

ARATA submission to the Inquiry into the delivery of outcomes under the National Disability Strategy 2010-2020 to build inclusive and accessible communities
06-07-2017



David Harraway – Occupational Therapist (Yooralla) ARATA Member and Carl Thompson –Project Officer ([AFDO - Australian Federation Of Disability Organisations](#)) ARATA Board Member attending the Melbourne Hearing on 6 July 2017

David Harraway explains,

We were made welcome by the members of the Committee present on the day and they thanked us for ARATA's written submission. We spoke about the importance of impartial , experienced , and expert information and advisory services as resources for the whole Assistive Technology community. It is ARATA's considered position that The independent Living Centre and TADs are a vital check and balance on the supply side driven market that the NDIS is based on.

The Committee questioned us on several key areas that ARATA had highlighted :

1. The concerns we have for changes to the NBN and the potentials for reduced access and increased user costs. Carl spoke very eloquently and passionately about how essential reliable/fast internet is to him in both his personal and business lives. We made reference to the employment opportunities that the NBN may provide people with disabilities going forward as the roll out of the NDIS continues in tandem.
2. Professional Issues being faced by Therapists working in rural and remote contexts. David related experiences he has had when working with therapists based outside major centres of population as they tend to not have as ready access to Supervision and opportunities for Professional Development. We spoke about the potential for a well implemented NBN to offset some these and also that it may provide new ways of working eg teleconsulting, teletherapy
3. Accessible home design. Carl and David talked to the need for quality flexible public and private housing options for both purchase and rental. Innovative housing models are going to be required if the NDIS is to be successful in fulfilling ambitions.
4. Accessible Public Transport- Carl shared his personal experience and appreciation for the Victorian experience. There still needs to be more work done in connecting various modes of transport together. Carl also spoke about issues with Accessible Aviation travel. Limitations on the numbers of people who use wheelchairs in flights does not align with some other developed nations. Being a wheelchair user means there are extra layers of bureaucracy to navigate/endure every time he wants to catch a flight for work or a holiday.

The Committee finished by thanks us for sharing our experiences of the issues raised; and we expressed our gratitude for the opportunity .

Link to submissions and hearing programs can be found at:

http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Community_Affairs/AccessibleCommunities/Public_Hearings