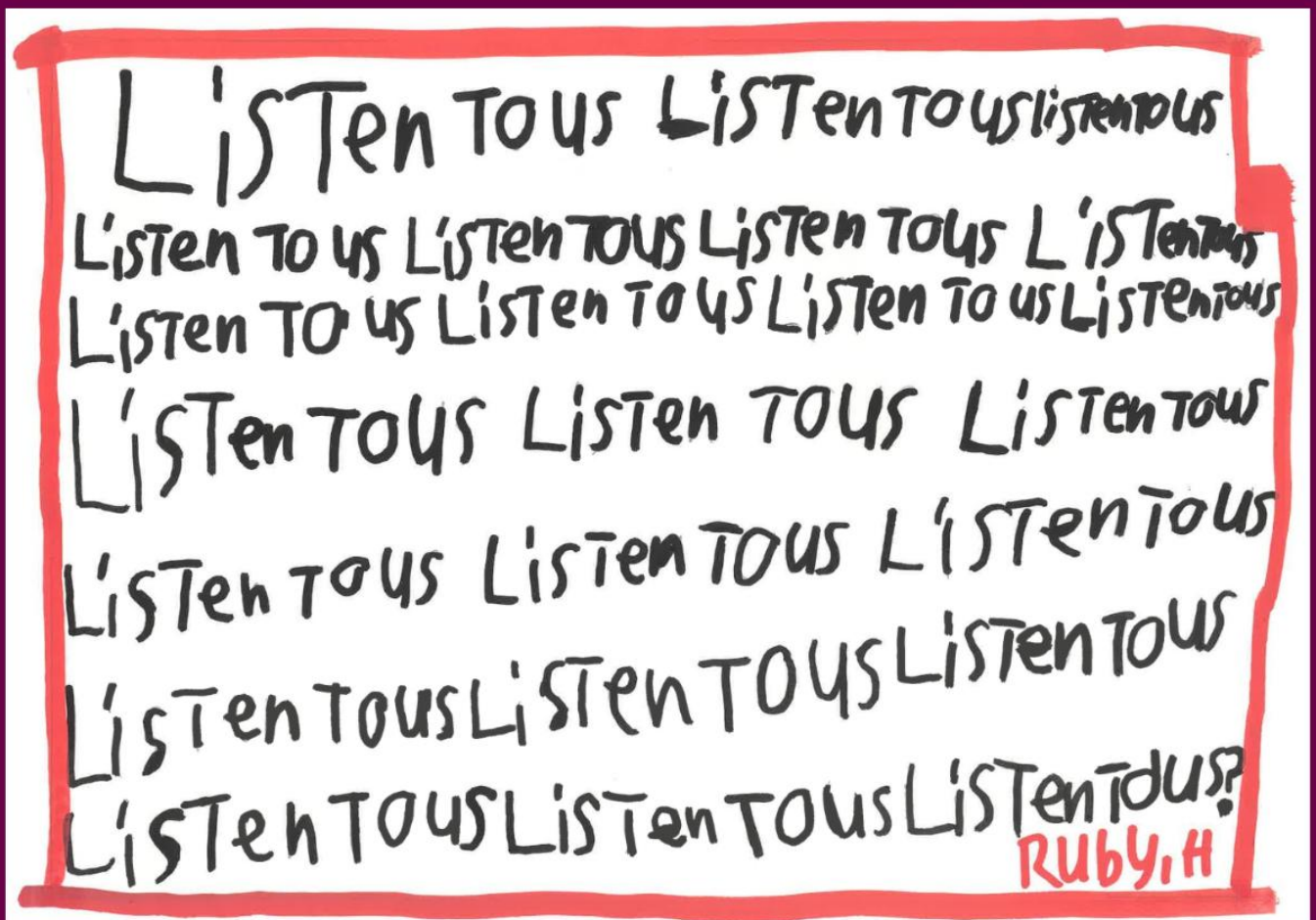




Queensland Independent
Disability Advocacy Network

Analysis of Volume 5 of the Implementation of the DRC



About the Queensland Independent Disability Advocacy Network

The Queensland Independent Disability Advocacy Network (**QIDAN**) is a group of organisations providing individual advocacy services to Queenslanders living with disability. These organisations are funded under the Queensland Disability Advocacy Program (**QDAP**). The member organisations include Aged and Disability Advocacy; AMPARO Advocacy Inc; Capricorn Citizen Advocacy; Mackay Advocacy Inc; People with Disability Australia; Queensland Advocacy for Inclusion (**QAI**); Rights in Action; Yarn2Action run by Aged and Disability Advocacy; Speaking Up For You; and TASC.

QIDAN has three aims:

- Systemic advocacy: coordinated action to address systemic issues experienced by people with disability,
- Member support: a collaborative space for the exchange of information, resources and issues affecting disability advocacy organisations, and
- Sector advocacy: to promote the importance and value of independent disability advocacy on a local, state, and national basis.

The members of QIDAN offer various independent disability advocacy services across Queensland, including general disability advocacy, specialised individual advocacy (including National Disability Insurance Scheme appeals), citizen advocacy and systemic advocacy. QAI coordinates the Disability Advocacy Pathways Hotline ('Pathways') to provide information and referrals to people with disability, their families and supporters.

About the cover artwork

QAI commissioned award-winning artist with disability, [Ruby Herrenberg](#), to create an artwork to raise awareness with politicians on the issues people with disability face. We love that she has used a phrase many people with disability tell us is one of the most fundamental human rights, to be heard. This phrase is particularly relevant in the context of this report, being the lack of implementation of the recommendations that came from thousands sharing their stories with the Disability Royal Commission.

Background

In response to the lack of transparent and meaningful updates on the implementation of the Disability Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (**DRC**), QIDAN initiated an independent, self-led analysis of the progress of each DRC recommendation. What started as a review of publicly available information quickly became something much larger, and our findings from the analysis changed the way we think about the governments' commitment to Queenslanders with disability. We decided to turn our analysis into the following report, because we believe that our findings belong to the public. QIDAN have two main intentions for this report:

1. We want it to be a tool everyone can use to independently track the implementation of the DRC recommendations, and to keep up to date with what governments have said and/or done in relation to the recommendations.
2. We want to keep governments accountable.

Since the DRC was first established in 2019, it has had a significant impact on Australia's disability community. The consultation and evidence gathering process involved nearly 10,000 people with disability, their families and their carers, who shared stories of maltreatment, discrimination, and oppression. The incredible strength of those who contributed to the DRC helped to inform 222 recommendations issued by the DRC in its final report in September 2023. All recommendations were made with the intent of reducing and eliminating the risk of maltreatment, discrimination and exclusion experienced by people with disability, and to reach the realisation of equitable rights and genuine inclusion.

Despite the DRC final report being published over two years ago, there has been very little progress in the implementation of the recommendations. In fact, QIDAN discovers in this report that **only 3% of recommendations have been genuinely implemented**, and 53% of recommendations have no progress we can report on. The lack of action taken by federal and state and territory governments to implement the DRC has significantly impacted the people who shared their experiences with the Commission, and has eroded public confidence that governments are committed to a truly inclusive Australia.

In July 2024, the Australian and Queensland governments released reports detailing their responses to each recommendation made by the DRC, advising whether each recommendation was:

- Accepted
- Accepted in principle
- Subjected to further information
- Noted
- Rejected

QIDAN analysed the reports and noted many of the governments' responses to recommendations were sometimes misleading and did not adequately address the actual intent of the DRC, nor provide strong or clear commitment to the changes the DRC proposed. More information on QIDAN's findings can be found in [QIDAN's Position Paper on the Government Responses to the DRC](#).

Timeline – from the final report to the present

In September 2024, the Disability Reform Ministerial Council (**DRMC**) released a [Disability Reform Roadmap for 2024 and 2025](#) (the **Roadmap**), which provided a brief overview and timeline of the key deliverables for major disability reform pieces, including the DRC, National Disability Insurance Scheme (**NDIS**) reform, Foundational Supports, and Australia's Disability Strategy (**ADS**). The Roadmap clearly stated:

- an interim joint progress update on the DRC was due in December 2024
- the first national implementation progress report was due in June 2025, and
- the second progress report is due in December 2025¹.

It is important to note the first national implementation progress report was only published in late November 2025.

After the Roadmap was published, the Queensland Government committed over \$160 million to disability reform in the Queensland 2024-25 Budget, including investment for the co-designed implementation of the DRC.

In December 2024, the Australian, state and territory governments published a report titled the [National Interim Update 2024](#). The stated intention of this short report was to provide a “snapshot” of the work governments are doing on certain recommendations². However, as we will discuss throughout our report, the activities described in the National Interim Update 2024 report do not adequately meet the intention of the recommendations made by the DRC. The report also reiterated “All governments have agreed that biannual reporting arrangements will commence from June 2025”³.

Following the National Interim Update 2024 report, there was very little communication from the governments about the DRC for most of 2025. The first meaningful update on the DRC was mentioned in the [DRMC Communiqué](#) dated 6 June 2025, which stated Ministers “reiterated their commitment to the implementation of the joint government’s response to the Disability Royal Commission recommendation as a priority for the DRMC and agreed to endorse the Biannual report out of session by the end of August 2025”⁴. QIDAN believe this is a reference to the first national implementation progress report. This report was not released in August. Then, on the 30th of July 2025, an updated [Disability reform roadmap](#) was published.

In October 2025, QIDAN reached out to Queensland’s Minister for Disability to ask when the report will be published, and the response received from the Minister offered no information on its status nor due date.

Finally, on 27 November 2025, governments released the [Disability Royal Commission Progress Report 2025](#), providing federal and state-based updates on each recommendation⁵. Upon review of this report, QIDAN was disappointed by its lack of genuine updates, especially from the Queensland Government.

Alongside the DRC Progress Report 2025, The Queensland Government released a new and updated version of the [Queensland Government Response to the DRC](#), changing the Queensland Government’s position on several recommendations⁶. In fact, the Queensland Government reduced their commitment for two recommendations, and altered their supporting commentary for 37 other recommendations. Some of the changes that concern QIDAN include:

- Recommendation 4.30 (b) regarding vilification because of disability, which was originally accepted in principle but subsequently changed to subjected to further consideration.
- Recommendation 8.16 regarding enabling First Nations organisations to support First Nations peoples with disability in custody, where the Queensland Government originally stated in their response that they accepted the recommendation “to ensure First Nation peoples in custody or under supervision are managed in a culturally sensitive and culturally safe manner”⁷. The response was then altered to remove this sentence⁸.
- Recommendation 9.1 regarding culturally appropriate parenting capacity assessments, which was originally accepted in full by the Queensland Government but subsequently changed to accepted in principle.⁹

It is crucial to note QIDAN could not find any press from the Queensland Government prior to releasing the updated version of its response to the DRC, and the changes made in the new response paper are not clearly identified within the new response document. Though QIDAN do note that the DRC Progress Report 2025 contains several statements about the updated Queensland response, the statements are scattered, inconsistent, and are not made on every relevant recommendation. This means that QIDAN only learned of all the content changed by the current Queensland Government by performing a side-by-side comparison of the original and updated response reports. Covertly changing and downgrading commitments to certain recommendations sets a dangerous precedent, and QIDAN will monitor any future updates made by the Queensland Government.

QIDAN's ongoing commitment to the Disability Royal Commission

QIDAN intend for this analysis to be an annual exercise, and we hope to publish this type of report annually to keep our communities up to date. For this analysis report, QIDAN used information that is publicly available. In many cases, this meant reviewing media statements, articles, reviews of policies and strategies, announcements of reviews into policies and strategies, amendments to legislation, information on consultations, and information from government websites. We use the following terms to indicate how far each recommendation is in the implementation process:

- **Rejected:** The government/s responsible for implementing this recommendation has shown they have no intent to implement it.
- **No Update:** The government/s responsible have either made no public comment regarding implementation of the recommendation, have made no clear attempt at implementation, or the attempt has been cited by the government/s for the recommendation does not actually align with the recommendation.
- **Beginning stages:** The government/s responsible have started a review, plan or program that will inform the future implementation of the recommendation, but no further work has occurred.
- **In progress:** The government/s responsible have implemented a review, plan or program aligning with the recommendation. The government/s may also have started pilot projects or other initial steps that will likely lead to full implementation in the future.
- **Implemented:** The government/s responsible have implemented the recommendation in line with the DRC's intention.

The process of analysing the implementation of the DRC recommendations was challenging and time-consuming. For QIDAN, it put into perspective how difficult it would be for the every-day person to try to keep up to date with the DRC. Often, the updates we discovered were not directly attributed to the DRC, meaning QIDAN had to use discretion to decide whether an action taken by government or other body truly reflected the intent of a DRC recommendation. Because our analysis is based on what is publicly available, and our own discretion, it may not reflect the most recent developments. In an effort to ensure we present accurate information sections of this analysis were provided to relevant Government Departments and agencies prior to release to offer an opportunity for feedback on any publicly available information we may have missed or misrepresented.

QIDAN is committed to promoting and defending the rights of people with disability, and we are hopeful the implementation of the DRC will eliminate the conditions leading to Australians with disability being targeted by violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation. The disability community deserve to play an active role in the disability reform, and QIDAN strives to ensure the DRC is not forgotten.

Volume 5: Governing for inclusion

Volume 5 addresses the need for greater disability leadership, governance and coordination, particularly during the disability reform. Recommendations were made to increase disability leadership with the establishment of a National Disability Commission, lived-experience ministerial positions, portfolios and departments. Recommendations also focused on improving cohesion and effectiveness throughout the Government.

Recommendation 5.1: Development of a National Disability Agreement

Responsibility: Australian, state and territory governments

Response: Subject to further consideration/accept in principle

Update: No update

Recommendation 5.1 recommended the development of a National Disability Agreement by the end of 2024. The National Disability Agreement is recommended to be established through the Disability Reform Ministerial Council, with the fundamental objective of advancing equality, inclusion and disability rights. The National Disability Agreement would also provide a framework for nationally consistent implementation of disability reform, including the DRC. The Australian Government subjected this recommendation to further consideration, stating they would provide their response on the 31 December 2024¹⁰. This response has not been provided.

Recommendation 5.2: Review and update of Australia's Disability Strategy

Responsibility: Australian, state and territory governments

Response: Accept

Update: In progress

Recommendation 5.2 calls for the review and update of Australia's Disability Strategy (**ADS**). A review has occurred, and an updated version of the [ADS 2024 update](#) was published in December 2024. However, the updates to the ADS does not align with the DRC. Furthermore, additional consultation with people with disability have continued into 2026 as part of an independent evaluation of the ADS. Until the ADS has been updated in line with the DRC, and consultations have been finalised, this recommendation is only in progress.

Recommendation 5.3: Review and update of Queensland's Disability Plan

Responsibility: State and territory governments

Response: Accept in principle

Update: Beginning stages

Recommendation 5.3 recommends all state and territory governments review and update disability related strategies and plans to ensure they reflect the DRC's findings. In the DRC Progress Report 2025, the Queensland Government stated it has commenced a review of the [Queensland Disability Plan 2022-2027](#), further mentioning that it will not begin a "full review and co-design process" until the Australian Disability Strategy is updated¹¹. No further progress has occurred.

Recommendation 5.4: Review of national agreements strategies and plans

Responsibility: Australian, state and territory governments

Response: Accept in principle

Update: Beginning stages

Recommendation 5.4 requests that all national disability-related agreements, policies and plans be reviewed. The scope of disability-related national agreements, policies and plans is extensive, and it is difficult to track progress on the extent to which governments have progressed this recommendation. However, there are some areas where traction can be observed, such as in the disaster and recovery space, where disability appears to be a key consideration for reviews and updates to strategies. It appears that governments are beginning to review relevant agreements through a disability lens.

Recommendation 5.5: Establishment of a National Disability Commission

Responsibility: Australian Government

Response: Subject to further consideration

Update: No updates

Recommendation 5.5 recommends the establishment of a National Disability Commission. In their initial response, the Australian Government subjected recommendation 5.5 to further consideration, stating they would consider this recommendation whilst reviewing the 2024 the [Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights report](#) regarding Australia's Human Rights Framework. However, there have been no updates.

Recommendation 5.6: New governance arrangements for disability

Responsibility: Australian Government

Response: Note

Update: Rejected

Recommendation 5.6 calls for new governance arrangements for disability, including establishing a portfolio responsible for disability policies and programs, a ministerial position for disability inclusion, and the formation of a Department of Disability Equality and Inclusion. In the Australian Government's initial response, the government implied it had no intention of implementing this recommendation¹². Therefore, QIDAN considers this recommendation rejected.

Recommendation 5.7: Focal points across jurisdictions to implement the CRPD

Responsibility: Australian, state and territory government

Response: Accept in principle

Update: No updates

Recommendation 5.7 recommends each jurisdiction has a dedicated focus on the implementation of the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (**CRPD**). There are no clear updates on whether governments are actively working toward implementing the CRPD.

References

- ¹ Disability Reform Ministerial Council. (2024). *Disability reform roadmap for 2024 and 2025*. https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/2025-07/disability-reform-roadmap_0.pdf
- ² Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing. (2024). *National interim update 2024*. <https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/2025-07/national-interim-update-2024-easy-read.pdf>
- ³ Ibid, (pp,2)
- ⁴ Disability Reform Ministerial Council. (June 2025). *Disability reform ministerial council (DRMC) Adelaide – 6 June 2025 Communiqué*. <https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/2025-07/drmc-communication-6-june-2025.pdf>
- ⁵ Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing. (November 2025). *Disability Royal Commission Progress Report 2025*. <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/disability-royal-commission-progress-report-2025/volume-4-realising-the-human-rights-of-people-with-disability/recommendations-423-to-434-disability-discrimination-reform>
- ⁶ Queensland Government. (2025). *Queensland Government Response to the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability*. https://www.families.qld.gov.au/_media/documents/disability/disability-royal-commission/qld-govt-response-disability-royal-commission.pdf
- ⁷ Queensland Government. (2024). *Queensland Government response to the Disability Royal Commission* (pp, 100). <https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/2025-11/original-queensland-government-response-to-the-disability-royal-commission.pdf>
- ⁸ Queensland Government. (2025). *Queensland Government Response to the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability* (pp, 92). https://www.families.qld.gov.au/_media/documents/disability/disability-royal-commission/qld-govt-response-disability-royal-commission.pdf
- ⁹ Ibid (pp, 98)
- ¹⁰ Australian Government. (July 2024). *Australian Government response to the Disability Royal Commission*. <https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/2025-07/australian-government-response-to-the-disability-royal-commission.pdf>
- ¹¹ Ibid
- ¹² Australian Government. (July 2024). *Australian Government response to the Disability Royal Commission*. <https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/2025-07/australian-government-response-to-the-disability-royal-commission.pdf>