

Suzanne Orr MLA

Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs
Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water
Minister for Disability, Carers and Community Services
Minister for Seniors and Veterans

Member for Yerrabi

RESPONSE TO QUESTION ON NOTICE**Questions on Notice Paper No 3****Friday, 7 March 2025****Question No. 196**

MS BARRY MLA: To ask the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs

1. Can the Minister provide an update of the status and current work priorities of the Disability Reform Taskforce, noting that the (a) ACT Government response to the Disability Royal Commission was in part the establishment of a Disability Reform Taskforce to progress disability reform, (b) National Disability Services ACT pre-budget submission 2025-2026 asks that “the Disability Reform Taskforce should release a Reform Roadmap and provide regular updates on the reform agenda. It should develop a Stakeholder Engagement Plan to formalise a sector-led approach, including people with disability, carers, advocacy groups and providers and (c) 2024-2025 Budget, Supplementary Budget Papers at page 48 identifies savings in 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 of \$851,000 with the description “Savings – Establishing a Disability Reform Taskforce”
2. How will the work intended to be conducted by the Disability Reform Taskforce be impacted by the decision not to fund the Taskforce?
3. Can the Minister provide details of the Reform Roadmap and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy, and if these details are not currently available, when does the Minister anticipate the Reform Roadmap and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy will be available?
4. Is the Minister committed to engage widely with the disability community on the development of this approach; if so, when will the Minister commence that engagement?

Suzanne Orr MLA - The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

1. The Disability Reform Taskforce (DRT) was operationalised for two years following the 2024-25 Budget to lead ACT's implementation of the significant disability reform agenda resulting from the combined findings of the *Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation of People with Disability* (DRC) and the *Independent Review of the NDIS* (NDIS Review).

Since its commencement, the DRT has undertaken significant work to progress national and ACT-specific disability reforms including:

- a. Leading ACT's participation in interjurisdictional negotiation on NDIS legislative and operational reform, including negotiation of five instruments under the *National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013* (NDIS Act). Three of these instruments were classified as NDIS Rules and as such required the formal agreement of the ACT Government. Approximately sixteen further instruments under the NDIS Act are expected to be developed and agreed in the remainder of 2025.
- b. Negotiation on legislative approaches to defining 'NDIS Supports' in a way that clarifies the role of the NDIS and as such minimises issues at the mainstream interface.
- c. Ongoing support for the work of national First Deputies Group and disability senior officials to negotiate the parameters of a national Foundational Supports Strategy. Ongoing work to design of Foundational Supports has been tasked to disability officials in 2025 while joint negotiations on health and disability funding continue, with the intent to roll out services once these funding negotiations are settled.
- d. Engagement in national modelling work with disability officials, to consider the Foundation Support cohort size, scope and support needs, as well as preliminary ACT-specific modelling to inform local service design considerations.
- e. Leading ACT's participation in national discussions around reforming the Information, Linkages and Capacity Building program in response to community and jurisdictional concerns.
- f. Working with the Commonwealth and other states and territories to establish an NDIS Reform Advisory Council, including developing the Council's terms of reference and ensuring the inaugural Expression of Interest process is accessible for people with disability.
- g. Working with cross-government colleagues to progress quality and safeguarding reforms in response to the findings of the DRC.
- h. On an ACT-specific level, the DRT's work has included:
 - i. Cross-government work to oversee and coordinate ACT reforms to avoid duplication with existing work and ensure a coordinated whole-of-government approach to disability reform.
 - ii. Ongoing engagement with the disability community to keep them updated on, and engaged with, the reform agenda.
 - iii. Undertaking thematic analysis and initial prioritisation of the ACT's disability reform agenda resulting from the combined findings of the DRC and NDIS Review.

- iv. Testing early work on thematic analysis and prioritisation with a group of targeted stakeholders in October 2024, and ongoing community engagement to further shape disability reform priorities, sequencing and implementation planning.
2. The DRT was funded for 2 years' operation in the 2024-25 Budget. The 2024-2025 Budget Supplementary Budget Papers note the DRT funding as a saving because funding for the DRT was comprised of offsets from several other ACT Government Directorates. This funding arrangement has not impeded the work of the DRT.
3. A national Disability Reform Roadmap and associated national engagement activities was released in September 2024 to provide clarity around current national reform activities that all Governments are committed to progressing over 2024 and 2025. Implementation planning across the breadth of disability reform recommendations and actions in the ACT is underway, with early work brought to a targeted stakeholder group in late-2024 for their consideration. More detailed work on implementation planning and community engagement will be made available later in 2025.
4. Yes. The findings of the both the DRC and NDIS Review are the result of extensive engagement with the disability community and the Commonwealth government continues to lead a range of stakeholder engagement and co-design forums, in which ACT disability community representatives have engaged. In addition, the ACT government continues to work with the ACT disability community when there is updated information to share and when there are genuine opportunities for engagement and input into key reforms. In 2024 a community workshop on foundational supports was held in June 2024; an information session on the ACT Government response to the DRC was held in August 2024; and testing early work to prioritise disability reforms held in October 2024. The next disability reform stakeholder forum is planned for 25 March 2025. The design and implementation of specific reforms will require fit for purpose engagement mechanisms, and these will be established as implementation progresses.

Approved for circulation to the Member and incorporation into Hansard.

Suzanne Orr MLA
Minister for Disability, Carers and Community Services

Date: 19/03/25

This response required 175 minutes to complete, at an approximate cost of \$331.75.