Submission to Commission of Audit
Made by (James McGrory), of ([redacted]).

This is my personal submission in response to the Commission of Audit's invitation for submissions from across the community.

As a taxpayer and worker in the Social and Community Services industry, I support the provision of Government-funded Social and Community Services in my community. Delivered primarily by not-for-profit organisations, Commonwealth funding saves the taxpayer money in the long run by keeping vulnerable Australians supported, healthy, safe and with the best opportunities to become independent, contributing members of our community.

My submission deals exclusively with Commonwealth funding to the not-for-profit sector, rather than services and programs delivered directly by Government.

- **Increased contestability of services itself can be inefficient.** Making organisations constantly reapply for funding is administratively burdensome, time consuming and inefficient. It can advantage organisations that can afford to dedicate staff to the task of writing applications and tenders, rather than organisations running efficiently by focusing resources on direct service provision.

- **Longer-term Government contracts are imperative for reducing cost of service delivery.** To reduce the service delivery footprint, reducing the frequency with which organisations need to reapply for funding will mean less associated administrative costs.

- **Longer-term Government contracts will improve quality of services.** Giving greater certainty to organisations and their staff, longer term funding contracts can provide greater job security to Community Services works. This means more consistent and stable service provision, and less cost associated with churn of staff.

- **Performance metrics and reporting need to be streamlined and simplified**. Delivery of community services to services users will be more efficient with less red tape and complexity in reporting requirements on activities and outcomes. Making it easier for organisations to comply will reduce the cost of service delivery.

- **Taxpayers expect Government-funded services to be of high quality.** Cost is not the only driver in providing value for money to the taxpayer. It is false economy to use the cheapest service provider without considering the impact on quality of output and the organisations legal and industrial obligations and compliance. Not for Profit organisations are efficient at direct delivery of services, however need to be funded to the full cost of service delivery if they are to consistently provide high quality services for taxpayers.