

DPO Coalition
by email: us-dpo@groups.io

Key Messages – March 2025

The DPO Coalition meets with a wide range of agencies. The objective of our meetings with officials is always to get improved outcomes for disabled people. We regularly discuss the need to ensure accessibility and to uphold the rights of disabled people under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (“the Disability Convention”).

This set of Key Messages covers our DPO Coalition meeting in March 2025.

Payments NZ

The DPO Coalition met with a team of 12 people from Payments NZ. Andrew Weaver, Senior Business Analyst led workshop interactions with us on behalf of the Payments NZ team, which included Steve Wiggins Chief Executive. We discussed several topics, each of which looked at ways to improve the experience disabled people have when carrying out financial transactions. We emphasised the importance of disabled people having confidence when making financial transactions, whether in person or online. We look forward to working with Payments NZ and informing their work around accessibility of payments for disabled people.

Stats NZ

During our meeting with Stats NZ, we learned about key themes from the public consultation held in 2024. We also

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heard about the next Census and what this means for the collection of data about disability communities.

We met with:

- Sean Broughton, General Manager Statistical Delivery, Population and Housing;
- Abby Johnston, General Manager, Statistical Delivery, Social and Environment;
- Thomas Cooper, Senior Insights Analyst Social and Communities Statistics;
- Simon Browne, Principal Statistician;
- Danielle Calder, Senior Advisor Accessibility;
- Gareth Minshall, Principal Methodologist.

Human Rights Commissioners

Initiated by the Disability Rights Commissioner Prudence Walker, the DPO Coalition met with the new Race Relations Commissioner Dr Melissa Derby and the Equal Employment Opportunities Commissioner Dr Gail Pacheco and Frances Anderson, Senior Human Rights Advisor to the Disability Rights Commissioner. We talked about disability rights and the relevance of these to each of the new Commissioner's portfolios. The DPO Coalition conveyed to the Commissioners the importance of taking an intersectional approach to disability and engaging with disabled people directly on issues relevant to their respective portfolio. The Minimum Wage Exemption was amongst topics we talked about. Regrettably Dr Stephen Rainbow, Chief Human Rights Commissioner was an apology.

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Hon Louise Upston, Minister for Disability Issues

The DPO Coalition's meeting with the Minister for Disability Issues included Chris Bunny Deputy Chief Executive Disability Support Services MSD, and Ben O'Meara Deputy Chief Executive Policy and Strategy Whaikaha. We discussed the future of disability support services, accessibility legislation, and the approach towards refreshing and developing a five-year Disability Strategy. The Minister encouraged the DPO Coalition to continue actively engaging with Disability Support Services and Whaikaha. She pointed out the value the DPO Coalition can add to each of the objectives being worked on.

Ministry for Women

The DOP Coalition met with the Ministry for Women to discuss their consultation on online harassment and experiences of online abuse. The DPO Coalition agreed this was an important topic and provided some anecdotal examples and trends in online abuse, harassment and intersection with disability rights for the Ministry of Women to include in the Online Harm Report.

Donald Beasley Institute

The DPO Coalition met with the Donald Beasley Institute (DBI) team Brigit Mirfin-Veitch, Director and Associate Professor, Umi Asaka, Research and Education, and Dr Robbie Francis Watene, Senior Researcher. We received a progress report on each of the areas the 'Disabled People Led Monitoring' work that DBI is contracted to do, for the DPO Coalition. The first report from the "Disability Supports and Services" work "The

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Whaikaha Report” was released on 31 March 2025. This is available in alternate formats on the DBI’s website.

DBI is commencing a new project on behalf of the DPO Coalition, which will be worked on over the next three years. The topic ‘What does an adequate standard of living look like?’ links to Article 28 of the UNCRPD | Disability Convention and will look at the cost of living for disabled people. There will be opportunities for disabled people and whānau to provide input to this mahi.

The DPO Coalition also congratulated the DBI for the 2025 Zero Project Award. DBI’s award recognises at a global level the work they are doing to advance the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Whaikaha

A workshop with the DPO Coalition and a succession of Whaikaha officials contributed towards the development of briefing papers, which each of the five working groups will use to develop actions for the next Disability Strategy. Led by Ben O’Meara Deputy Chief Executive Policy and Strategy Whaikaha, the DPO Coalition engaged with officials, providing context, information sources, and other information it believes would assist the working groups do their job.

Voice of disabled people

The DPO Coalition is the first place that the Government goes to when wanting to engage with the voice of disabled people.

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We are continually looking for new member organisations to join the DPO Coalition to increase our coverage across the disability community. New members must represent disabled people who are not already represented by an existing member. If you would like to apply, please email the Secretariat at: us-dpo@groups.io