

Working towards Equality for People with Disability Mid-Term Report (July 2016 – January 2019)

January 2019 marks the half-way point of my 5-year term as Australia's Disability Discrimination Commissioner. My job is to work towards an Australia where the rights of people with disability are respected, protected and promoted. Through the [Shaping our Future: national consultation on disability rights](#), people with disability across the country told me what areas they wanted me to work on. This process resulted in my [Working towards Equality for People with Disability roadmap](#). Here, I present a brief overview of my work to date.

Improve disability rights in the criminal justice system



Progress

- Advocacy for implementation of recommendations in the Commission's 2014 [Equal Before the Law](#) report, in particular the development of Disability Justice Strategies by justice agencies.
- Engagement with stakeholders on issues of access to justice for people with disability, including public forums and targeted workshops.

Improve housing accessibility



Progress

- Research on the economic benefits of mandating a minimum standard of accessible housing in the National Construction Code in a collaboration with the Summer Foundation.
- The research provides a sound evidence base for the Commission's policy advice that the Government mandate accessible housing for private residences.

Improve safety and freedom from violence



Progress

- Delivery of the Commission's report, [A Future Without Violence: Quality, safeguarding and oversight to prevent and address violence against people with disability in institutional settings](#). This report makes strong recommendations to governments on redressing violence against people with disability.
- Advocacy for the implementation of recommendations from the A Future Without Violence report, including keeping violence against people with disability on the national agenda.

Increase access to employment



Progress

- Advocacy for the implementation of the Commission's [Willing to Work report](#) recommendations on the prevalence and nature of discrimination in employment against people with disability.
- Promotion of the Commission's [good practice guide](#) for employing people with disability.
- Engagement with the Australian public sector on best practices for employment of people with disability.

Foster Human Rights in the National Disability Insurance Scheme



Progress

- Regular dialogue and engagement with the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) on human rights issues arising from the experiences of community members with the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).
- Regular community conversations around Australia that include discussions of human rights issues with the NDIS. This includes visits to regional and remote locations, such as Tennant Creek and the Utopia region, in partnership with First Peoples Disability Network and Ashurst.

Improve inclusive education



Progress

- Convened a national roundtable on inclusive education with stakeholders representing government, education professionals, academics and disability advocates, co-facilitated by the National Children's Commissioner.
- Held targeted consultations, co-led with the National Children's Commissioner, with education stakeholders.
- [Delivery of a statement](#) at the 11th session of the United Nations Conference of States Parties (COSPP) to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) highlighting inclusive education as a critical issue for people with disability.

I know that there are many other issues that continue to affect people with disability. For example, areas I have been monitoring closely are access to health, communications, and goods and services. I also continue to monitor community attitudes towards people with disability and progress under the National Disability Strategy. I also continue to monitor progress against the DDA Standards.

Other activities:



Transport

The Commission co-hosted a national consultative forum with the Australian Federation of Disability Organisations (AFDO) to discuss current issues with transport accessibility for people with disability. The consultations informed advice and recommendations to Government to improve transport access, as part of the third review of the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport.



Technology

Close engagement with the Human Rights Commissioner on promoting accessible technology for people with disability. This includes involvement with the Commission's [Human Rights and Technology project](#).



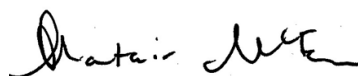
International Advocacy and Engagement with United Nations Mechanisms

- Supported the participation of over 30 representatives of people with disability in key international forums on human rights in 2017 and 2018, including the COSP to the CRPD.
- Reported to the United Nations on Australia's progress with implementation of the CRPD at COSP in 2017 and 2018.
- Hosted the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities and a program of events to reflect on the [25th anniversary of the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 \(Cth\)](#).

Thank you

My deepest thanks and gratitude to all who have supported me in my role thus far. I greatly appreciate your contributions. Your information, ideas, advice and suggestions inform the work that I do.

To all people with disability around Australia: this work is for you and for a better Australia where people with disability can live their lives on an equal basis to others.



Alastair McEwin
Australian Disability Discrimination Commissioner