

Inquiry into the National Disability Insurance Scheme Amendment (Getting the NDIS Back on Track No. 1) Bill 2024 [Provisions]

Canberra Hearing – 14 June 2024, Answers to Question on Notice by Disability Advocacy Network Australia

Q: A list of non-disclosure agreements signed by you or your organisations, the content of those NDAs, and who asked you to sign those non-disclosure agreements

A: DANA was asked and did sign a non-disclosure agreement to be briefed on the draft Bill. I understand that this briefing did not provide any direct input on the bill and how it would operate, and was limited to not discussing the contents of the Bill outside of the briefings provided. I did not sign a non-disclosure agreement on the Bill as another DANA staff member was involved in that process.

I did sign a non-disclosure agreement for DSS meetings on fraud I attended (of which I believe there were two) and I understand my colleague, El Gibbs, similarly did so for a third meeting (but I am not in a position to check as she is on leave today).

It is my understanding that the NDIA does not require non-disclosure agreements except in very limited circumstances (such as where commercial-in-confidence matters arise. The agency can obviously advise on this.

Q: Subject, dates and locations of briefings with DSS/Minister

A: DANA performs a Secretariat role for the peak Disability Representative Organisations on national systemic policy as part of the National Coordination Function. DANA also has a parallel Secretariat role for Disability Representative and Carers Organisations in the context of the NDIS and the NDIA. As a result, DANA regularly meets with DSS and the NDIA and, on occasion, the Minister. These are best placed to provide this information.

Q: Whether you received copies of any of the RedBridge focus groups reports, about how to communicate this legislation and the government's reform agenda in the NDIS? Anything further from anyone else about how to spin the legislation or how to frame or talk about it?

A: I have been made aware that the Redbridge report was an agenda item for the DRCO Forum in February 2023. I was in Darwin for consultations on the establishment of the National Centre for Disability Advocacy (NCDA) for DANA but recall attending the first hour or so before leaving for the airport (after consulting my diary). I note that there does not seem to be any papers or attachments regarding this report.

DANA is the industry body for independent advocacy organisations. We have a proud history of representing the interests of our members and working to improve the lives of people with disability. DANA is widely regarded by stakeholders as an honest broker and we have considerable experience and expertise in constructively and independently engaging in policy

and advocacy; a role that we perform without fear or favour. Any suggestions that DANA would spin the legislation to suit the government is anathema. A cursory glance at our stance on the current Bill - with extensive recommendations on proposed changes to the Bill - speaks volumes to our independence.

Q: Have you or anyone you worked with ever met with Julianne Stewart

A: I do not believe I have met with Julianne Stewart, and I am not familiar with the name. I am not aware of anyone else at DANA who has met with her.