

To the Senate

RE: THE ADMINISTRATION AND PURCHASING OF DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT SERVICES IN AUSTRALIA – SUBMISSION

I am writing as a Training & Placement Consultant for Break Thru People Solutions in the DES department and I will be writing from the perspective of my Clients and their genuine concerns regarding the thought of constant, periodic re-tendering and the instability it causes.

I am confused as to the Government's strategy on ensuring good quality service for people with disabilities and providing adequate, long-term support when every three years sites that are performing at 3 stars has to re-tender. This is not encouraging a long-term vision at all. I can understand that under-performing sites should evaluate their effectiveness and I invite that but knowing the site I work in, the TPC's who are committed to their roles, the vision we follow...there is a disconnect because despite being a 3 star site, we are very much committed to the cause and we as a team and for me as an individual, have a great love for our Client's wellbeing and their future.

My question is how am I suppose to confidently give my job and my Clients 100% if I am constantly fearful that every three years, I might lose my job? How do I look at my Clients and confidently say that I can commit to long-term support under that kind of arrangement. For five days of the week, I pour out my time, energy and emotion in order to help my Clients. I am definitely not in this industry for the money because in comparison to other professions, it doesn't pay much but the rewards are far greater and one cannot put a value to it. However, this passion that I have for my Clients can wither away and die if at the end of every three years constant uncertainty looms. I need to care for my family over and above my care for anyone else.

The impact this has on me personally means constant stress of providing for my own family and their needs. Can you imagine that the stress this can have on a TPC? Just picture my life for a moment, working in a stressful environment, everyday hearing of heartbreaking stories that every one of my Clients carry pressures of finding employment for everyone of Clients and on top of that the stress of potentially not having a job after three years despite the good efforts we display. To me there is a fine line between me being a Consultant in DES and one day potentially being a DES Client myself.

The government needs to not only support people with disabilities but the staff members need to be supported too and one of the ways this can happen is some kind of job security and incentives that communicate to the working people that the DES service is a great industry, supportive as well as being rewarding. This outlook will lift the game for everyone working in DES. Clients will receive the service/support they are looking for and there will be stability in the industry. It's not rocket science...look after your workers and the service quality improves.

Kind regards,

John Veloso Training & Placement Consultant