

Australia's Disability Strategy Advisory Council

22 JUNE 2023

COMMUNIQUÉ

ADS Advisory Council meeting summary

Australia's Disability Strategy Advisory Council (the Advisory Council) met on 22 June 2023.

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Review update

The Advisory Council noted the update on the membership and chairing arrangements for the Advisory Council.

Dr Ben Gauntlett informed members that he will step down from his role on the Advisory Council and as Disability Discrimination Commissioner on 30 June 2023 to commence as Deputy Commissioner of the National Anti-Corruption Commission.

Members were informed that Minister for Social Services, the Hon Amanda Rishworth MP, has appointed Ms Jane Spring AM as the interim Chair until the end of the year and that the Advisory Council membership will expand from next meeting, with five new members to be appointed to the Advisory Council shortly. Four members will be from disability advisory councils of the Australian Capital Territory, Queensland, Tasmania and Western Australia. The fifth member will fill an existing vacancy.

Members thanked Dr Gauntlett for his significant work with the Council and contributions as the Disability Discrimination Commissioner and to the disability community.

Members acknowledged Ms Spring for being awarded a Member of the Order of Australia in the 2023 King's Birthday Honours List for her significant service to disability advocacy in sport and to public sector administration.

Airports and air travel

The Advisory Council considered issues raised by the disability community regarding the accessibility of airports and air travel, including the particular issues experienced by people travelling by air to and from regional and remote locations.

The Advisory Council noted reforms planned and being implemented in the aviation sector, including the development of an Aviation White Paper; current review of the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002; and discrete transport improvements in a range of areas. The Advisory Council expressed concern, however, that the current activities do not go far enough in supporting universal access to air travel and consider substantive reform of legislation, policy and practices is required. The Advisory Council agreed to provide a submission to the 2022 Review of the Transport Standards for Accessible Public Transport as a first step and to commission further research and analysis to define potential policy reforms. The Advisory Council will also write to the Minister for Transport and Disability Reform Ministers.

Criminal justice and law reform

The Council agreed that further consideration of criminal justice and law reform should occur after the Disability Royal Commission (DRC) releases its final report, as these issues have been subject to significant focus during hearings and are expected to be a focus within the final report.

Housing

The Advisory Council agreed to focus on the substantive issues around housing for people with disability at their next meeting, noting there are multiple policy priorities in Australia's Disability Strategy related to housing and it remains

a key concern to many people with disability. This discussion will inform the Advisory Council's advice to Disability Reform Ministers.

Issues raised by the disability community

The Advisory Council discussed issues that had been raised with members in the disability community.

- The [16th session of the Conference of State Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#) (CoSP), held in New York during June 2023, provided a positive opportunity for Australia's delegation to connect with key stakeholders from across the world.
 - The Council noted the benefits of strong youth representation within Australia's civil society delegation this year and reinforced that this should continue as an important way to support emerging leaders within the disability community and to strengthen connections between these leaders and government.
 - The Council also provided feedback to the department around ways to continue to strengthen arrangements that support civil society participation at CoSP and on the importance of linking Australia's Disability Strategy to the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) and Sustainable Development Goals.

Other business

The Advisory Council agreed to finalise proposed advice to Disability Reform Ministers regarding the Outcomes Framework Annual Report and Targeted Action Plans at the next meeting. The Advisory Council will also be briefed on the approach to Australia's Disability Strategy Two-Year Implementation Report at the meeting.

The next meeting is scheduled to occur on 2 August 2023.