

Disabled staff are 'untapped talent'

By STAFF REPORTER

The PAG staffing organisation has launched a recruitment strategy for people with disabilities – at the same time helping companies meet their employment equity targets.

PAG's managing director, Lawrence Wordon, says the company considers that people with disabilities are an untapped source of talent for the workplace – and employment enables them to play a more productive role in society.

He says the government estimates in its Integrated Disability Strategy White Paper that between 5% and 12% of the population have disabilities.

The Employment Equity Act of 1998 says that 2% of every company's workforce must be repre-

sented by employees with a disability.

The Act recognises many disabling conditions, including arthritis, brain injury, cancer, chronic pain, cumulative trauma disorders, HIV/Aids, multiple chemical sensitivity, sight impairments, development disabilities, diabetes, epilepsy, hearing loss, blindness, heart conditions, multiple sclerosis, psychiatric impairment and wheelchair users.

PAG has teamed up with a number of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) catering for people with disabilities, including the South African National Council for the Blind, the QuadPara Association of South Africa, the Association for the Physically Disabled and Rehab. and an NGO in the Eastern



ENCOURAGING EQUITY: PAG's Lawrence Wordon

Cape that focuses on the rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities.

Wordon says that PAG will use the expertise of these partner

organisations in their specific fields of disability, helping address the psychological barriers employers and staff might face when employing people with disabilities. They will also assess the physical aspects of the workplace to determine what accommodations need to be made.

"As part of the education process, our partners will cover the 'Code of Good Practice on Key Aspects of Disability in the Workplace', which is a guide for promoting fair treatment and reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities," Wordon says.

PAG is a member of the recruitment and staffing company, Kelly Group, which is an AA, Level-3 Empowerdex accredited organisation.

