

6 May 2019

Mr Ross Joyce
Chief Executive Officer
247 Flinders Lane
Melbourne VIC 3000
office@afdo.org.au

Dear Mr Joyce,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide the views of the Coalition on important issues facing your members. A response to your questions is attached.

This election will have real consequences for Australia's economy and our future.

Despite global headwinds, our economy is strong. This year, for the first time in more than a decade, the Government will deliver a Budget surplus.

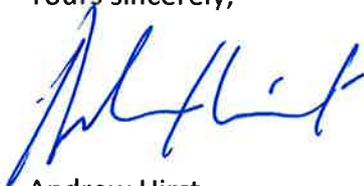
A stronger economy means we can deliver on our plans to:

1. Create 1.25 million more jobs over the next five years.
2. Maintain budget surpluses and pay down debt.
3. Deliver tax relief to encourage and reward hard working Australians.
4. Guarantee increased investments for schools, hospitals and roads.
5. Keep Australians safe and our borders secure.

I have attached a copy of *'Our Plan to Support People with Disability'*, which outlines our commitment to the essential services people with disability, their families and carers rely on.

Thank you for communicating our response to your members.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew Hirst
Federal Director

MORRISON GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO AUSTRALIAN FEDERATION OF DISABILITY ORGANISATIONS

The Morrison Government is backing Australians with disability, their families and carers.

The Morrison Government is committed to providing individual choice and control to people with disability, to create opportunity so they can achieve their goals.

We understand that people with disability want to play an important role contributing to the social and economic life of our community. We recognise that it is good for them, their families and the nation.

It is only by building a stronger economy and balancing the Budget that the Morrison Government can guarantee the services people with disability, their families and carers rely on – and deliver them the jobs they deserve.

1. Commitment to the Royal Commission into violence, abuse, neglect, and exploitation of people with disability across all settings in Australia, encompassing matters raised by AFDO and its members that are not currently in or are lacking sufficient weight in the Royal Commissions Terms of Reference, as well as conflict of interest issues with two of the appointed Commissioners who must step aside.

The Morrison Government has established a *Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability*, providing \$527.9 million over five years in the 2019 Budget.

The Royal Commission will provide the opportunity for people with disability, their families and carers to tell their stories. It will help us to understand where systems are failing, so that we can put measures in place to better uphold and promote the rights of people with disability.

The Morrison Government will ensure that people with disability, their families and carers have access and are supported to engage with the Royal Commission, with more than \$100 million for advocacy and supports and counselling.

The panel of six Commissioners is representative of a diverse range of backgrounds, which includes lived experience of disability, judicial and policy experience, and Indigenous leadership. As with any Royal Commission, Commissioners will be expected to declare any real or apparent conflicts so that they can be effectively managed throughout the inquiry.

2. Commitment to funding the National Disability Strategy (NDS) and progressive achievement of measurable outcomes at a federal level as well as ensuring this applies to all levels of government.

The Morrison Government is committed to the implementation of the *National Disability Strategy (NDS) 2010-2020* and the development of a new NDS beyond 2020.

Since 2013, the Coalition Government, in partnership with the states and territories, has released:

- *The National Disability Strategy 2010-2020 Second Implementation Plan – Driving Action 2015-2018;*

- *The Australian Government Plan to Improve Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People with Disability*; and
- *National Disability Strategy 2010-2020 Australian Government Action Plan*.

Under the *National Disability Strategy Second Implementation Plan: Driving Action 2015-2018*, all governments committed to a series of solutions-focused workshops.

Four workshops have been held: two on improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, one on improving employment outcomes for people with disability and another on criminal justice.

In 2017, also under the second implementation plan, we released *the Australian Government Action Plan* and *the Australian Government Plan to Improve Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People with Disability* (the Indigenous plan).

To support the Indigenous plan, the Coalition announced funding of \$3 million for two targeted projects: a research to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners and ex-prisoners with disability and a trial on integrated health and education approaches to support students with disability in remote communities.

The Coalition have also announced \$10.5 million in grants for initiatives to help build inclusive communities, so people with disability can take control of their lives and have equal access and opportunity. The grants will contribute to outcomes under the current Strategy and build the foundation for delivery of a new strategy for 2020 and beyond.

Work has already begun on developing a new NDS for beyond 2020, with public consultation opening in the first half of 2019. A re-elected Morrison Government will continue to consult with people with disability, their families, carers and supporters, as well as the states and territories to consider the recommendations of the Productivity Commission Review of the National Disability Agreement.

3. Commitment to set aside, as a clearly defined reserve fund, the full and ongoing funding of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and to provide any necessary legislation to this effect. This must be at the level required for the full Scheme each year, including any funds remaining being retained in the reserve fund, including from any budget underspend in any given year. This is to provide certainty for all approved participants and for the long term security of the Scheme.

The Morrison Government will establish an NDIS Reserve Fund to manage the lifetime risk of participant costs. It will improve participant outcomes and manage scheme sustainability on insurance principles. The parameters of the Reserve Fund will be agreed with the states and territories, in line with the NDIS Full Scheme Agreements that have been signed with NSW, SA, ACT and NT.

4. Commitment to people with disability who are not part of the NDIS for continued access to services and relevant supports provided at a Federal and State/Territory level through COAG and other agreements or arrangements.

The Morrison Government is committed to ensuring people with disability who are not eligible for the NDIS continue to be supported.

In the 2018 Budget the Coalition committed \$92.6 million over 4 years to provide continuity of support for clients of existing Commonwealth programs transitioning to the NDIS who are found ineligible. There are five different packages of continuity of support which will be implemented from 1 July 2019, with approximately 27,000 existing Commonwealth clients expected to receive continuity of support.

The Morrison Government will also continue to work in partnership with state, territory and local governments, people with disability and the disability sector more broadly to develop a new NDS for the next decade and consider the recommendations of *the Productivity Commission Review of the National Disability Agreement*.

As part of *Our Plan to Support People with Disability*, a re-elected Morrison Government will commit \$45 million over the next three years to develop a national disability information gateway, including a website and 1800 number, to assist all people with disability (not only those supported through the NDIS) and their families to locate and access services in their communities.

The gateway will consist of a website, including a service finder similar to that available on the My Aged Care and Carer Gateway websites, and a national call centre via a dedicated 1800 number to assist people with disability and their families to locate and access services for themselves or the ones they love.

Establishing a National Gateway will improve access to information and services for people with disability and their families, which is currently fragmented and difficult to navigate with services and supports spanning multiple sectors including health, housing, employment, transport and disability services.

For example, the Gateway will assist people with disability to find a local advocacy services, a sporting team that meets the needs of their disability, disability related events and disability service providers.

The Gateway will utilise information and resources that will be developed as part of *the NDIS Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) National Information Program*.

5. Commitment to equitable and sufficient funding of all current national Disability Representative Organisations and an allowance for emerging, to fulfill their role for people with disability and their families; to add value in working with all governments on policy, initiatives and systemic disability issues.

See answer to question six

6. Commitment to equitable and sufficient funding of disability advocacy agencies and its national peak body to fulfil their role for people with disability and their families; to add value in resolving individual issues and to provide input and data on systemic or other issues for resolution.

The Morrison Government recognises the important role of advocacy for people with disability. Since September 2013, investment in disability advocacy has grown from \$19.7 million to \$34.4 million in 2018-19.

We have demonstrated our commitment to funding disability advocacy. In 2017, the Coalition committed \$60 million to continue Commonwealth support for advocacy until 30 June 2020, including *the National Disability Advocacy Program (NDAP)*, the NDIS Appeals providers and a new funding round *for Disability Representative Organisations (DRO)*.

As part of this commitment, a number of reforms have been rolled out to better support people with disability, including:

- a move to a more person centred approach;
- improved coordination of people's systemic issues;
- a greater focus on helping Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability; and
- improved reporting of advocacy outcomes.

The Coalition has also announced:

- an additional \$2.4 million a year for NDAP in New South Wales and Queensland to ensure each state and territory receives equitable funding for advocacy from the Australian Government according to population; and
- continuation of the NDAP Decision Support Pilot and a boost of funding for NDIS Appeals providers in 2019-20 costing \$6.5million.

Additional funding for advocacy services are also being provided as part of our \$527.9 million commitment to the establishment of *a Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability*.

A re-elected Morrison Government will reform the national delivery of advocacy services for people with disability from 1 July 2020. Following the rollout of the new *National NDIS Information, Linkages and Capacity Building Strategy in 2019*, we will work with the states and territories to ensure appropriate and fully funded independent, individual and systemic advocacy is available for all people with disability across Australia.