

7 December 2006

Mr. Elton Humphrey  
The Secretary  
Community Affairs Committee  
Department of the Senate  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr. Humphrey

**Senate Community Affairs References Committee Inquiry  
into the funding and operations of the Commonwealth  
State/Territory Disability Agreement**

Further my letter dated 17 November 2006 I attach extra information in addition to our original submission provided to the Senate Standing Committee at the Brisbane Hearings on Friday 17 November 2006.

This supplementary submission contains additional information that Endeavour would like to put before the Committee. I am pleased to read the positive statements made by Mr Tony Lanigan, President of Toowoomba Intellectual Disability Support Association, in relation to the support his son receives at Endeavour's Business Service in Toowoomba. I would like to take the opportunity to provide some context around some points by Mr Lanigan, in his evidence to the Committee on 17 November.

I have also had an opportunity to speak personally to Tony about these matters and indicated that I would forward a copy of this letter and the attachment to him for information.

Should you require any further information regarding our original and subsequent submissions please contact Ms Paige Armstrong, Manager, Community and Advocacy Support Unit, Endeavour on (07) 3908 7277 or [p.armstrong@endeavour.com.au](mailto:p.armstrong@endeavour.com.au)

Yours sincerely



Kelvin Spiller  
Chief Executive Officer

Endeavour supports over 3000 people with an intellectual disability.

We have over 200 locations around Queensland.

We were established in 1951.

Endeavour has services in the following regional locations:

- + Cairns
- + Mareeba
- + Innisfail
- + Ingham
- + Townsville
- + Ayr
- + Home Hill
- + Bowen
- + Mackay
- + Rockhampton
- + Gladstone
- + Bundaberg
- + Hervey Bay
- + Maryborough
- + Gympie
- + Sunshine Coast
- + Metropolitan Brisbane
- + Gold Coast
- + Ipswich
- + Getton
- + Toowoomba
- + Kingaroy
- + Roma
- + Stanthorpe
- + Warwick

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## **Supplementary Submission by Endeavour Foundation to the Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs - Funding and operations of the Commonwealth State/Territory Disability Agreement.**

Endeavour Foundation seeks to add to the evidence and information provided to the Senate Standing Committee by Ms. Paige Armstrong, Endeavour's Manager, Community and Advocacy Support Unit at the Brisbane sittings on Friday 17 November 2006. We also wish to provide broader context to some issues raised by Mr. Tony Lanigan, President of Toowoomba Intellectual Disability Support Association Inc, in relation to the management and operations of Endeavour.

Mr. Lanigan raised these matters when responding to a question from Senator McLucas around business services and the "financial viability versus human services discussion". The matters include Endeavour's financial viability from 2004 to the present; the overall management and accountability of the organisation and the closure of the nursery and farm at Toowoomba.

### **Financial viability; overall management and accountability of the organisation:**

In 2004, Endeavour Foundation's new Executive Management Team identified a number of trends that had occurred over the previous nine years that directly impacted on the operational finances of the organisation.

These included nine years of operating deficits, reducing cash at bank, reduction in equity, reduction in prize home lottery income, and a number of business services around the State that were operating at a loss.

It was recognised by the organisation that a significant effort was required to reverse these trends and by the end of the first year (2005) with the assistance of staff across all four departments around the State, three of the five trends were reversed and by the end of the second year (2006) the remaining two were also reversed.

Reported operating results in \$000,000

	2003	2004	2005	2006
Operating surplus/ deficit	(\$1,731) deficit	(\$3,866) deficit.	\$434 surplus	\$714 surplus

By the end of June 2005, the Endeavour Strategic Plan 2005-10 was completed. This is our strategic and practical "plan of intent" that will ensure we continue to deliver quality services to people with an intellectual disability and their families while at the same time balancing competing priorities in all aspects of our operations in a financially sustainable manner.

The Endeavour Strategic Plan 2005-10 identifies eight critical success factors where the organisation must focus our and describes the outcomes we aim to achieve in each area. The plan also states what Endeavour will do to deliver the outcomes.

Over the past two years as Endeavour's Chief Executive Officer, I have, with my four General Managers and organisational staff, engaged in a process of renewing the organisation's future which has focused on four areas: -

The **past** - and identifying the trends, issues and concerns;

- The **present** - by putting in place many changes to areas of Endeavour's operations including new systems, reporting processes, staffing and technology development;

- **The short to medium term future** - by developing a 5-year Business Plan identifying 8 critical success factors and a detailed action plan; and
- **Reviewing and identifying different possible future scenarios** in the longer term - in relation to Endeavour's range of services.

In this context, Endeavour has a responsibility to service users, families, staff and supporters to think about the future in addition to developing short term strategies and the day-to-day operations. This involves identifying and asking the questions and putting them on the table for discussion.

As an outcome of considering many diverse issues, from a range of perspectives, there is a firm belief that the long-term future of the Endeavour Foundation is dependent on at least some degree of redefinition of the organisation's work and services provided.

A key session at the 2006 July Endeavour Council meeting was a "Hypothetical" on disability services into the future. The Council is an annual Endeavour event which brings together key stakeholder delegates from around the State. Stakeholder delegates include clients; families; Local Parent Group Coordinators; Local Area Committee Chairs; staff and the Board Directors.

The session was facilitated by Professor Sohail Inayatullah and the panel included the CEO, Downs Syndrome Association; the Deputy Director-General, Disability Services Queensland; a Senior Lecturer, School of Human Services, Queensland University of Technology; the Executive Director, Carers Queensland; the Executive Officer, ACROD, Queensland Division; and the Business Manager, Disability and Youth Programs, Queensland State Office, Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

In the context of issues identified in the hypothetical Endeavour's Executive Management Team are in the process of reviewing and developing strategies and mechanisms as part of the forward direction of the organisation. Some of the identified issues are listed below and include:

Issues of 2006 – considering the impacts of legislation on the role of NGO's in the Disability sector; ensuring service sustainability; and people with an intellectual disability living as citizens rather than service users.

Likely Issues in 2016 – balancing the need for change with the need for certainty; choice; viability and sustainability; unmet needs; impact of legislation; employment; and ageing parents.

Services Needed in 2016 – need for services that meet demands of flexibility, individuality, choice, provision of meaningful occupation, safeguards, security, availability, access. Changes in Government change of priorities, and demographics of community change will require different responses.

Funding Sources in 2016 – Community contributions through the taxation system, the value of lotteries, increase in philanthropy; entitlement for access to appropriate support for people with an intellectual disability, dependent, independence and participation.

We have also introduced specific mechanisms in the past two years to enhance accountability around service provision to clients, families and external stakeholders. Such mechanisms include the introduction of Compliance Statements signed by myself as the CEO and senior managers around the State and presented to the Board on a quarterly basis; the creation of two high level external committees to provide advice to the Board and myself on how to improve the organisation's systems and processes around managing abuse and complaints; twice yearly state-wide meetings of Endeavour's 8 Local Area Committee Chairs and 23 Local Parent Group Coordinators with the Board Chair, Deputy-Chair and myself and regular service meetings and visits that I have around the State with clients, families, staff, volunteers and supporters.

**Closure of the Toowoomba nursery and farm - financial viability versus human service delivery:**

Within the context of current human services provision the increased expectations of clients and their families for service flexibility and responsiveness needs to be balanced by organisations such as Endeavour with increasing exposure to a range of business and financial risks. As such, Endeavour's strong history of self-contained independence must now be balanced against increasing demands for transparency and accountability to external legislative and governance requirements.

The decision to close both the nursery and farm in Toowoomba was not one taken lightly by the Board and the Executive Management in 2004; however decisive action needed to occur to ensure the continued operation of all other 180 plus Endeavour facilities and services around the State and the ongoing support to up to 3,000 clients on a daily basis. The poor financial state of the organisation at this time, as described above required immediate actions.

Once this decision was made to close the nursery and farm appropriate assistance was given to the supported employees and their families to make the transition as seamless as possible. No supported employees lost a placement and since then, supported employees have indicated they are satisfied with their new work place and their work assignments. Additionally, Endeavour's 2006 Family Satisfaction Survey found that the families of clients indicated an overall positive level of satisfaction with the organisation and the service received by their family member.

A State-wide review of the 25 Business Services that provide employment opportunities for 1,350 people with an intellectual disability has now been completed. With the assistance of PricewaterhouseCoopers and the Federal Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, marginal and at-risk businesses that have struggled to breakeven or making a loss have been refocused on products and services as well as some business services receiving additional grant funding to ensure a six-year period of sustainability and continued employment opportunities.

**Conclusion:**

We believe the respect and dignity of people with intellectual disability and their families is core to the very existence of the organisation. We see this as not only as a legislative responsibility but a fundamental value which underpins all aspects of the services we provide.

The organisation does not hide from the fact that it has been through some difficult times in recent years. Endeavour's current Board; myself, the Executive Management Team and all staff are committed to working in partnership with clients, families; external agencies and both the Federal and State Governments and the broader community towards delivering quality services and building a sustainable organisation into the future.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this additional information.



Kelvin Spiller  
Chief Executive Officer