

Easy Read NSW Government Election Commitment

January 2026



OFFICIAL

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1 Background and Purpose

In 2023 the incoming NSW Government made a commitment to ‘*work towards making all government documents that are relevant to people with intellectual disability, in Easy Read by 2025, including developing an Easy Read Style Guide in partnership with people with intellectual disability*’.

Significant work has been undertaken between 2023 and 2025 to achieve this goal.

Key milestones include:

- The initiation and development of the Easy Read Style Guide.
- Creation of the Easy Read Hub to centralise all NSW Government Easy Read materials.
- Increased awareness and integration of Easy Read principles across departments.
- Capacity building through shared resources and consultation with lived experience user testers.
- Embedding Easy Read into policy and service delivery frameworks.

1.1 Purpose of this document

This document:

- Provides an overview of the significant progress that has been achieved in relation to the Easy Read commitment.
- Outlines how the NSW Government will continue to produce Easy Read material.
- Commits to ongoing consultation and engagement with people with lived experience of disability, people who benefit from the use of Easy Read material, and disability representative organisations.

An Easy Read version of this paper is available here <https://dcj.nsw.gov.au/documents/community-inclusion/disability-inclusion/easy-read-nsw-government-commitment.pdf>.

1.2 What is Easy Read?

Easy Read is a format that presents information using simple language, short sentences, and supportive images. It is designed to make content easier to understand, especially for people with intellectual disability.

It also benefits others who may find reading difficult, including people with low literacy, cognitive disabilities, learning difficulties, older people, and those who speak English as a second language.

Terms such as *Easy Read*, *Easy-to-Read*, *Easy Information* and *Easy English* are often used interchangeably across different organisations and contexts. For the purposes of this document **Easy Read** is used specifically to refer to the clear, user-friendly format that uses a simple layout with text and images as described in the NSW Government **Easy Read Style Guide**.

By simplifying complex information, Easy Read helps remove barriers and enables greater participation, particularly for people experiencing multiple forms of disadvantage or discrimination.

2 Election Commitment Status

In 2023, the NSW Government made a commitment to:

work towards making all government documents that are **relevant to people with intellectual disability**, in Easy Read by 2025, including developing an Easy Read Style Guide in partnership with people with intellectual disability.

Significant work has been undertaken to deliver on the election commitment, led by the NSW Department of Customer Service (DCS) in 2023 and 2024, and the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) from early 2025.

2.1 Easy Read Style Guide

The **Easy Read Style Guide** was developed in partnership with people with intellectual disability, primarily to ensure consistency in the production of Easy Read material (DCS, 2024).

The Easy Read Style Guide provides information about the benefits of Easy Read, tips for writing Easy Read content and what to look for in for Easy Read content. It recommends collaborating with experts who understand user groups and have design experience.

The Easy Read Style Guide includes a link to the **NSW Government Brand Toolbox** which provides branding information on NSW Government approved logos, colours, Easy Read templates and visual library and stock image library suggestions.

The toolbox is only available to NSW Government employees – *Refer to Figure 1.*

DCS hosts the Easy Read templates and the NSW Government Style Guide. The current nsw.gov.au distributed content publishing model allows agencies to publish content under the OneCX service agreement, with hosting covered. Easy Read templates are available via the Toolbox, and access requires completion of CMX training.

Figure 1 Image showing location of the Easy Read templates, in the existing NSW Brand Toolbox (<https://branding.nsw.gov.au/>)

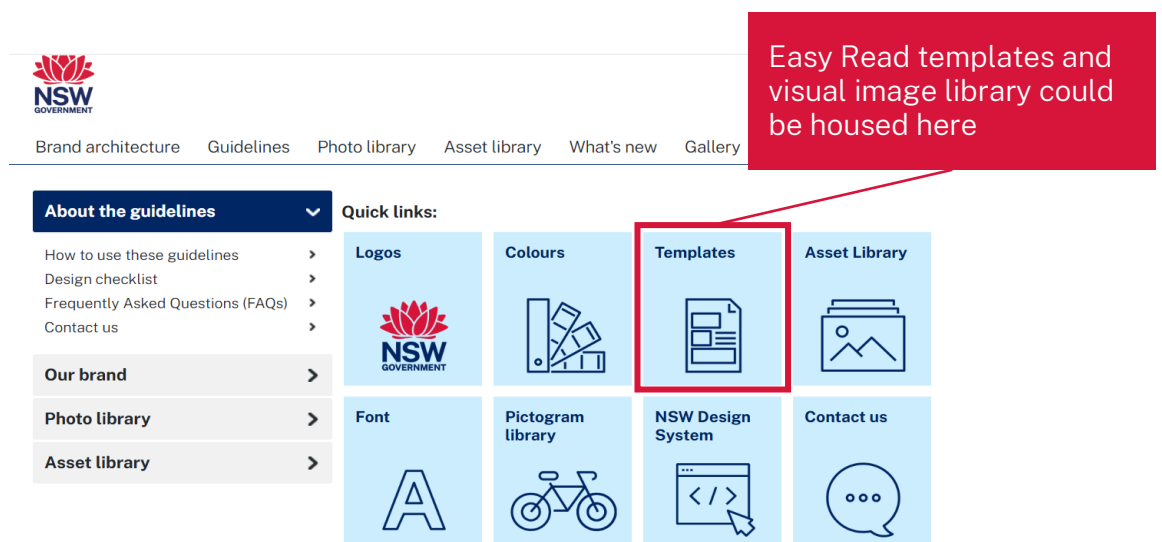


Figure 2: Example showing the DCS Easy Read Template available in the NSW Government Brand Toolbox and output when content and images are added

Backend Template

Item	Order
Easy Read content block item	Remove

Image *

No media items are selected.

Add media

One media item remaining.

0

Body text *

B I @

Words: 0 Characters: 0

- Do not use 'Easy Read content blocks' with 'Cards' blocks on the same page
- Limit each 'Easy Read Content block' content to 1 concept - which is usually only 1 or 2 sentences and supported by an image
- Content should be written for a reading age of Grade 4 to 6
- Bold complex words and provide definitions for them within the content

Add Easy Read content block item

Example Output

In this guide, we explain how you can apply for a TAFE course.

We also explain:

- support available to choose your course
- what you need to do before you apply.

Where you will study your course

Before you apply for a TAFE course, you need to decide where you will study.

You can find the different locations on the page about your course.

2.2 Easy Read Hub

The **Easy Read Hub** was created as a single repository for all NSW Government produced Easy Read documents (DCS, September 2024) which can be accessed by the public.

Documents are currently grouped in the Easy Read Hub under the following categories:

- Community Services (Guardianship, Wills and Estate Planning)
- Education
- Emergency
- Employment
- Fines and Fees
- Government Services
- Health & Well Being
- Housing
- Legal & Justice
- NSW Digital Inclusion Strategy
- Transport
- Visiting a Service NSW Centre.

Figure 3: NSW Easy Read Hub (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/easy-read>)

NSW Easy Read Hub



You can find Easy Read guides about each area of government.



Community Services

Easy Read guides for community services.



Education

How you can apply for TAFE and what support is available for you



Emergency

What you can do in an emergency, crisis or natural disaster and how you can prepare.



Employment

Learn about your rights at work and the rules you must follow.



Fines and fees

How to pay NSW Government fines and fees or request a review.



Following the significant progress made by DCS, DCJ assumed responsibility in early 2025 for progressing the remaining activity required to deliver the Election Commitment.

2.3 Easy Read Interagency Working Group

Establishment of the Easy Read Interagency Working Group (ERIWG): In March 2025, the Minister for Disability Inclusion approved DCJ to convene a time limited working group, comprising policy, communication and disability leads from across government, to finalise work under this commitment.

The following NSW Government agencies have participated in the ERIWG and contributed to delivering the election commitment:

- Department of Communities and Justice
- Department of Creative Industries, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport
- Department of Customer Service
- Department of Parliamentary Services
- Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
- Department of Customer Service
- IPART NSW
- icare NSW
- Ministry of Health
- Department of Education
- Legal Aid NSW
- Service NSW
- Transport for NSW
- TAFE NSW
- NSW Treasury
- NSW Trustee and Guardian
- Multicultural NSW
- Premier's Department
- NSW Police

ERIWG activities and achievements:

In 2025 the group met four times (May, July, September, November 2025) and has:

- Supported a consistent approach to Easy Read translations
- Strengthened accountability through monitoring and reporting on the effectiveness of Easy Read materials
- Promoted whole-of-government and/or agency-level Accessible Communications Policy
- Improved the capability of agencies to produce relevant documents in Easy Read
- Collaborated with people with lived experience and external subject matter experts.

2.4 Easy Read Review

An **Easy Read Review** by agencies who are members of ERIWG was undertaken to understand the status of Easy Read production in member agencies (DCJ, June 2025).

Key findings from the Easy Read Review indicate that participating Agencies:

- Are at various stages in building their internal capability for developing Easy Read materials
- Have adopted a range of approaches to developing their Easy Read materials, including:
 - *Internal development* of materials, supported by staff training and informed by subject matter experts, colleagues, and working groups. Agencies have utilised checklists, guidelines and resources from advocacy organisations in Australia and internationally. User testing has been conducted internally through employee networks or through external Easy Read organisations
 - *Fully outsourcing* to specialist Easy Read providers with established expertise, leveraging their in-house user testing and guidelines
- Have applied different approaches to determine which documents should be translated into Easy Read, including:
 - Analysing website traffic to identify high demand content
 - Consulting with client services, disability and carer networks and peak bodies, interdepartmental working groups and other relevant stakeholders.

The ERIWG has facilitated collaboration across agencies, sharing resources, knowledge and expertise and supporting efforts to streamline approaches to Easy Read development.

2.5 Building internal capabilities

A key focus of the ERIWG was to build agency capability to bring consistency to the production of Easy Read materials through:

- Presentations from external stakeholders, including:
 - Easy Read organisations, user testers and end users/people with lived experience (see section 2.6 for further details)
 - The DCJ Multicultural Engagement team to understand the broader benefits of Easy Read materials to people from multicultural communities.
- Supporting ERIWG members to share resources and build expertise by organising presentations by ERIWG member agencies including:
 - DCS on the NSW Government Easy Read Style Guide, Easy Read Hub and NSW Brand Toolbox – Easy Read Templates
 - DCJ Accessibility Team on the DCJ Easy Read Hub (<https://dcj.nsw.gov.au/resources/easy-read-hub.html>).

2.6 Engagement with stakeholders

Ongoing engagement with key stakeholders is crucial to ensure that the Easy Read materials produced by the NSW Government meet the needs of those who benefit from their use.

Through the ERIWG, agencies have had the opportunity to collaborate with a broad range of stakeholders, including:

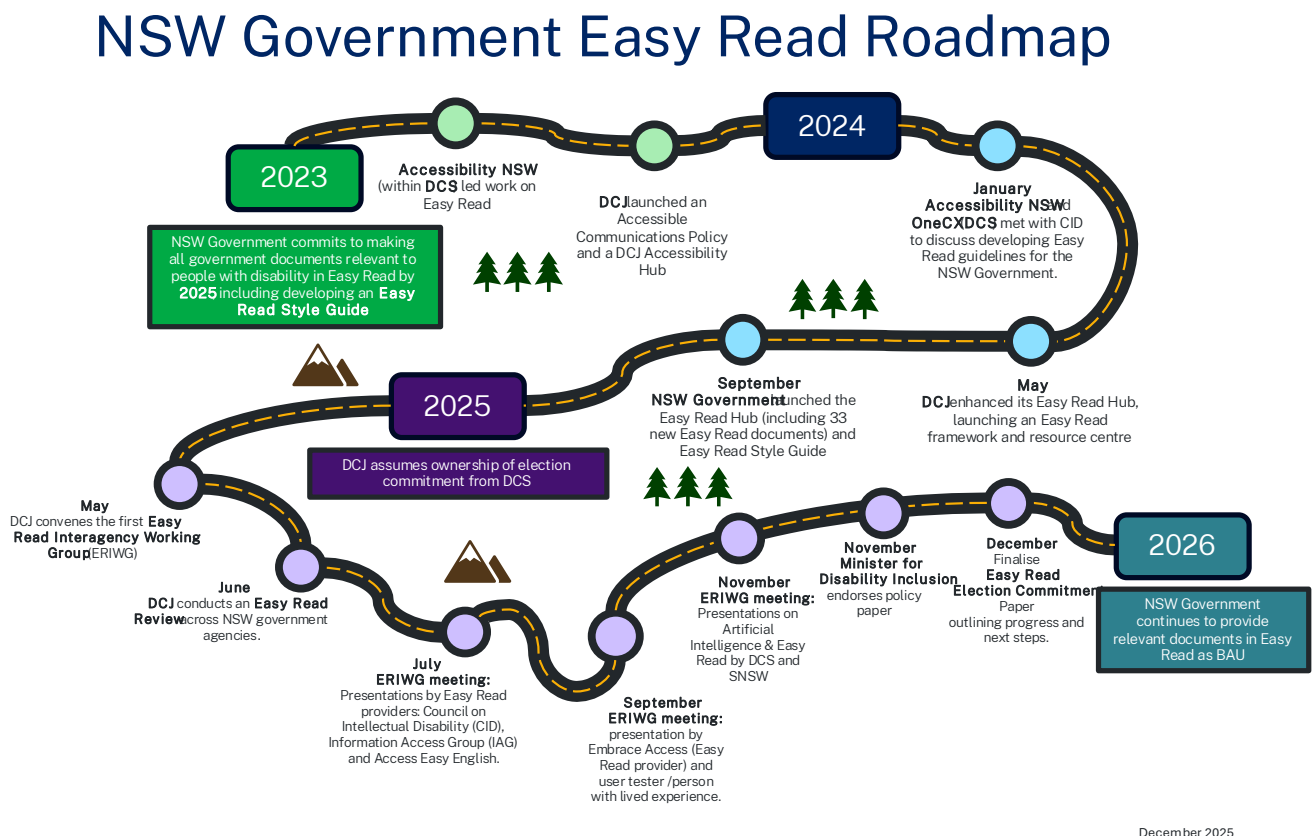
- People with lived experience and individuals who use Easy Read material, along with representative organisations.
- Specialist Easy Read providers and user testers, such as the Council on Intellectual Disability (CID), Information Access Group (IAG), Access Easy English and Embrace Access.
- Other relevant stakeholders across government.

NSW CID presented to the ERIWG and expressed their support for the development of this Easy Read paper.

In 2026, DCJ will support the ERIWG to transition into a Community of Practice (CoP) model. This will enable ongoing collaboration, knowledge sharing, and consultation with key stakeholders to strengthen the quality and consistency of Easy Read materials across NSW Government.

A road map has been developed to illustrate progress on the Easy Read election commitment (Figure 4):

Figure 4: NSW Government Easy Read Road Map



2.7 Embedding Easy Read production as business as usual

The right to access NSW Government information is a core principle that guides future work and ensures Easy Read production becomes business as usual across all agencies.

Embedding Easy Read as a standard practice will deliver equitable access to information for people with intellectual disability and similar needs. Access to information is also a human right under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

This commitment is reinforced through the following NSW Government strategies and plans.

2.7.1 The NSW Disability Inclusion Plan (DIP) 2026-2029

The NSW DIP launched in December 2025 includes an action to increase *the number of Easy Read resources, measured against the June 2025 baseline*. The NSW Government will report against DIP commitments to track progress.

2.7.2 The Disability Royal Commission

The NSW Disability Royal Commission 2024–2025 Implementation Plan contains two actions related to the production of accessible and inclusive information:

- **Action 16:** Work with other governments, people with disability and their representative organisations to develop a new national plan to improve the accessibility of information
- **Action 17:** Continue work to have all NSW Government information relevant to people with intellectual disability in Easy Read by 2025 and developing an Easy Read Style Guide.

2.7.3 The NSW Digital Strategy

The **NSW Digital Strategy** outlines how the NSW Government will increase its digital maturity, use technology to further improve service delivery, enhance accessibility and inclusion, and drive better outcomes for communities and business across NSW. It is underpinned by 5 missions for digital transformation.

Accessibility is a pillar of the NSW Digital Strategy under Mission 1: Make digital services accessible, inclusive and connected for everyone in NSW.

The Digital Strategy also commits to ‘create a test panel of “service testers” from diverse backgrounds, including geographic diversity, and abilities to test digital services for accessibility’ (Commitment 2), with this work being led by DCS.

2.7.4 NSW Digital Inclusion Strategy

The Accessibility pillar in the recently launched **NSW Digital Inclusion Strategy** requires ‘NSW Government digital products and services to be usable for everyone, regardless of ability or circumstance’ (Pillar 4).

Outcome 4 of the Digital Inclusion Strategy aims to ensure that ‘NSW Government digital products and services are accessible for everyone’. It notes that:

‘The NSW Government has accepted in principle a recommendation of the Disability Royal Commission to set clear expectations that all NSW Government agencies must uphold accessibility and inclusion commitments when buying digital products and services.

The aim is to foster a culture of accessibility within government that prioritises user experience and inclusivity, helping to ensure that everyone can access and benefit from online government services.’

3 Next steps

Given the significant work delivered to achieve the Easy Read election commitment in 2025, the focus in 2026 will shift towards continuing to make the production of Easy Read materials business as usual for NSW Government agencies by continuing to increase internal capability and capacity.

3.1 Support continued agency engagement

To maintain momentum and strengthen collaboration, the ERIWG will transition into a whole-of-government Community of Practice model focused on:

- Collaboration and continuity – building on the progress achieved through the ERIWG and fostering ongoing partnerships across agencies.
- Collective learning and capability building – sharing resources, tools and best practice insights to enhance agencies’ ability to produce high quality Easy Read materials.
- Prioritisation of key documents – identifying frequently used documents that support service access and providing guidance to help agencies prioritise content for Easy Read translation.

3.2 Commitment to lived experience engagement

The NSW Government will continue to support ongoing collaboration and engagement with both internal and external stakeholders with lived experience.

This includes CID, other organisations with expertise in Easy Read production, user testing groups, industry leaders, culturally diverse and First Nations communities, disability employee networks, and the Disability Council NSW.

This approach will ensure that the voices of people with lived experience remain central to this work including participation in the Community of Practice.

3.3 Monitoring and implementation of best practice

DCJ will continue to monitor and implement best practice by:

- An annual Easy Read review to track progress against the June 2025 benchmark.
- Seeking ongoing feedback and advice from users, stakeholders and advocates.
- Reporting against the Easy Read action in the NSW Disability Inclusion Plan 2026-2029 and frameworks.

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