

The Hon Catherine King Minister for Transport, Regional Development and Local Government Parliament House Canberra



My Dear Minister

I appreciated the opportunity to be part of the Aviation White Paper- Ministerial Roundtable on Disability Access. I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss how the government might implement IDA's programs nationally. The Disability Royal Commission (DRC) supported our call for our covid centres access proposal to be considered a matter of national priority.

I attach IDA's paper, Rights to Reality requested by a Disability Royal Commissioner, the paper details a quantum shift in the approach to changing community attitudes and individual capacity building. A world first human rights based approach suggested by Gerard Quinn, UN Special Rapporteur on Disabilities, during his appearance before the DRC.

IDA is proud of the response from the DRC for our world first initiatives:

**Disability Royal Commission** responses to IDA submission (copies attached)

"We would greatly appreciate hearing of these experiences through a further submission by you as it is evident that your organisation has promising practices, innovations and recommendations that can assist in achieving a more inclusive Australia"

"We acknowledge the importance of mutual recognition, support, and safe zones, so that persons with disabilities can participate in standard civilian activities without their condition, and/or mental health, being exacerbated or undermined by the ignorance of those they are interacting with. We are sorry to hear of the verbal and physical abuse endured by some of your participants but are pleased to hear that your National Communication ID Cards, Lanyards and Car Magnets have alleviated some distress with your participants."

IDA has undertaken over 6 years of intensive research and development in consultation with individuals, groups, and organisations across a wide cross section of society in Australia and overseas and has created a strong platform and framework that is already being seen as world best practice. It offers a model that both government and community can be proud of and is in use right now.

If airports and airlines go it alone instead of being part of a national program they will unfortunately continue to abuse, segregate, assault and traumatise people with chronic health conditions and disabilities.

I attach letters of support from the Disability Royal Commission, The Hon Michael Kirby, AC, CMG, The Hon Gareth Evans, AC QC FASSA FAIIA and 365 Stomal Therapy Nurses.

I can be contacted on: Phone 0409 511 493 email IDA@invisibledisabilities.com.au

Kind Regards Lynn Russell, CEO & founder Invisible Disabilities Australia

17 August 2022

Dear Ms Russell,

Thank you for your organisation's submission to the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability.

Your submission was received on the 15 June 2022. We have now read the submission of your organisation, **Invisible**Disabilities Australia, regarding the widespread and broad lived experiences of Australians living with Invisible

Disabilities. We greatly appreciate the time and energy your organisation has spent in making this submission, and your organisation's general enthusiasm to contribute to both our work and to improving the lives of those suffering from Invisible Disabilities. We acknowledge the importance of mutual recognition, support, and safe zones, so that persons with disabilities can participate in standard civilian activities without their condition, and/or mental health, being exacerbated or undermined by the ignorance of those they are interacting with. We are sorry to hear of the verbal and physical abuse endured by some of your participants but are pleased to hear that your National Communication ID Cards, Lanyards and Bumper Stickers have alleviated some distress with your participants.

Further, thank you for shining light on the need to develop a National Framework for more accessible Covid Testing and Vaccination centres throughout Australia. We acknowledge your organisation's efforts in lobbying same with government and your recommendation this initiative be considered a matter of national priority.

We have ensured your organisation's submission has been brought to the attention of the relevant teams within the Royal Commission.

Please note that for your participants' submissions to be taken into account in preparing the Final report the Royal Commission will need to receive them no later than 31 December 2022. We are unlikely to use submissions received after this date in our work or count them in our statistics. Your participants are encouraged to contact our office to discuss the options available to them for sharing their lived experiences.

We again sincerely thank you for your contribution to the work of the Royal Commission.

Kind regards,

#### **Submissions**

Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability

**T:** 1800 517 199

**E:** <u>DRCsubmissions@royalcommission.gov.au</u> **P:** GPO Box 1422 Brisbane, Queensland, 4001





**OFFICIAL: Sensitive** 

Dear Ms Russell,

Thank you for providing the Royal Commission with a copy of your creative Submission. It was a fantastic snapshot of your National Communication ID Cards and Lanyards offerings which has been circulated with the relevant teams across the Royal Commission.

We are encouraged to hear that your organisation considers the important intersect for older persons identifying as persons with disabilities as they commonly suffer from compounded marginalisation in society. We would greatly appreciate hearing of these experiences through a further submission by you as it is evident that your organisation has promising practices, innovations and recommendations that can assist in achieving a more inclusive Australia.

In order to facilitate a new, or further, Submission/s, the Royal Commission can assist with:-

- organising a telephone submission with one of our Intake and Counselling Officers;
- organising a weblink be sent to you or a participant;
- organising an email be sent to you or a participant;
- organising a text message be sent to you or a participant; or
- organising a hard copy of the application form to be sent to you or a participant.

Please note we will endeavour to tailor the Submission process to the needs of any participant should we be made aware of the participant's needs prior to making contact.

Unfortunately the registration for private sessions was closed in June 2022.

We are looking forward to your next Submission and hope it covers the topic of 'Disability Transport Standards Reforms' as previously foreshadowed.

Please note our correspondence is not confidential and it would not disadvantage your Submission for you to distribute the content of our emails with your participants. We hope by doing so, you are able to encourage your participants to engage with us and share their lived experiences. We would be pleased to hear from them and can, of course, offer tailored communication to suit their needs.

Please note we have been circulating your organisation's contact details with persons who identify as living with invisible disabilities, as an additional support option, with the aim of connecting people with appropriate supports throughout this process.

We again sincerely thank you for your contribution to the work of the Royal Commission and your advocacy for persons with disabilities.

Kind regards,

#### **Submissions**

Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability

**T**: 1800 517 199

**E:** <u>DRCsubmissions@royalcommission.gov.au</u> **P:** GPO Box 1422 Brisbane, Queensland, 4001



#### **OFFICIAL: Sensitive**

Dear Lynn,

Thank you for providing Invisible Disabilities Australia's submissions to the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability.

Your submissions were received on 30 December 2022. We have now read all of the documents you provided via drop box link. We thank you for sharing accounts of the experiences of people with invisible disabilities navigating air travel, public bathrooms, discrimination in employment, and their positive experiences of using the IDA lanyards and cards. We also express our gratitude for your extensive advocacy work for people with invisible disabilities.

While the Royal Commission is unable to resolve individual cases, submissions such as those you have provided help us to develop an understanding of systemic issues.

We have ensured that your submissions have been provided to the relevant teams across the Royal Commission. We greatly appreciate the time and energy you have spent in making your submissions

#### How your organisation's information will be used

All submissions we receive contribute to the Royal Commission's work.

Your organisation's submission will help us to:

- identify the extent of the problem
- understand more about the systems and contexts in which abuse is more likely to occur
- develop an understanding of the impacts on people with disability, their families, support people and our community
- gather information relevant to our investigations and research programs
- hear different views.

We may want to contact you to discuss aspects of the information you have provided. Please let us know if you do not wish to have any further contact from the Royal Commission. Please also let us know if there are any further supports, contact preferences or adjustments that would support you to participate.

#### **Independent support services**

<u>Blue Knot Foundation</u> has been funded by the Australian Government to provide trauma informed telephone counselling for people engaging with the Royal Commission. The phone number for Blue Knot is 1800 421 468 (open 9:00am to 6:00pm weekdays or 9:00am to 5:00pm weekends AEDT) or emailing <a href="mailto:helpline@blueknot.org.au">helpline@blueknot.org.au</a>. We also have internal support services available.

<u>Your Story Disability Legal Support</u> is a national legal service independent from the Royal Commission. It can provide free and independent legal advice. The service can be contacted via free call on 1800 771 800 between 9:15am to 5:15pm AEDT, Mon – Fri, excluding public holidays.

#### Follow our work

The Royal Commission has resumed Public Hearings. Public hearings are live streamed on our <u>website</u> and recordings of previous hearings of the Royal Commission can also be accessed there. Our website also provides upcoming dates for Public Hearings.



# From Rights CREATING AN INCLUSIVE SOCIETY

From Rights to Reality

World first initiatives based on rights and needs





GOOD FOR FAMILIES, TOURISM, BUSINESS & ECONOMY

### **EFFECTIVE NATIONAL PROGRAMS**

Reduce Escalation of Disability to Dependency

### Advantages

Veterans
Older Persons
Visible & Invisible Disabilities
Migrant Communities
Chronic Health Conditions

Reduces NDIS Costs Supports Social Inclusion Reduces Dependency Increases Independence Starts Conversations



DISABILITY ROYAL COMMISSION HEARINGS **PROVE THE CASE ABS 2021** 20.6 Million 11.6 Million At least one long term health condition At least one chronic health condition WIDESPREAD ABUSE, DISCRIMINATION & EXCLUSION of people with chronic health conditions, 5.2 Million invisible and visible disabilities Mental health 3.2 Million **Arthritis** 3.9 Million Back

**Problems** 

### A SERIOUS NATIONAL PROBLEM

## Requires a National Program

Industry or Disability Specific Solutions are not the Answer

#### THE PAST

- Disability definition has changed over the last 50 years
- Understanding, signs, access have stayed the same

#### IMPACT ON COMMUNITY

- Over 90% of people with visible disabilities have invisible conditions
- Invisible disabilities and chronic health conditions not obvious
- Harder for organisations to comply with anti-discrimination laws
- People with disabilities are often abused for not looking disabled
- 1960's wheelchair logo use is unregulated; misinforms community



#### IDA DETAILED REPORTS OF ABUSE TO DISABILITY ROYAL COMMISSION

#### **Shopping Centre**

Young woman with early onset
Parkinson's challenged by security
staff for looking drunk. They
called police to remove her

#### Disabled Parking

Mother of disabled children heard a noise at car window. Man had head inside car screaming expletives saying she did not look disabled to him

#### **Airport Security**

Woman with ostomy was suicidal after being publically humiliated, abused and assaulted by untrained airport security

#### Australia Post

OVER 50,000 TWITTER VIEWS

Disabled elderly lady asked Australia Post counter manager if she could sit on a chair instead of queuing. She said she had problems standing. He replied, "No you can't, we have to treat everyone the same".

She replied, "But we are not all the same are we?"

#### National Institution

Disabled woman publically shamed & humiliated by her manager for arriving at work on a walking frame

#### **Bank Queue**

Woman with disability requiring a chair, kneels on floor rummaging through handbag and crawls to counter

#### Airport

Adult trauma victim of child abuse completely traumatised by lack of support at airport

#### Airport

Security staff refused private screening request and put security wand and hands down the pants of a woman with an ostomy

# THIS HAS TO STOP R Invisible Disabilities Australia

#### **HOW DO WE TURN THE SHIP AROUND?**

#### **NEW PERSPECTIVES AND INNOVATIONS**

"We need to turn the ship around.

Create new perspectives and innovations to contribute to change."

#### RIGHTS FIRST THEN IMPAIRMENT

"Persons with disabilities should be approached first as persons with equal rights and expectations and secondly as persons with impairment that might require special attention."

#### PROBLEMETISE BARRIERS NOT PEOPLE

"We need to stop problemetising people, instead we need to problemetise the circumstances within which people find themselves, problemetising the barriers and finding practical means and legislation to support and include the needs of all of us."

> MR GERARD QUINN United Nations Special Rapparteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

> > DISABILITY ROYAL COMMISSION HEARING 31, INCLUSION 2022

Disabilities Australia

# WHERE IS THE HOW?

"We hear so much about what people have and why we should support them but the how is sadly missing"

Ms Kate Eastman, Senior Counsel Assisting the Disability Royal Commission (Hearing 31, 2022)



### THE HOW!

### ONE NATIONAL CONSISTENT PROGRAM

**NEEDS BASED SOLUTIONS IN DIFFERENT CIRCUMSTANCES** 

#### **REDUCES CONFUSION**

- Supports rights of people with disabilities reduces litigation
- Assists in reducing discrimination and loss of business
- Considers that people have several disabilities or conditions
- Reduces triggering, public humiliation & mental health impact
- Needs based approach simplifies national training
- No need for understanding of a range of impairments



# AIRPORTS & AIRLINES - SERIOUS NATIONAL PROBLEM A REFLECTION OF THE REST OF SOCIETY

#### The Case for One National Program - Based on Needs

IDA submissions report discrimination to Disability Royal Commission

- Woman with ostomy (external bowel) physically assaulted by security staff
- · Airport refused to support former child abuse victim suffering trauma, PTSD, anxiety
- Publicly challenging people with breast implants, ostomies, external medical appliances
- Abusing people physically and mentally
- No priority queueing or support system for people with impairments or disabilities
- Unwieldy ad hoc training of security staff focused on a limited group of disabilities
- Lack of any/or suitable chairs for those who cannot stand in queues

Chair of Disability Royal Commission
The Hon Ronald Sackman AO KC
Writes to CEO's of Airports & Domestic Airlines





### THE CASE FOR NEEDS BASED REFORM

#### NOT ORGANISATION, IMPAIRMENT, OR DISABILITY SPECIFIC

#### **COURTS AND LAW REFORM**

Several jurisdictions in Australia have considered legislation and law reform promoting diversity and inclusion. Recent reforms include jury duty and inclusion of people with sight or hearing impairments, <u>presumes all deaf and blind people have the same needs</u>.

• Over 90% of people with visible disabilities have invisible impairments

#### REFORM NEEDS TO BE SYSTEMIC AND INCLUSIVE

Inclusive of needs of all who enter and work in courts

- Priority Support Lanes at all entrances
- Safe Zone Stations mutual recognition
- Badge Ambassadors trained to recognise, respond & support
- · Extensive disability parking
- Accessible building
- Toilets that include needs of over 50,000 with ostomies (Opening in abdomen that collects body waste)

  ACT first jurisdiction in Australia to modify court toilets to suit ostomy changing
- Appropriate inclusive support chairs reserved for people with impairment

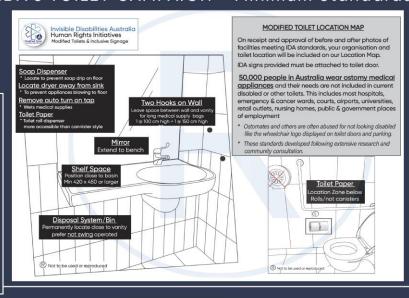
#### 365 STOMAL THERAPY NURSES SUPPORT IDA'S CAMPAIGN Exclusion of over 50,000 people with stomas.



#### MINIMUM SUPPLIES FOR STOMA CHANGING



#### IDA'S TOILET CAMPAIGN - Minimum Standards





**INACCESSIBLE PAPER** 





#### UNUSEABLE FACILITIES AT;

- **EMERGENCY WARDS**
- HOSPITALS, COURTS
- SCHOOLS, CANCER WARDS
- NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS





# ABOUT US

#### **INVISIBLE DISABILITIES AUSTRALIA**

- CHANGING COMMUNITY ATTITUDES
- LINKING PEOPLE TO RIGHTS & NEEDS
- CONTRIBUTING TO AN INCLUSIVE SOCIETY

....it is evident that your organisation has promising practices, innovations and recomendations that can assist in achieving a more inclusive Australia."

**Disability Royal Commission 2022** 



### STRONG COMMUNITY SUPPORT

#### THE HON. MICHAEL D. KIRBY AC CMG

• I strongly support the initiatives that Invisible Disabilities Australia has undertaken.... I hope you will do the same

#### THE DALAI LAMA

 ....admires the initiatives of Invisible Disabilities Australia supporting disabilities of one kind or another that are not so evident to others

#### THE HON. GARETH EVANS AC QC FASSA FAIIA

IDA'S work goes directly to the protection of human dignity, has real
practical impact, and deserves the utmost recognition, respect and support

#### STOMAL THERAPY NURSES ASSOCIATION (365 Nurses Australia Wide)

 The AASTN supports Invisible Disabilities Australia in their campaign to improve facilities and processes for people with invisible disabilities







#### WORLD FIRST INITIATIVES

NO NEED TO EXPLAIN- COMMUNICATE WITHOUT WORDS

CARD QR CODE LINKS PEOPLE TO INTERNATIONAL RIGHTS

#### **QR CODE WEBSITE STATEMENT**

If an Invisible Disabilities Card Holder has asked you to scan the QR Code on their card it means they need your support.

Please ask them if there is any support they need.

PLEASE DO NOT ASK THEM ABOUT THEIR MEDICAL CONDITION

You have an obligation to support them under the United Nations Convention On Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

**HUMAN RIGHTS OBLIGATIONS- Link to AHRC** 









#### IMPORTANCE OF MUTUAL RECOGNITION

#### Between Rights Holders & Duty Bearers

#### Supported by Disability Royal Commission 2022

"We acknowledge the importance of mutual recognition, support, and safe zones, so that persons with disabilities can participate in standard civilian activities without their condition, and/or mental health, being exacerbated or undermined by the ignorance of those they are interacting with"



Lack of recognition and support can lead to litigation, public humiliation and loss of business.



Lack of inclusion impacts people with chronic health conditions and can lead to an increase in disability.

R Invisible

Disabilities Australia

# WHY REGULATED SIGNS MATTER A CAUSE FOR NATIONAL RESET

#### PEOPLE AND COMMUNITY ATTITUDES ARE MISLED BY SIGNS

The 1960's sign is no longer fit for purpose is misleading & often causes escalation of medical conditions to disability and dependency.

- people abused and refused access to facilites, laughed at or taunted for not looking like this sign.
- organisations display this sign when facilities are not suitable for use by people with a range of impairments.
- toilets are used for storage, are unuseable. This leads to stress, exclusion, personal injury, humiliating accidents, self isolation and reduces social participation.
- installation of signs must be audited for compliance prior to installation,
- complaint Safe Places and facilities (including toilets) included on IDA's Safe Places Map.

UNREGULATED 1960'S SIGN
CAN BE USED ANYWHERE
CAUSES ABUSE & DISCRIMINATION



# IDA'S INCLUSIVE SIGNS, CARDS & LANYARDS SUPPORT MUTUAL RECOGNITION

PRIORITISES PEOPLE WHO NEED SUPPORT, PRIORITY IN QUEUES,
SAFE RESERVED CHAIRS, TOILET ACCESS



IDA's SIGN USE REGULATED & PRE-APPROVED





### NATIONAL CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE

Showcasing National Standards & Safe Places













LET'S START WITH THE HOUSE OF THE PEOPLE

Show Business, Governments & Community what inclusion looks like



# FEDERAL PARLIAMENT

An Inclusive Place
to Visit and Work





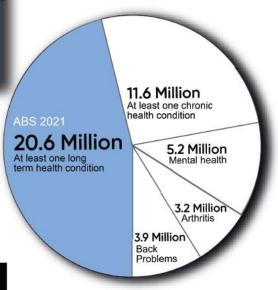
#### THE FEDERAL PARLIAMENT

NOT JUST A WORKPLACE - Over 1 Million Visitors a year

SAFE ZONES & PRIORITY ACCESS LANES
For people with disabilities/medical conditions

- Safe Zone Stations In Building Entrances
- Badge Ambassadors Providing Support
- IDA Chairs in public and workplace areas











#### THE FEDERAL PARLIAMENT

NOT JUST A WORKPLACE - Over 1 Million Visitors a year

SAFE ZONES & PRIORITY ACCESS LANES For people with disabilities or medical conditions

- Safe Zone Stations In Building Entrances
- Badge Ambassadors Providing Support
- IDA Chairs in public and workplace areas









552300 INVISIBLE DISABILITIES AUSTRAL
www.linvisibledisabilities.com.au
admin.sinvisibledisabilities.com.au

PLEASE OPEN IN EMERGENCY



NATIONAL
ACCESS CARD
TOILET ACCESS
The holder of this cord has a medical condition
requiring use of disabled and non-public toilets.

EMERGENCY-TOILET ACCESS REQUIRED PLEASE

EMERGENCY-TOILET ACCESS REQUIRED P
www.invisibledisabilities.com.au
admineinvisibledisabilities.com.au

# PROPOSED GOVERNMENT ACCESS PROGRAM 100% Discount provided to vulnerable groups

Government program in line with Disability Royal Commission's position that <u>IDA's National Access Cards and Lanyards</u> assist card holders by reducing the impact of the ignorance of those they are interacting with.

#### Program Access Groups - Distribution

- War Veterans
- People with visible & invisible disabilities
- People with chronic health conditions
- NDIS Recipients Currently available to Plan & Self Managed participants
- Toilet Access Cards Members of the Governments Stomal Therapy Program (Over 50,000)

# Rights to Reality



IDA requests Federal Government - In advance of the DRC's Final Report in September 2023;

#### SUPPORT CHANGES TO COMMUNITY ATTITUDES - DISABILITY/CHRONIC HEALTH PERCEPTIONS BY;

- (a) Providing funding for/sponsor screening of IDA's video, attached, on national television, social and other media
- (b) Showcase and implement Safe Zones, Mutual Recognition, National Access Cards & Lanyards, in the Federal Parliament; National Institutions; Australia Post Offices; National Disaster Planning Programs; Courts; Border Force at airports, and other Federal organisations
- (c) Support National roll out of IDA's regulated disability inclusive signs and phased withdrawal of 1960's wheelchair logo promoting advantage of inclusive national profile for participating organisations and businesses
- (d) Encourage states & territories, business and community to implement national changes mirroring (b, c & f) including hospitals, schools, courts, chemists and health facilities, retail outlets

#### **REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES - RECOMENDATIONS**

- (e) Civil Aviation Authority (CASA) mandatory reporting on national standards for airports and airlines
  - \* Widespread abuse and lack of national needs based program, including airports, is causing escalation of mental health and suicide ideation among people with PTSD, prostheitc limbs, stomas, arthritis, chronic pain
  - \* More recently women with breast implants humiliated and traumatised as a result of new airport security systems

#### AIRPORTS AND AIRLINES CAUSING WIDESPREAD ABUSE AND DISCRIMINATION

- (f) Inclusion of the needs of over 50,000 people in Australia with stomas (opening in the abdomen that collects body waste) in disability toilet design standards (In the interim promote importance with states & territories, business and community)
  - \* IDA National Toilet Design supported by 365 Stomal Therapy Nurses, Stoma Supply Associations and appliance wearers
  - \* These people suffer disproportional abuse at airports and throughout community, when using disabled facitlities or parking
- (g) Encourage States and Territories to include a photo on Disability Driving Permits
  - To assist in prevention of widespread abuse of people using valid permits who are acused of not appearing disabled
  - \* Card holders to be advised that the person in the photo must be in the car when disabled parking is being used



# MADE IN AUSTRALIA FOR AUSTRALIA Supported by Disability Royal Commission

SUPPORT AUSTRALIA BE AMBASSADORS FOR CHANGE

#### AUSTRALIAN MANUFACTURING, BUSINESS & JOBS





#### CHAIRS

Made entirely in Australia for generations by Queensland family business. Supplies Opera House and state health departments



#### BADGES

Made for generations by Victorian family business





# Invisible Disabilities Australia (IDA) SERVICE PROVIDER DECLARATION

IDA R 2023 All Rights Reserved. All information included in this letter/proposal pertaining to IDA, Pty Ltd - including but not limited to its operations, employees, technology and clients - is proprietry and confidential and supplied with the understanding that such information will be held in confidence and not disclosed to any third party without IDA's prior written consent.

This letter/proposal is intended solely as a preliminary expression of general intentions only, and does not create any agreement or obligation by IDA to negotiate or continue negotiations. IDA shall have no contractual obligation with respect to the matters referred to herein unless and until a definitive, fully executed agreement has been delivered by the parties.

Prior to delivery of a definitive executed agreement, and without any liability to the other party, either party may (1) propose different terms from those summarised herin, (2) enter into negotiations with other parties and/or (3) unilaterally terminate all negotiations with the other party hereto.

This proposal is open for acceptance for up to 14 days.

#### **COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE**

www.invisibledisabilities.com.au

