembled. Some progress seemed to be made as part of long term planning, but the new laws w/o regulations have made absorbing and planning frustrating more difficult. The RIDE leadership meeting showed a good direction for 2007 and beyond.

(viii) Civil Rights Roundtable

Liaison, Christine Rancourt

FY 06 Activities

Staff assisted in the planning of the Roundtable's Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration, ensuring that it was accessible and arranged for an interpreter for the deaf to be present. Onna Moniz John the City of East Providence's Affirmative Action/ ADA Officer was recruited to be a participant in the Municipal ADA Coordinator Web-cast training, representing both East Providence and the Civil Rights Round Table.

FY 06 Difficulties or Problems

The only problems/difficulties were finding the time to attend all the meetings.

2. To expose college students with disabilities, and other students in fields of study related to disability to government occupations

Authority: RI General Law 42-51-11. Governor's Commission on Disabilities. – Mary Brennan fellowship fund. – (a) There is established the Mary Brennan fellowship fund ("the fellowship fund"), which shall be utilized to create a fellowship program for college students with disabilities.

(b) These fellowships shall provide a semester-long, part-time placement with the commission in RI, working on disability policy and research. Each fellow will be assigned to a specific placement, providing assistance to the commission in disability policy. Mentor experiences will introduce the fellows to disability policy issues and actions at the local, state and federal levels. The fellowships will offer students an opportunity to:

- (1) Gain perspective on the role and responsibility of the commission;
 - (2) Knowledge of national/state disability programs;
 - (3) Policy issues and research;
 - (4) Meet with decision makers, experts and critics in disability and related policy fields; and
 - (5) Develop networks with local, regional, and national based experts, and researchers who can assist in career development and future endeavors.
- (c) The commission will provide each fellow with a stipend of at least one thousand five hundred dollars (\$1,500) and reimbursement for authorized travel.

RI General Law 42-47.1-5. Summer internships for students with disabilities.

The program in consultation with the governor's commission on disabilities and other agencies servicing people with disabilities shall establish a summer internship program for students with disabilities. The student interns shall be placed in state agencies for the purposes of enabling these individuals in establishing an awareness of the governmental process, and also develop academic skills and career goal awareness through experiential education.

Fellow Selection by:	Manager:
Executive Committee	Disability Business Enterprise / Public

John J. MacDonald, Vice Chairperson	Information Coordinator
Recruitment Policy Oversight by:	Christine Botts
Employment Committee	
Patricia Ryherd, Chairperson	

Measurement

The number of fellowship applications received for each fellowship in the four fellowships
This indicator measures number of applications for each of the four fellows submitted to the Commission.
The measure is related to the Commission’s responsibility to award Mary Brennan Fellowships to college students, each semester. The Commission's staff retains the applications for fellows.
The commission’s objective is to double the number of fellowship applications in each of the next several years.

Goal III. Objective B 2	FY 05	FY 06	FY 07	FY 08
Recruiting Fellowships	Actual	Actual	Proposed	Proposed
Objective	100%	200%	200%	200%
Actual/Estimated	75%	50%	100%	100%
Summer Applicants	0 of 1	1		
Fall Applicants	1 of 1	0 of		
Spring Applicants	2of 2	1 of 2		
Total # applicants	4	2		

FY 06 Activities

Undertook an expanded outreach program to promote the fellowships; contacted the career services offices of all the colleges and universities and identified academic departments related to the fellowships.
The Commission awarded two fellowships;

- Summer '05, the Mary Brennan Public Awareness Fellow, Jose Lobaton, of ____, attending RI College, assisted in organizing the 2005 series of Public Forums on the Concerns of People with Disabilities and their Families;
- Spring '06 the Mary Brennan Public Awareness Fellow, Leah Carpentier, of Kingston, attending ____,

FY 06 Difficulties or Problems

- The staff position responsible for recruiting the fellows and supervising the Mary Brennan Fellow was vacant from July 04 to May 2005. During that time, very little outreach and recruitment was undertaken, resulting in one of the 4 fellowships remaining unfilled, since no students applied.
- Another consistent problem is the long delays in the state paying half the \$2,500 stipend once the fellow has completed half the semester. During the past year it took so long that both the first and second payments were consolidated and paid after the fellowship had been completed.

The outreach and recruitment of applicants should improve, now the staff position has been filled.
The late payment of the stipend, which most students use to pay part of their tuition, since one of the requirements of the fellowship is the student must receive credit for her/his participation in the program.

Recommendations to avoid these difficulties in the future

For future fellows, the Commission will work with the Central Business Office to establish a faster track for payment of the stipend.

Activities Planned for FY 07 & 08

Shift outreach activities at least one semester earlier.

Target outreach to department heads of related areas of study.

Follow-up on where the alumni are now and how the fellowships.

Goal IV. Commission's Finances, Personnel & Management

Objective A. To ensure the Commission's goals and objectives are accomplished and

Objective B. To ensure smooth operation and coordination of the Commission's activities, committees, volunteers, and staff

Policy and Oversight by:	Manager:
Executive Committee	Executive Secretary
Paul Choquette, Chairperson & John J. MacDonald, Vice Chairperson	Bob Cooper

Measurement

Percentage of the Commission's operational plan's objectives accomplished in the program year (Oct. - Sept.)

This performance indicator measures the successful completion of objectives. The measure is related to the commission's operation plan.

FY 06 Activities

The Executive Committee continued to meet regularly to address Personnel issues (staff discipline, selecting of Fellows), general Commission activities, develop agendas for Commission meetings and respond to time sensitive issues.

This has been a challenging year for the Executive Committee with regard to personnel issues. We have been called upon to consider appropriate responses to employee actions, to interview applicants for fellowships and to recommend the hiring of a contract employee.

Without question, the most challenging issues surrounded our role, individually and collectively, as the employer of the staff and fellows, as well as our responsibility for the working environment for contractor working for the commission. We have learned and are still learning in these areas.

FY 06 Difficulties or Problems

The major difficulties were in the area of Commission staff disciplinary issues. There were two issues this past year that needed to be addressed. Both issues were addressed ultimately in a satisfactory manner.

They should not be an impediment to the overall goals of the Commission; in fact the opportunities that have presented themselves as a result of the problems will ultimately result in a staffing pattern that will more adequately meet the Commission's goals in the future.

Recommendations to avoid these difficulties in the future

Job descriptions for staff positions are being re-written to more adequately reflect the staffing needs of the Commission

A new orientation format for Commissioners and staff is currently being developed and will be implemented in the late summer/early fall time frame. This orientation is designed to inform Commission members of their responsibilities as employers to promote a better working environment for the staff. Also formal Orientation packets for Commissioners and for individual Committees are being developed to provide reference materials for Commissioners and Volunteer Committee members.

Activities Planned for FY 07 & 08

A comprehensive Orientation program is being designed and will be implemented in late summer/early fall. This will be followed by a strategic planning retreat involving Commissioners and staff. A more formalized Orientation/Re-Orientation program will be developed and take place on a regular basis each year.

The Executive Committee will review the Commission's Structure and propose revisions as necessary to meet the current & future needs as spelled out in the strategic plan.

Job descriptions for staff positions are being re-written to more adequately reflect the staffing needs of the Commission

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Each Executive Committee member will attend at least one monthly staff meetings, as a liaison and the Executive Committee in its responsibility for Commission personnel and management.