



GPO Box 700  
Canberra ACT 2601  
1800 800 110

[ndis.gov.au](http://ndis.gov.au)

Mr Bob Buckley  
Convenor  
Autism Aspergers Advocacy Australia  
via email: [convenor@a4.org.au](mailto:convenor@a4.org.au)

Dear Mr Buckley:

Thank you for your email of 18 May.

We request your assistance. We would like to establish a firm fact basis and agreement on a professional approach as a basis for moving forward.

In relation to the facts. First, we can assure you that Mr Peter De Natris — the National Disability Insurance Agency's Early Childhood Early Intervention Special Advisor — telephoned you. He called you from his mobile at 5.28pm on Tuesday 15 May. When you did not answer your phone, he left you a telephone message, which included asking you to call him back. Another member of staff witnessed him making that call. When you did not call him back, he called you again around 11.30am on Wednesday from a landline, but did not leave another message.

Second, you state that neither of us have engaged with autism participants or their representatives. That is not the case. Just this month, Mr De Luca met with Ms Fiona Sharkie, the CEO of AMAZE, as well as Mr Adrian Ford, the CEO of ASPECT and Chairperson of the Australian Advisory Board on Autism Spectrum Disorders. Dr Nugent has attended over a dozen participant workshops meeting a significant number of participants with autism, as well as members of their family and carers. She also regularly meets with a broad range of stakeholder groups, with there being over ten just this month. In addition, as you are aware, Mr De Natris conducts extensive and regular meetings with a large number of stakeholders through the Autism CRC and through Autism consumer representative groups and providers.

On the second and sensitive subject, we respectfully request that you speak about our staff in a professional way. Using the term "minions" to describe them is not consistent with our values, as well as the respect we try to engender and the professionalism to which we aspire.

On the basis you are prepared to have a fact-based, professional discussion, we will meet with you at a time and place that is mutually convenient. That would be in addition to the meeting that is already planned with you later in the month with Ms Stephanie Gunn, NDIA General Manager, and the one that was held with you in January. Please advise us if that is agreeable.

Yours sincerely,

**Helen Nugent, AO**  
Chairman  
National Disability Insurance Agency  
20 May 2018

**Robert De Luca**  
Chief Executive Officer  
National Disability Insurance Agency

Delivered by the

National Disability  
Insurance Agency