

Do you have skill shortages?

Have you considered 'Job Splitting' or 'Job Carving'?

**Tina Zeleznik,**  
*Chief Executive Officer, Disability Works Australia*

DWA currently manages the National Disability Recruitment Coordinator (NDRC) Service and assists over 70 large employers to recruit people with disabilities (and mental health) into their workforces' utilising the services of DEN's and VRS providers.

To date DWA have assisted over 4,000 skilled workers with a disability into employment and over time it has become evident that employers, when faced with recruitment difficulties in skill shortage areas, are often highly receptive to innovative solutions to address their workforce needs.

Many employers nationally, have demonstrated a past commitment to seeking innovative ways to recruit semi skilled or unskilled people with a disability in skill shortage areas and share best practice. DWA's expertise in conjunction with employers has provided a variety of creative solutions aimed at addressing skill shortages through position design and modification to address workforce needs.

This edition of the DWA newsletter showcases three innovative ways that employers have addressed skill shortages and prove people with a disability can be an asset to any business:

- **South Australian Police Department (SAPOL)**  
– created a position for a person with a disability to process transcript tapes. This released the Officers for increased activity in the field.
- **Accuweigh** – This national company appointed one person *in each state* to assist with a range of support tasks to free up qualified staff for more specialised work – splitting the role out of necessity as the employer could not recruit qualified staff.
- **Coles (Nationally)** – A leader in the community in the employment of people with a disability. Coles Supermarkets has demonstrated innovation by redesigning duties of the night-fillers position and re-modelling the task of presenting the store.

Businesses operating in today's market cannot afford to miss an opportunity to develop their workforce and increase their competitive advantage.

Next time you are struggling to fill a position, why not think out side the square, try splitting the role or "carve" several roles. Not sure how? Then contact DWA on 1800 356 670.

**Why not give an opportunity to a person with a disability!**



*From back left to front: Acting Superintendent of Holden Hill Police Station, John McCaffrey; Administration Manager, Doris Andrew; Sonja Veitinger; and Sonja's Guide Dog, Rowen.*

## South Australia Police are leading the way in "Job Splitting" positions

Doris Andrew, Administration Manager of Holden Hill Police Station, was searching for an ASO1 Administration Officer and explained to DWA how difficult it was to attract people to the position due to the repetition of the duties and the ability to type transcription tapes all day. Although this was only one of the duties of the Administration Officer role, this particular duty was rarely enjoyed by staff and therefore it was rarely completed on time. Doris also believes transcript typing is a dying skill which is very particular and believes this only adds to the issues associated with finding staff for the role.

In the past, this task was brought up to date by using temporary staff who had experience in medical or legal transcription supplied through Temp agencies. This method did not prove to be the most cost effective solution.

Doris first looked at a number of applicants for the position, which included an application endorsed by DWA for Sonja Veitinger. When she came across the resume, she was amazed that Sonja had all the skills to fulfil the transcript typing part of the role but due to her vision impairment was unable to complete other tasks of the position.

Although the generic role was not able to be filled by Sonja, Doris had discussions with her seniors and was given approval to employ Sonja for the transcript part of the role only. Doris is pleased with the newly created job saying, "by being creative with the role, we're getting retention in this job, providing a solution to one area of skill shortage and proving to be more cost effective." Sonja was employed directly by South Australia Police on a contract.

Sonja required work place modification to be implemented to assist her to complete the tasks. An assessment was conducted and the installation of a computer program (JAWS) to Sonja's computer and a dual headset was installed for her to listen to the tapes. The JAWS program verbalises word documents which enables Sonja to 'read' material. Sonja's guide dog, Rowen, sits quietly next to Sonja and has become very popular in the station. He requires occasional rest breaks across at the park and generally Sonja's colleagues ask to take him over to get a little 'stress relief'.

When Sonja first commenced employment, she was trying so hard to ensure everything was perfect and checking her work over and over, slowing down her work rate. Doris said "this has nothing to do with her disability and when I told her that she was going slower by checking too much detail, Sonja quickly addressed the issue, increased her pace and is now completing the tapes at a fantastic rate."

Out of the 90 hours she has so far worked, Sonja has completed 30 transcripts and completed 63.7 hours worth of transcribing (including all her time training). Doris commented that "these statistics are kept on all staff and Sonja is making her area look good as the team gets things done more quickly".

Doris believes this is a story for all employers and said, "by investing in the right person you will reap the benefits. There is room in generic jobs to carve duties and provide opportunities for people with a disability as well as assisting businesses with areas of skill shortages."

Sonja agrees saying, "it's a great idea and I am much happier and less stressed than I have been in the past. I'm working with great people and feel that I am doing something worthwhile now. In the beginning it was difficult but it's a great feeling knowing I've typed something that will hopefully help someone."

Sonja is on a temporary contract but as soon as a vacancy becomes available, Doris will have no hesitation offering a full time role to Sonja.



*Sonja (front) and her colleagues*

## Accuweigh creates roles in five states for people with disabilities

**In September of 2008, Salter Australia Holdings (SAH Group), a well known identity in the weighing industry contacted DWA for assistance.**

One of the companies within SAH Group, Accuweigh, had previously employed a person with a disability in their Queensland branch in 2004 through DWA. This employee's duties included: sweeping the warehouse, emptying office bins, cleaning the lunch room, cleaning company vehicles and re-stocking parts of shelving. Accuweigh then decided to employ a person with a disability to fulfill similar duties in each state branch due to the success of this position.

While being a young and dynamic company, through its workforce, Accuweigh totals over 800 years experience in the weighing, packaging and inspection industry. Accuweigh provides a full and complete range of products and services in the weighing, filling, packaging and inspection industries, complete with after-sales service, backup and support.

The business is committed to putting back into the community they serve and donate part of their quarterly profits to local charities.

DWA worked in collaboration with SAH Group in Western Australia to devise a national agreement to employ people with disabilities and soon put the agreement into effect. After discussions with Accuweigh to work out the position specifics, the position was broadcast to DEN & VRS Providers in each state.

Suitable applicants were pre-screened by DWA and put forward for interviews. One person in each state successfully gained employment within Accuweigh. The carved position differs from state to state but was specifically designed for a person with a disability to assist the warehouse staff with cleaning duties, packing and unpacking weights, painting weights, emptying bins and other duties as required.

By creating this role in each state branch, Accuweigh has successfully relieved these general duties from their qualified staff, releasing them to concentrate on their specialties. This has greatly benefited Accuweigh and one or two branches are looking at possibly employing a second person with a disability for another tailored position.

**Following are the individual stories for each of the people employed in each state:**



Ian Cunningham, Chief Financial Officer of Accuweigh (national); Tom Armour, SA Branch Manager; Stephen Blight, Yard Hand/Cleaner in SA branch

### South Australia

Stephen Blight is excelling in his role as a Yard Hand/Cleaner at the Port Adelaide branch. He thoroughly enjoys his job and has found the process through DWA to be easy and straightforward. He is happy DWA determined him a suitable applicant for the job and linked him with Accuweigh. There has been no modifications required for Stephen to work and he is happy with the support he receives from his employer and DEN provider.

Stephen is employed on a Supported Wage Scheme SWS (a productivity based wage subsidy) due to his disability and says, "Supported Wage gave me an opportunity to commence work and I look forward to the challenge of completing my duties faster so I can earn a higher wage."

The job has made Stephen feel included socially and he enjoys the staff BBQ's sometimes held on Fridays and was even given a ticket to the Clipsal 500 to go with his boss.

Ian Cunningham, CFO of Accuweigh nationally and Stephen's previous boss has said, "Stephen increases workplace morale. Other employees feel good to have him around."

Tom Armour, Stephen's boss is happy with this 'carved' role and said,

*"The benefit of creating the Yard Hand role for Stephen was to support the Administration staff and Apprentices which helps them focus on their roles. With Stephen designated to his cleaning and yard hand duties, it ensures those jobs are done consistently and at the required level."*

Tom encourages other businesses to look at ways they can job carve duties from one or more existing positions to create new roles for people with disabilities. Accuweigh has adopted the job carving philosophy nationally.

### Victoria

Tibor Siposs was successfully employed on a SWS for the position within the Springvale branch. Tibor has many years experience as a jeweller but when his physical disabilities caused his manual dexterity to deteriorate, he had to change careers to factory work. His factory work experience meant he had the skills needed to fulfil the needs of the role and he has the right attitude to his work.

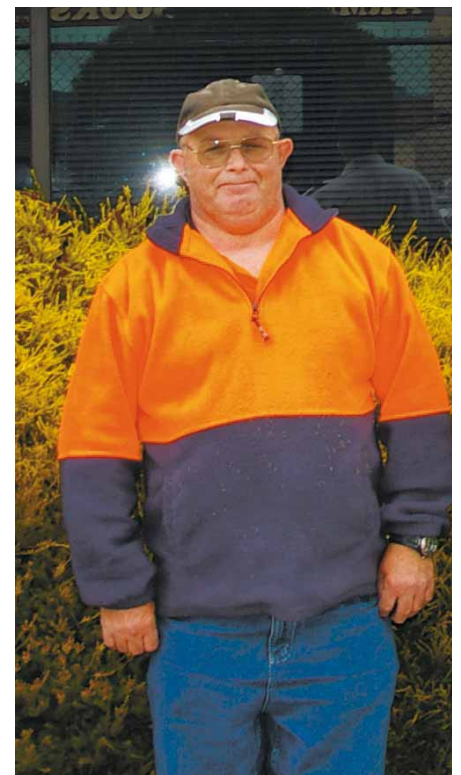
The scales are imported to Accuweigh who ensure they are weighing properly. Tibor's role at Accuweigh involves calibrating and checking the new scales for quality assurance. Tibor enjoys his job at Accuweigh and says the people he works with are friendly and supportive.

Tibor has not required any modifications to the workplace due to his disability but is thankful for the support provided by all at the branch. His colleagues and employer assist him in his work to ensure he knows what he is doing. There is always someone on call to help out.

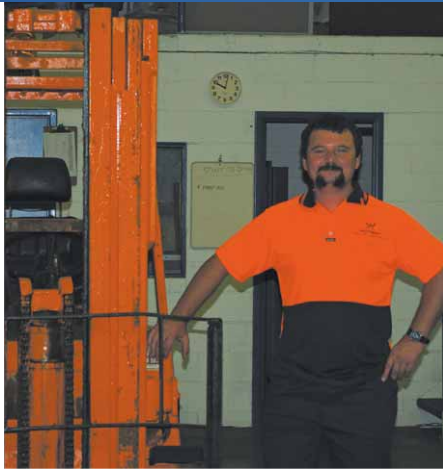
Andrew Snaidero, Tibor's boss has had no issues with Tibor and is happy working with DWA. When asked about Accuweigh's relationship with DWA, he said,

*"Working with DWA is an advantage as they suit people to what we require. It's a win-win situation and improves the social skills of people with disabilities. It's also good for workplace morale."*

Tibor is improving in his work every week and Accuweigh are very pleased with this job match.



Tibor Siposs, Storeperson at Vic branch



Frank Kramaric, Storeperson in NSW branch

## New South Wales

Frank Kramaric began employment with Accuweigh in February 2009 after being out of work for 2 years. Having previously worked in painting and decorating and been a factory hand, he was a good match to the position being offered at Accuweigh. Frank disclosed a learning disability and has limited literacy skills but it was recommended that he be physically shown how to do tasks rather than be given a textbook.

Frank's duties include sweeping the warehouse, emptying office bins, cleaning the lunchroom, cleaning company vehicles and re-stocking parts in shelving. Just the same as any worker, Frank understands his role with guidance and initial training and support. This support is the only adjustments provided for Frank to succeed and thus far has proved to be a great success. Frank has said, "The staff and the boss are very friendly and they help me a lot. I'm very happy to be working at the job."

Frank's employment consultant at Sydney Counselling Centre was very happy with the job match saying, "Frank was very excited and enthusiastic about beginning his work as a Warehouse Assistant with Accuweigh. Tim (Frank's employer at Accuweigh) has been very welcoming of Frank, and has demonstrated both an acceptance and understanding of both Frank's strengths and weaknesses. Together with the assistance of Disability Works Australia, we have been able to form a supportive network to aid Frank in the employment process."

As an employer, Accuweigh is leading the way by employing people with disabilities to fill a carved role in each state. Tim is very happy to be working with DWA. He said, "We are very pleased to be associated with this program and believe the benefits to be both wide ranging and long term for all parties. This represents an opportunity for Accuweigh to give something back to the community whilst at the same time, offering opportunity to young Australians. It is refreshing to deal with an organisation such as DWA when they have the best interest of client and company at heart. Frank brings with him a type of infectious enthusiasm that cannot be purchased or taught which will no doubt transfer to fellow staff."

## Queensland

John Smith was unemployed for over 12 months before the opportunity came up with Accuweigh. He was successful for the position due to his previous experience in metal fabrication and fibre glassing proving a bonus as his role with Accuweigh entails drilling and grinding.

John has Aspergers Syndrome and did not require any modifications to enable him to complete his job duties. He was employed on a SWS and has the support he needs from his Disability Employment Network Provider, EPIC Employment and of course his employer, Accuweigh. John's role initially was general cleanup and has now progressed to include packaging and testing of scales, small and large and loading and dispatching of goods. Accuweigh is now looking to extend John's hours and possibly hire another person through Disability Works Australia.

John is enjoying his new role and has made some good mates. He said, "I am more confident and motivated now I am working with Accuweigh. I especially like the additional money which comes in handy because I own a 20 year old Ford XS Falcon."

Jeremy Hembrough, Accuweigh Qld State Manager is very pleased with John and said, "In John's six weeks with Accuweigh he is conscientious and is always looking for things to do even when times are quiet. His enthusiastic attitude is very infectious on other staff."



John Smith, Warehouse Assistant at Qld branch

## Western Australia

Ken Buckley has an intellectual disability and occasional anxiety issues. He was employed in the Willeton branch in Western Australia. Ken was working in the Good Samaritan Industries (GSI) factory at Canning Vale and registered with Options Employment in an effort to gain stable employment. Ken's Employment Coordinator thought this position at Accuweigh would be a good job match for Ken's skills. Ken excelled at his work trial and was soon offered a casual position (2 days per week) on SWS.

Ken experienced some anxiety about catching the bus and opted to cycle the 11km's to work. This takes Ken about an hour. To make this journey a little easier, Options Employment is organising for Ken's bike to be

fitted with an electric motor to make this trip a little less physically demanding and a lot quicker.

Ken's boss, Rob Antonelli, has said that Ken fits well into Accuweigh and regularly completes his set duties for the day early. Rob says,

*"Though Ken was quiet at the start, he is a lot more confident now and interacts well with his co-workers to find more work to do".*

As a result of this, Ken's duties have been expanded to assist with deliveries and to check orders when they arrive at the Warehouse.

Ken Buckley, Warehouse Assistant in WA branch; Rob Antonelli, WA Branch Manager



## Recruitment Made Easy

Employer or preferred supplier notifies DWA of forthcoming job opportunities.

DWA broadcasts vacancies to attract applicants with disabilities.

DWA receives applications and pre-screens applicants.

DWA provides the employer or preferred supplier with details of suitable applicants and advises about any potential supports or modifications required.

Employer or preferred supplier keeps DWA informed of changes or delays in the recruitment process.

Employer or preferred supplier decides which applicants to interview.

DWA contacts and arranges interviews with suitable applicants.

DWA notifies any applicants the employer has decided not to interview.

DWA contacts the employer or preferred supplier to discuss interview results and gain feedback to provide to the applicant.

DWA provides the employer with continued support for employees with a disability.



From left to right: Martin Leeson, Darren Perry (Access Employment), Matthew Mizzi, Wayne Maguire (Coles), Andy Rodman, Damien Lawler (Access Employment).

## Coles Group still giving great opportunities to people with disabilities

The Coles Group continue to work well alongside DWA nationally. In the five years since the relationship was established, over 2,000 people with a disability have secured jobs in the now well known Face Up Teams across Coles Group stores. Face Up Teams are a role carved by DWA from the duties associated with bringing stock to the front of the shelf for a tidier appearance. These duties were taken off the Day/Nightfill Service Assistants so they could fill the shelves quicker.

Glenorchy (Northgate) Tasmania store is the latest store to come on board. The shelves are always tidy thanks to the three people employed with the assistance of DWA.

Matthew Mizzi has an Acquired Brain Injury and has been working in Face Up for about five months. His employment consultant (Damien Lawler) at Access Employment has noticed a significant difference in him. He has seen Matthew's confidence grow, he has gained an ability to work in a team (after working independently), he is more calm and relaxed, and most importantly, his health has improved. Matthew says, "The best thing about working here is that all the staff are supportive and if you have trouble you know they're here to help you."

Martin (Marty) Leeson is another member of the Face Up Team at the store. Damien (Marty's employment consultant) said, "Marty has a learning disability. The Face Up role is great for someone like Marty because it gives him the chance to be shown what to do and learn. He is full of energy and has grown in leaps and bounds." In the future, Marty aspires to one day be a store manager in Coles and looks forward to saving up enough money to own a house. He has said, "What I like about working at Coles is the people (customers) you get to meet and the friendships you build."

Working alongside Marty and Matthew is Andy Rodman. Andy also has an Acquired Brain Injury and was initially wary about

employment but since he has the support he needs from DWA, Access Employment and Coles, he is enjoying having a purpose and working just the same as everyone else. Damien commented that, "Andy's ability to focus on a task has improved dramatically."

Wayne Maguire is currently (Care-Taking) Manager of the store and comments on his three new employees, "Matthew is well loved in the company, he just comes in and does his work as per required. Martin is very good with team spirit and he's always on a high which is noticeable. He performs very well and is a bit of a leader for other team members. Andy loves to come up and interact with people. I think he looks up to Marty and he is learning all the time."

Wayne is very happy with Access Employment and the support they provide for all three employees. "The support and service is fantastic. I have no hesitation in recommending them."

Overall the Face Up Team in the store has seen significant benefits and Wayne comments on the feedback from customers, "The customers are very positive and we get a lot of feedback that the presentation of the store is a lot better than other stores they go to. I would highly recommend to other stores to take up the option of a Face Up Team if the opportunity was presented."

The Face Up Team's are generally filled with people who have a work capacity of between eight and twelve hours per week so it works out perfectly as this role only requires a couple of four to five hour shifts. "The biggest opportunity we've found is that all store managers talk to each other and the successes we are seeing in this store flow to other stores," said Damien.

"Working with DWA has been really good and I would highly recommend DWA to other companies." – Wayne Maguire of Coles.