



NDIS Reform Advisory Committee Meeting Summary – Friday 13 March 2026

The Committee met on Friday 13 March 2026. The Co-Chairs acknowledged there is currently concern and fatigue in the disability community, with the rapid pace of reform and past experiences of how changes have been implemented. The Co-Chairs also noted the resignation of the Western Australia representative from the Committee and thanked them for their contribution. Members were advised that arrangements to fill the vacancy are progressing.

Mr Graeme Head AO, the Chief Executive Officer of the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) attended for an open question and answer session with members. He outlined his approach to NDIS reforms, saying his priority is rebuilding confidence through clear, direct, participant-facing communications rather than policy documents alone. He reported the NDIA has started targeted emails about new framework planning, and committed to making decisions transparent and predictable so people can see how assessments translate to budgets. He detailed work to strengthen capability within the Agency, and build an assessor learning and capability framework aligned to APS values, and simpler internal guidance to reduce inconsistent experiences. On new framework planning, he described desktop analysis, volunteer testing and independent validation of the support needs assessment and committed to respond in writing to members detailed technical questions. Members asked a wide range of questions, particularly focused on their representative areas and groups, such as engagement with people with disability from culturally and linguistically diverse communities, commissioning in remote areas and how the Agency is increasing the capacity of staff to engage with people with disability.

The Committee then considered a presentation on the proposed NDIS Supports rules and associated materials. Officials outlined the move from the current 36 support categories to 22 broader categories of NDIS Supports, aligned with the new Support Needs Assessment and budget setting. This approach is intended to enable more flexible budgets, reduce the volume of stated supports, and better connect assessed need to what can be purchased with NDIS funding.

Breakout room discussions highlighted confusion navigating the NDIS Supports “in” and “out” lists and concern that rigid or technical drafting could unintentionally exclude legitimate supports. Members pointed to examples such as home security systems that enable supported decision-making, private transport where public transport may be unsafe, unavailable or not usable for a person’s fluctuating needs, and choices between mainstream and bespoke assistive technology. Members emphasised the need for plain-English explanations and practical examples to help participants and decision-makers confidently use flexible budgets without fear of compliance action for good-faith decisions. Given many participants require support for decision-making, members stressed guidance must be designed for use with supporters, interpreters and peers, and that planners and plan managers need clear permission and backing to apply judgement rather than defaulting to refusals.

Members also stressed good communication to support implementation, building trust and NDIA staff capability as key factors. Breakout rooms consistently pointed to the need for staged, accessible

communications; peer-led and community-based advice channels; and culturally safe engagement, particularly for CALD and remote communities. Members advised that overlapping reforms may risk overwhelming people if not sequenced carefully. They suggested an approach that preserves flexibility, encourages innovation, including using mainstream and emerging technologies, and demonstrates how participant choice and control will operate in practice, not just in policy intent. Members also highlighted the need for plan managers as well as planners to be clearly supported to make reasonable, good-faith decisions, including where the rules are not clear, without risk of punishment.

Under its Terms of Reference, the RAC provides formal advice and six-monthly reports to Disability Reform Ministerial Council (DRMC) to inform Disability Ministers about community views on the progress of the implementation of NDIS reforms.

The Committee agreed to provide the following advice:

- **Publish a clear NDIS reform roadmap**
Ministers should urgently release a clear, authoritative roadmap setting out the full package of agreed NDIS reforms over the next five years, including priorities, sequencing and timing, to reduce uncertainty and stress in the community.
- **Delay commencement of New Framework Planning**
The move to New Framework Plans should not commence before 1 October 2026, to allow sufficient time for development, testing and meaningful public consultation, while still beginning reform in 2026.
- **Release full exposure drafts for New Framework Planning consultation**
All inter-related Category A Rules and associated documents (including explanatory materials, budget methodology and assumptions) should be published together with exposure drafts to enable informed and holistic public consultation.
- **Ensure New Framework Planning reforms are tested and implemented carefully**
Implementation of New Framework Planning should not be rushed in a way that increases the risk of unintended consequences. Participants and the disability community must be central to testing, trialling and evaluation.
- **Proceed with proportionate provider regulation reform**
The Commonwealth Government should accept and implement all recommendations of the Provider Registration Task Force, working with people with disability and their representative organisations to design a proportionate, risk-based regulatory framework.

Members discussed the content of the RAC's first 6-monthly report to the DRMC and agreed on its overall focus and tone. The report will explain the recent increase in reform activity, restate the RAC's role, and highlight the Committee's national membership and lived-experience base.

The advice outlines the scale and pace of current reforms, including new planning framework, assessment and budget-setting work, provider regulation, integrity measures and Thriving Kids and foundational supports reform. The report also notes the stabilising impact of confirmed NDIA leadership and highlight current community sentiment, including ongoing gaps in information and reform fatigue, as key risks to successful implementation.

The report summarises the RAC's work to date and engagement with Ministers, senior officials, advisory bodies and disability representative organisations. The report asks Ministers to support joined-up

consultation on related reforms, prioritise plain-English guidance and examples, and ensure the NDIA is equipped to deliver reforms in line with co-design principles so flexibility works in practice.

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday 17 April 2026.