

To Whom It May Concern:

The Physical Disability Council of the Northern Territory wishes to fully endorse the response from the Physical Disability Council of Australia Ltd May 2003.

The information and recommendations contained within the PDCA document are the viewpoints of all Territorians with physical disability.

The PDC-NT is incorporated in it's own right but is part of PDCA in general and has 2 representatives on the Directors Board of Management.

As the Northern Territory has a high population of indigenous people of many language groups leading traditional lives, it is essential that the DDA not be tampered with in any way that will be detrimental to the rural and remote areas of Australia.

Many indigenous persons have high levels of multiple disabilities and their rights can be easily infringed upon, due to the disempowerment of a most marginalised group of people.

The remoteness and tyranny of distance can lend itself to discrimination occurring and not being acted upon to reverse the situation.

There are many individuals in the Northern Territory who do not have a voice or a sufficient lobby to ensure the needs of an individuals rights are met.

The DDA presents an opportunity for the "VOICE" to be articulated and heard. The preservation of HREOC is an essential component in ensuring the continuation of rights for all people who are marginalised, and it's effectiveness and competency must be guarded well into the future.

Making complaints in rural and remote areas is not an easy accomplishment, as distance is prohibitive and the infrastructure that supports anti-discrimination is only visible in Darwin, the capital of the Northern Territory with visits from Darwin visiting as time and finances permit.

Michele Castagna,
Chairperson