

Subject: Re: FOI 23/24-0833 – Status Update - complete farce

From: "Bob Buckley (A4)" <convenor@a4.org.au>

Date: 13/09/2024, 6:49 pm

To: foi <foi@ndis.gov.au>

CC: "Falkingham, Rebecca" <Rebecca.Falkingham@ndis.gov.au>, "McKenzie, Corri" <Corri.McKenzie@ndis.gov.au>, "The Hon. Mr. Shorten MP" <Bill.Shorten.MP@aph.gov.au>, "Hughes, Hollie (Senator)" <senator.hughes@aph.gov.au>, senator.steele-john@aph.gov.au, Amanda.Rishworth.MP@aph.gov.au, michael.sukkar.mp@aph.gov.au, "Jenny Karavolos (Australian Autism Alliance, co-chair)" <jenkaravolos@outlook.com>, Andrew Davis <adavis@autismcrc.com.au>, "Chris Varney (Australian Autism Alliance co-chair)" <chris@icannetwork.com.au>, Jacqui Borland <jborland@aspect.org.au>, Ross Joyce <ross.joyce@afdo.org.au>

BCC: David Edelman <davidedelman76@gmail.com>, renee fisher <reneef@live.com.au>, Natalie Rose <rosenatalie1015@gmail.com>

Thank you for keeping me informed on "progress". Please note that I now regard the processing of this FOI request as a complete farce. People in the autism sector have the right to know what is being said about them and on their behalf.

Bob Buckley

Co-convenor, *Autism Aspergers Advocacy Australia* (A4)

website: <http://a4.org.au/>

A4, a recognised disability representative organisation (DRO), advocates for autistic people, their families, carers and associates. A4 is internet based so that Australians anywhere can participate in and contribute to A4's advocacy for autistic people, their carers and allies.

A4 recognises the Traditional Owners of lands in Australia; we respect their elders past, present and emerging. Sovereignty was never ceded.

Recipients of correspondence from A4, especially politicians and government officials, are all subject to A4's policy on unanswered questions: see <http://a4.org.au/node/1419>.

The issue is that autistic people just don't deliver on the plans, dreams and expectations in other peoples' head.

On 13/09/2024 3:56 pm, foi wrote:

Dear Bob Buckley

I am writing to give you a status update about your FOI request.

Firstly, I apologise for the significant and ongoing delays. I am continuing to process your matter. I have identified that your request includes documents which contain the business information of third parties. As such, I am conducting a consultation with those third parties to ascertain if they have any objections to the release of the documents.

I have **attached** a letter which explains this process in further detail. If you require the attachment in a different format, please let me know.

Please contact us at foi@ndis.gov.au if you have any questions or require help.

Kind regards

Laura
Assistant Director

Complaints Management & FOI Branch
General Counsel Division
National Disability Insurance Agency

E foi@ndis.gov.au



The NDIA acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures and to Elders past, present and emerging.



From: Bob Buckley <convenor@a4.org.au>
Sent: Friday, August 2, 2024 11:22 AM
To: foi <foi@ndis.gov.au>
Cc: Jenny Karavolos <jenkaravolos@outlook.com>; Andrew Davis <adavis@autismcrc.com.au>;
jborland@autismspectrum.org.au; Chris Varney <chris@icannetwork.com.au>
Subject: Re: FOI 23/24-0833 – Your request for information - Communication [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Thank you.

I have not been holding my breath. I won't start doing that now.

Bob Buckley
Co-convenor, *Autism Aspergers Advocacy Australia (A4)*
website: <http://a4.org.au/>

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The autism issue is that autistic people just don't deliver on the plans, dreams and expectations in other peoples' heads.

On 2/08/2024 10:17 am, foi wrote:

Dear Bob Buckley

I am emailing you about a FOI request you made on 31 January 2024. I have taken over

as decision maker on this matter. I am emailing to give you a status update on your FOI request.

Firstly, I would like to apologise for the significant delays in processing your FOI request. I can assure you that we are still actively working on your FOI matter.

You requested the following documents held by the NDIA:

"...documents relating to the NDIS Autism Advisory Group (AAG) including but not limited to minutes, agendas, briefing material and action/outcome reports"

You agreed to revise the scope of your request to documents falling within the past 12 months. We have interpreted this to mean documents from 31 January 2023 – 31 January 2024 (which was the date of your FOI request).

We have conducted searches with line areas to locate documents that fall into the scope of your request. Our search efforts have returned multiple documents. We are currently working with line areas to consider disclosure under the FOI Act.

At this stage, I do not have a timeframe on when your request might be finalised. However, I can assure you that it is being treated as a priority in appreciation of the length of time you have already been waiting for our decision.

If you have any questions or would like to raise any concerns, please contact me at any time by emailing foi@ndis.gov.au.

Kind regards

Laura

Assistant Director

Complaints Management & FOI Branch

General Counsel Division

National Disability Insurance Agency

E foi@ndis.gov.au



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From: Bob Buckley (A4) <convenor@a4.org.au>

Sent: Monday, May 20, 2024 6:15 PM

To: foi <foi@ndis.gov.au>

Subject: Re: FOI 23/24-0833 – Communication – Request Consultation [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Dear Ms L

I'm sorry, your call came in the middle of another call. It said "private number" so I could not call back.

To save time, I suggest that we start by narrowing the scope of my FOI to the last 12 months. If that is OK, we don't need to meet at this time.

Bob Buckley

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"The first step in solving any problem is recognising there is one." Jeff Daniels as Will McEvoy in The Newsroom.

On 20/05/2024 4:56 pm, foi wrote:

Good afternoon Mr Buckley,

I have attempted to telephone you a couple of times this afternoon, however I have been unable to reach you.

I would like to set up a time to discuss the scope of your request in further detail and go through some options with you.

I'm conscious that the legislative 14-day request consultation period expires today, however are you amenable to extend this period so that we can further explore options and come to an agreeable way forward?

If you would like to revise the scope of your request to a particular year, a good position to start with would be settlement on what year. The AAG has been established and meeting since 2018.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Kind Regards

Misty L (MIL275)

She/Her

Assistant Director FOI

Governance, Risk & Legal - Complaints Management & FOI

General Counsel Division

National Disability Insurance Agency

I work Monday - Friday



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From: foi <foi@ndis.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, May 8, 2024 1:42 PM
To: 'Bob Buckley - A4 Co-convenor' <convenor@a4.org.au>
Cc: foi <foi@ndis.gov.au>
Subject: RE: FOI 22/23-0833 – Communication – Request Consultation [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Good afternoon Mr Buckley,
Thank you for responding so quickly.

My previous correspondence to you on 6 May 2024 was to formally advise you that the current scope of your request, being “*documents relating to the NDIS Autism Advisory Group (AAG) including but not limited to minutes, agendas, briefing material and action/outcome reports*” is too large for us to reasonably process.

I further advised that you might want to consider a reduction of scope to enable the continued processing of the request and made a number of suggestions.

My suggestion of limiting your request to agendas of the NDIS Autism Advisory Group (AAG) only was for you to get a sense of the type of topics and information that was discussed at each of the meetings. On review of this information, you could make further, more targeted requests on topics/discussions of the (AAG) that is of specific interest.

The AAG has been established and meeting since 2018. Limiting your request to a specific time period would also greatly assist in the continued processing of your request.

You will then be able to review this smaller subset of documents and make further, more targeted requests with the benefit of knowing what type of information is contained within the AAG documents.

Please consider how each of these approaches may be of benefit to you when considering your approach moving forward.
Please note, you are not limited to the above suggestions when considering your revised scope.

Please contact me at foi@ndis.gov.au if you have any further questions or require additional assistance.

Kind Regards

Misty L (mil275)

She/Her

Assistant Director FOI

Governance, Risk & Legal - Complaints Management & FOI

General Counsel Division

National Disability Insurance Agency

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From: Bob Buckley - A4 Co-convenor <convenor@a4.org.au>

Sent: Wednesday, May 8, 2024 8:23 AM

To: foi <foi@ndis.gov.au>

Cc: Falkingham, Rebecca <Rebecca.Falkingham@ndis.gov.au>; McKenzie, Corri <Corri.McKenzie@ndis.gov.au>; Jenny Karavolos (Autism Alliance Co-chair) <jenkaravolos@outlook.com>; Chris Varney (Autism Alliance Co-chair) <chris@icannetwork.com.au>; Wright, Matthew <Matthew.Wright@ndis.gov.au>

Subject: Re: FOI 22/23-0833 – Communication – Request Consultation
[SEC=OFFICIAL]

Dear Misty

How do you suggest the Agency should respond to my request (other than your intent to refuse)? How will it inform A4 and the rest of the autism sector about the NDIA's Autism Advisory Group (AAG) discussed, decided, rejected, etc. and why? What has the Agency put to the AAG and what were the outcomes? And vice versa? How does this group represent the autism sector?

Clearly, the Agendas for the meetings provide minimal (possibly misleading) impressions and incomplete information about the meetings and the AAG's endeavours. That tells us nothing about outcomes and the

reasons.

Do you want me to spilt my request into separate periods, perhaps annual, and process them one at a time? Is that what you want me to do?

I am happy to discuss this anytime ... as I have always been.

Bob Buckley

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"The first step in solving any problem is recognising there is one." Jeff Daniels as Will McEvoy in The Newsroom.

On 6/5/24 4:10 pm, foi wrote:

Good afternoon Mr Buckley,

I acknowledge and sincerely apologise for the significant delay in progressing this matter for you.

I also appreciate your continued patience whilst we work through a series of older requests for you.

Please find **attached** correspondence in relation to your request. If you require the attachment in a different format, please let us know.

Please contact us at foi@ndis.gov.au if you have any questions or require help.

Kind Regards

Misty L (mil275)

She/Her

Assistant Director FOI

Governance, Risk & Legal - Complaints Management
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