



Queensland Independent
Disability Advocacy Network

Analysis of Volume 12 of the Implementation of the DRC



'My Good Life'

Artwork by First Nations artist with lived experience of disability, Gabe Wischki

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

"My Good Life" is an acrylic painting on coloured cardboard with string and magazine which is strongly connected to Gabe's sensory appreciation. This work represents a freedom to express himself and be included in places that belong to everyone. Gabe is a known member of his local community from which he collects magazines to peruse and meet his sensory needs.

Gabe's art involves rubbing his hands and pushing his fingers through the paint. Gabe loves the thick quality of acrylic paint squeezed between his fingers and wiped across his face and body. He also enjoys manipulating various materials through the paint. The painting's surface plays a significant role in creating the artwork, as it is folded and manipulated into various positions to capture the paint. The use of varied materials in combination with his hands serves as a way for him to connect with his Aboriginal

heritage. Being non-speaking, Gabe's art is a way to further communicate, enrich and connect with his community.

- **Gabriel Wischki, Mixed Media Artist**

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’ 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 12: Beyond the Royal Commission

Volume 12 focuses on the implementation of the DRC findings and recommendations, setting out expectations and suggestions for mechanisms to monitor, report on and evaluate actions taken by governments in response to the DRC. All recommendations made in Volume 12 are targeted at the Australian Government, with some also targeted at state and territory governments. It is clear volume 12 is focused on independent and disability-led oversight of the DRC implementation, strong accountability, and effective outcomes for Australians with disability. The necessity of this analysis shows

Recommendation 12.1: Government responses to the Final report

Responsibility: Australian, state and territory governments

Response: Accept in principle

Update: Implemented

Recommendation 12.1 calls for the Australian and state and territory Governments to publish initial responses to the DRC's Final Report by March 2024. Responses were expected to include a plan for how the recommendation would be implemented, justification for any rejections, and timeframes. The Australian and Queensland Governments responses released in December 2024 were very late and did not provide comprehensive plans for how the recommendations would be implemented or any concrete timeframes. There was also no adequate justification provided for rejected recommendations.

Recommendation 12.2: Implementation of the Final report recommendations

Responsibility: Australian, state and territory governments

Response: Accept in principle

Update: Implemented

Recommendations 12.2 regards the implementation of the DRC's recommendations, recommending the Disability Reform Ministerial Council oversee the implementation as a priority. Though the Communiqués published by the Disability Reform Ministerial Council are infrequent and provide very little information on the Council's work to implementing the DRC,

the stated purpose of the Council is to coordinate and lead disability reform (including the DRC).

Recommendation 12.3: Progress reporting on implementation of recommendations

Responsibility: Australian, state and territory governments

Response: Accept in principle

Update: No updates

Recommendation 12.3 recommends the National Disability Commission table an annual report on the progress of the implementation of the DRC. As mentioned in response to recommendation 5.5, the National Disability Commission has not been established. In the DRC Progress Report 2025 the Disability Reform Ministerial Council is credited with beginning to implement this¹⁰, however this recommendation will never be implemented without the National Disability Commission.

Recommendation 12.4: Evaluation of effectiveness in improving outcomes

Responsibility: Australian Government

Response: Accept in principle

Update: No updates

Recommendation 12.4 asks the National Disability Commission to lead independent evaluations of the implementation of the DRC recommendations, which should include evaluation of their effectiveness in improving outcomes for Australians with disability. As previously mentioned, the National Disability Commission has not been established, and there doesn't appear to be another independent body evaluating the implementation of the DRC.

Recommendations 12.5 – 12.7: Improving the collection of disability data

Responsibility: Australian, state and territory governments

Response: Accept in Principle

Update: Beginning stages

Recommendations 12.5 to 12.7 regard nationally consistent and strengthened approaches to disability-related data collection. The DRC Progress Report 2025 provided updates on these recommendations, stating that governments are working together through the Disability Reform Ministerial Council to develop a consistent approach to data collection. This includes

by developing a short standard set of questions on disability status. A report with recommendations on the questions was supposed to be finalised by mid-2025¹¹. This report has not yet been released publicly.

Recommendation 12.8: Long-term support for the National Disability Data Asset

Responsibility: Australian, state and territory governments

Response: Accept in principle

Update: No update

Recommendation 12.8 recommends the Australian and state and territory Governments, with the Disability Reform Ministerial Council, should commit to long-term support of the National Disability Data Asset (**NDDA**). This includes financial support with funding, a commitment to publishing annual data, and commencing specific data projects through the NDDA. Although the NDDA still functions there is yet to be a long-term commitment.

References

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- 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 Department of Health, Disability and Ageing. (November 2025). *Disability Royal Commission progress report 2025 - recommendation 12.3*. <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/disability-royal-commission-progress-report-2025/volume-12-beyond-the-royal-commission/recommendation-123-progress-reporting-on-implementation-of-recommendations>
- ¹¹ Ibid