August 2021

To the Economic Development, Science and Innovation Committee

Please find below DPA’s submission on the inquiry into the review of the Radio New Zealand Charter

## Disabled Persons Assembly NZ

Contact:

## **Prudence Walker**

## **Chief Executive**

## **021 546 006**

## **policy@dpa.org.nz**

# Introducing Disabled Persons Assembly NZ

The Disabled Persons Assembly NZ (DPA) is a pan-impairment disabled person’s organisation that works to realise an equitable society, where all disabled people (of all impairment types and including women, Māori, Pasifika, young people) are able to direct their own lives. DPA works to improve social indicators for disabled people and for disabled people be recognised as valued members of society. DPA and its members work with the wider disability community, other DPOs, government agencies, service providers, international disability organisations, and the public by:

* telling our stories and identifying systemic barriers
* developing and advocating for solutions
* celebrating innovation and good practice

**UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)**

**Government Obligations**

The UNCRPD[[1]](#footnote-2) places an obligation on Government to ensure and promote the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all disabled people without discrimination of any kind on the basis of disability.

**UNCRPD is the minimum standard**

DPA upholds the UNCRPD as the minimum standard for our participation in society.

**Partnership with DPOs (Article 4.3)**

The implementation of the UNCRPD depends on a partnership between DPOs and the Government. This is highlighted in Article 4.3 which says governments shall consult closely with and actively involve disabled people, including disabled children, through their representative organisations. This partnership goes beyond just consulting with disabled people. It mandates Governments to actively involve disabled people and our organisations in everything that affects us.

Other key Articles of the UNCRPD relevant to this submission are:

* **Article 8 (c) -** Encouraging all organs of the media to portray persons with

disabilities in a manner consistent with the purpose of the

 present Convention

* **Article 9 -** Accessibility
* **Article 21 -** Freedom of expression and opinion, and access toinformation
* **Article 30** **-** Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport

# The submission

This inquiry into the Radio New Zealand (RNZ) Charter is timely given the rapid changes in technology and the growing range of media used by RNZ.

Many disabled people face significant barriers in accessing reliable information, news, current affairs and debates. DPA believes that as a publicly funded body, RNZ has a responsibility to ensure full access for disabled people to their material.

For many blind people, radio is their major source of news and plays a vital role for them. For others, in particular, Deaf and hard of hearing people, radio isn’t directly accessible. We note that many of RNZ’s news stories, interviews and articles are uploaded to its website where they should be made accessible to Deaf and hard of hearing people by way of written transcripts.

Some items have a written summary uploaded to the website, but RNZ does not as a rule provide full transcripts of their broadcast material, thus denying Deaf and hard of hearing people access to important information and topical discussions.

In particular deaf and hard of hearing people have the right to be able to access transcripts of RNZ interviews with experts across a range of subject areas including health, climate change, and other core topics of public interest. Frequently Radio New Zealand covers issues that are of specific interest to the disabled community Such as inclusive education, the health and disability system review and the lack of transcripts denies Deaf people access to stories and interviews that are of specific interest to them. When DPA shares these stories via our social media channels we frequently have people comment, “Is there a transcript”?

# DPA’s recommendations

**Recommendation 1:** DPA recommends the Radio New Zealand Charter (Section 8 of the RNZ Act 1995) Purpose be amended by adding an additional clause; “*To ensure access to its content by disabled people through the use of such measures as: the provision of written transcripts, captioning of videos, NZSL and audio description”*.

**Recommendation 2:** Given the importance of UNCRPD Article 8 (c)**,** DPA recommends the Radio New Zealand Charter (Section 8 of the RNZ Act 1995) Purpose be amended by adding an additional clause; *“to ensure that all reporting is respectful of disabled people, upholds their mana and ensures their voice is fairly represented”.*

**Recommendation 3:** DPA recommends that Section 8A, Principles of Operation, be amended by adding an additional clause; “*…having regard to the needs of disabled people”.*

**Recommendation 4:** DPA recommends that Section 8D, Reporting, makes specific reference to disabled people in Section 8D(2)(a).

1. [[1]](https://word-edit.officeapps.live.com/we/wordeditorframe.aspx?ui=en%2DUS&rs=en%2DUS&hid=m0%2F9pQwJR0GDRPU%2FLPT4sg%2E0&WOPISrc=https%3A%2F%2Fwopi%2Eonedrive%2Ecom%2Fwopi%2Ffiles%2F6B77436FA21D4687%212012&&&sc=host%3D%26qt%3DFolders&wdlor=cB6E7A848%2D9BA6%2D4169%2D8B78%2DF423CA05BFA1&wdo=2&wde=docx&wdp=3&wdOrigin=AppModeSwitch&wdredirectionreason=Unified%5FViewActionUrl&wdPid=1368214B&wdModeSwitchTime=1628565219562&wdPreviousSession=d580271e-655a-40a6-a8d9-ec6fd03139ac&uih=OneDrive&pdcn=pdc6b0#_ftnref1) [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) | United Nations Enable](https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)