

Our Community **MATTERS**

Your community knowledge bank helping groups survive, improve, grow and innovate



Resources, News, Innovations and Tips on:

- ✓ Funding, Finance & Membership Management
- ✓ Leadership & Advocacy
- ✓ Management & Training
- ✓ Marketing & Media
- ✓ Boards, Committees & Governance
- ✓ Community & Business Partnerships
- ✓ Insurance & Risk Management

www.ourcommunity.com.au

November edition 2004

Welcome to the latest edition of *Our Community Matters*, our regular free community update. It is yet another benefit of membership of www.ourcommunity.com.au - the premier destination for Australia's 700,000 community, education and non-profit groups. Ourcommunity.com.au provides community groups with the latest funding and fundraising news as well as practical management and board and committee advice and the opportunity to list for free online donations through the [Australian Giving Centre](#).

A summary of our services is listed at the end of this newsletter. If you have trouble reading this newsletter or have any comments please let us know at brianw@ourcommunity.com.au.

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1. Welcome by Rhonda Galbally AO, CEO of [ourcommunity.com.au](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au)

Welcome to Our Community Matters

Christmas preparations.

The Christmas season is fast bearing down upon us and while many groups are preparing to close up shop for the year, it is also a very important time of year for many groups seeking to fundraise and build awareness of their groups.

While you want people to support your organisation 12 months of the year, there is no doubt that the months of June and December see an increased focus on giving and donating to community causes. If you haven't prepared a campaign or mini appeal for the Christmas giving season then there is still time to communicate with your supporter base and extended communities and explain what you have done this year, what you intend to do next year, what you need to achieve those aims and how they can help.

Make sure you include details on membership, details on donations (including your online donation page – can you imagine anyone these days without one – particularly when it is free on our website), details on how they can volunteer or details of how they can assist. The very least that can happen is that your current supporters have a better idea of the good work you are doing. At best they will be inspired to continue or expand their support or spread the message of your good work to the wider community.

More on Christmas in our next edition.

Communities in Control.

I have been asked constantly over the last few months about dates for the 2005 **Communities in Control** conference. We are in the process of finalising some details and will be announcing the dates and some of the key speakers in the next edition of the Our Community Matters newsletter.

Given the popularity of the last one where we had a capacity crowd of 1500 people and unfortunately turned away over 600 others, there is keen interest in the conference. We are also looking at a separate event in 2005 which will again push the theme of community and hope to have more details of this initiative as well in the next edition. Stay tuned!

Encouraging Women on Boards

This month I have spent a lot of time on the road running Women on Boards workshops. This project, is being undertaken by Our Community with the Office of Women's Policy and we have been touring with Fran Whitty (senior project officer), talking to wonderful groups of women about how to get onto boards and how to survive and flourish once they are there.

The Office of Women's Policy had set a target of women taking up 40% new appointments to government boards – a target they have already reached. However there is still some work to do with other boards, with community boards only having up to 26% of women as members and corporate boards trailing with a miserly 8.6%.

Interestingly, the research from the US shows that boards that include women are more effective and so are the organisations or companies that they govern. This makes sense as women's knowledge of the market, the services or the products is vital for the shaping of goods and services to suit the needs of 50 per cent of the population.

The Victorian Office of Women's Policy now runs a women's register at <http://www.women.vic.gov.au> where women can sign up to register their board CV. As well they receive a fascinating array of regular emails telling them of vacancies coming up in all Victorian government boards – ranging from the Equal Opportunity Commission to Cemetery trust and the Harness Racing Board.

Our Community has also prepared numerous help sheets addressing all of the issues, barriers and survival skills needed for women on boards – these can be accessed at www.ourcommunity.com.au/wob and are available to women from all over Australia.

RHONDA GALBALLY AO
Chief Executive Officer

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2. Innovation is the key for community groups. And study shows them how to practise it.

Community groups like to think of themselves as innovative. Often there are new practices, methods or ideas that are piloted by courageous community organisations and then – when they have proved successful – taken up by Governments at all levels.

But can the community sector be more innovative? And can it do more to expand the skills required to encourage a greater level of innovation in all aspects of a group's work. Well, according to a terrific study that came out recently, the answer is Yes and Yes.

The report, **Innovation Rules – A roadmap to creativity and innovation for not-for-profit organisations**, by British consultants NFP synergy looked at both groups' attitudes towards innovation and also provided tips and advice on encouraging greater levels of innovation.

One of the findings of the report is that a group's success at innovating can have a lot to do with their attitude towards innovation and whether they see it as a daily tool rather than something that only happens when they have the funding to think about it.

The report debunks what it says are the three myths of innovation;

- **Innovation is just creativity dressed up.** While closely related, "a creative person will make new connections, an innovative person will find a way to apply these connections".
- **Innovation belongs only to the private sector.** "When your principal motivation is not to create profit, but to make the world a better place, the drive to innovate should be even stronger. The more impact your organisation can have with the same resources, the more effective it will be."
- **Innovation and creativity are magical and elusive forces reserved only for a select few.** "Those people who are recognised as creative or innovative are different from others in one main respect: they believe in their ideas and their ability to achieve them and are therefore more passionate in pushing them forward."

The report says there are a number of stages in the innovation process – investigation, preparation, incubation, illumination, verification (and evaluation) and application.

- **Investigation.** Looking at how the work you do could be done differently or more effectively. It might be looking at a specific issue or examining all your practices and methods and asking if there is a better way of doing it. Investigation is the starting block and to reap the rewards the entire organisation should be involved.
- **Preparation.** Sometimes the solution is clear and you already have ideas on how it can be improved. If the solution is not as clear you will need to be creative.
 1. Get yourself/your team into a creative frame of mind:
 - Do something energetic.
 - Change your routine behaviours
 - Use some creative thinking techniques
 2. Ask friends and colleagues for their ideas and advice regarding an issue (ensuring that the parameters are clear):
 - Start an animated conversation around your issue.
 - Send a group e-mail.
 3. Organise a brainstorming session
 4. Do some research in the following areas:
 - Your specific cause (e.g. child welfare, the environment etc.)
 - The wider social welfare and voluntary sector.
 - The private sector.
 5. Allow time for contemplation and relaxation.
- **Incubation and illumination:** Stew on the ideas and information you have gathered until a viable solution pops into your head (illumination). Neither of these stages is clear-cut. Incubation really starts from the moment you become conscious that there is a problem or inadequacy. There is simply more chance of productive incubation once you have done some preparation.
- **Verification (and evaluation):** Now you have a possible solution, you need to consider how likely it is to be effective and whether it is right for your organisation. Ask yourself the following questions:
 - Do we have a clear idea about how this innovation will work?
 - Has it been done before? (And if so, what do the results tell us about how it would work for us?)
 - Are we confident that it will make a difference for our clients?
 - What are the obstacles? Could they be overcome?
 - How can we evaluate this change in practice?
 - Is the time right for this innovation?

- Do we have the skills and resources to implement it effectively?
- Is it cost-effective?
- Does it feel right?
- **Application:** Once you have found a viable solution, it is time to bring in the idea practitioners and make that idea work. Where possible, always try to involve those people who helped you during the innovation process, particularly in situations where you have run with someone's idea.

And remember...

Systematic innovation should not be confused with the frenzied search for the 'next big thing'. Innovation is a rigorous process involving a good deal of investigation, contemplation and verification. The changes it brings may be either earth shattering or subtle, but they will be lasting and effective.

The 48-page report looks at this whole area in greater detail and provides guidelines and ideas to cultivate ideas and innovation in your own organisation.

If people would like a copy of the full report they can email Brian Walsh at brianw@ourcommunity.com.au.

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3. What's up with your Board? Identifying the most common signs of Board dysfunction.

For many people, joining a non-profit or community board or committee is a prime chance to make a real difference to their local community. Not only do they get the opportunity to volunteer for a group that they feel passionately about but they also have the chance to assist in setting the direction of the group.

The downside is that while many boards operate in a unified, coordinated, positive and innovative manner, there are others that are dysfunctional and provide ongoing frustration for Board members. Instead of feeling positive about their contribution, they find that little gets done.

It is a problem that must be addressed but some Board members are not sure how to read the signs. Our Community has developed a Mayors Fellowship Program that provides resources and workshops to assist local groups to acquire the skills necessary to ensure they are more effective and efficient.

(Councils wanting to know more about the Mayors Fellowship Program should contact Patrick Moriarty on (03) 9320 6810 or patrickm@ourcommunity.com.au).

One of the resources specifically looks at the common characteristics of a dysfunctional board and what can be done to avoid them.

Here is an edited version of a Help Sheet identifying some of the characteristics of a dysfunctional Board and how to avoid them.

1. Board meetings are unspeakably boring and/or interminably long.

Probably the number one reason for a Board's ineffectiveness, this problem is usually caused by a poor meeting structure and lack of discipline.

Remedies:

- Ensure agendas are brief, relevant, logically presented and distributed well before meetings. Try allocating set times for items to be discussed and start meetings on time.
- Ensure all Board members know the meeting rules and are committed to following them and set time limits for individual speakers to avoid rambling Board members.
- If the chair is unable to keep order or keep the meeting on track, consider training.

2. Board members are unclear about their responsibilities.

It is frighteningly common for people to begin their role as a Board member without being clear of their roles and responsibilities. This is not only legally dangerous but is almost sure to impede the effectiveness of the Board.

Remedies:

- Fully brief all new Board members about the contribution and commitment required of them and give them a written job description.
- Establish an induction process for all new Board members.
- Carry out annual training sessions for the Board.

3. Board Members don't take their role seriously.

This is a similar problem to Number 2 above, but a more difficult one to tackle as it involves dealing with attitudes, rather than a mere lack of information. There is an alarming tendency for some not-for-profit Board members to take their roles less seriously than they would a company Board position – despite the fact that the legal requirements for each are identical.

Remedies:

- Ensure that all new and existing Board members are aware of their roles and responsibilities, particularly when it comes to financial and legal obligations. Our Community's handbook, **Surviving and Thriving as a Safe, Effective Board Member**, is a good place to start.
- Pay for Board members to attend an outside training course on Board responsibilities, or put in place your own training session.

4. Board meetings are enjoyable but decisions are rarely made; things are always being deferred.

This problem can be caused by a number of factors, including structural and operational deficiencies.

Remedies:

- Ensure that the Board is being provided with enough information before and during meetings to allow it to make a thoughtful decision.
- Think about the Board's size and structure and whether it may be too big and ungainly to be effective.
- Examine the conduct of your Board meetings to see if improvements need to be made.
- Ensure the Board's mission and vision are regularly reviewed so members are focused on the future direction of the organisation.

5. Decisions are made but they aren't followed through / implemented.

Again, there could be structural and operational problems at play here.

Remedies:

- Review the Board's committees and sub-committees. Do they meet regularly? Are their meetings conducted efficiently? Are committee members committed to their roles? Are they led by an effective committee Chair? Is everyone aware of their responsibilities?
- Ensure that tasks are assigned and that minutes record to whom all tasks have been assigned. Follow up on the progress of assigned tasks during every regular meeting.

6. The Board's decisions are inconsistent.

Boards are often accused of being inconsistent in their decision-making – approving one course of action one month and rejecting a similar proposal the next. This can lead to uncertainty and frustration among the community group's staff, members and other stakeholders.

Remedies:

- Ensure all Board members are conversant with and committed to the mission and vision of the community group, as well as its long and short-term goals.
- Ensure the Board has developed a range of well-articulated, clearly-understood policies to guide Board members in their conduct and decision-making. Policies could cover issues such as ethics and conduct, volunteer management, financial management, accountability, and so on.

7. Board members do not get along; conflicts are common.

Some conflict within a Board is not only inevitable but is actually desirable – the most effective Boards are those that invite differences of opinion. However, too much conflict can become a destructive force in a Board.

Remedies:

- Consider the root cause of the conflict and try to treat that – for example, does one party feel others are not pulling their weight? Does someone feel they are not being listened to? Is there a personality clash?
- Consider holding a retreat or social event to allow Board members to interact outside the pressures of the boardroom environment. Talk about the need for all members to focus on the organisation's overall mission, rather than the interests of individuals.

8. The Board is dominated by a clique.

While it is common for similar-minded individuals to join forces on particular issues, it can become quite damaging to the Board dynamics if the remaining members are consistently having their opinions overruled. Constantly defeated Board members are likely to lose interest in their role and conflicts could result.

Remedies:

- The Chair must take the lead in ensuring that all members' opinions are heard during debates and that all members are given an equal vote. Of course, if one group has the numbers, they will always win the vote; that's democracy.
- Think about putting in place sub-committees to deal with specific issues so that the power structures of the full Board can be diluted, or at least shared.

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4. Christmas cards – if you're buying or selling them, then visit the Our Community site.

Buy Christmas Cards from Community Groups

Is your community group selling Christmas cards this year?

Or are you looking to order Christmas cards for your family or business and want to buy them from a community group so your money can help to make a difference.

If so, then you should visit <http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/giving> where we have added a new page for groups that sell Christmas cards.

You can search for a group that you want to support with the purchase of cards this year. If your group is not selling cards, why not let your membership know where they can support community groups this year.

Just visit <http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/giving> and click on the Christmas cards button.

If you want to be added to the list, there are directions on the site where you can supply details.

The A-Z of Donating money.

As a result of the steadily increasing number of appeals we have on our free online donation service at the Australian Giving Centre, we have now added another element to the search engine.

As well as being able to search state-by-state, by postcode and by interest area (such as children and family, disability, indigenous etc) you can now search the appeals database by alphabetical order.

If you know the name of the group but not the location, you can now use the A-Z search tool to help you find the group to donate to. There are now almost 440 separate appeals on the site and we welcome the 20 new appeals that have been listed in the past couple of weeks. We wish them well with their fundraising.

To look at the groups listed for online donations in alphabetical order you can visit the search engine at http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/giving/a_z_listing.form?letter=A

List your Christmas appeal for online donations

If you have a Christmas fundraising appeal for your supporters and haven't yet listed it on the free online donations site at www.ourcommunity.com.au/donations then now is the time.

You can download the information from www.ourcommunity.com.au/donations or email Amy Johannsohn at amyj@ourcommunity.com.au for a full information pack for Our Community's free online donations service).

As we mentioned last month we have had a very strong run of online donations and in the September quarter of this financial year collected more donations online than we did for the entire 2001/02 financial year. It's also good to see strong growth in the number of return donors and also a greater diversity in the groups receiving donations.

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5. New national community television channel to start broadcasting.

We have seen 24 hour a day sport, movies and documentaries.

Now we are about to see a new national television channel that is devoted to airing community programming 24 hours a day.

Aurora TV (<http://www.auroratv.org>) will air on Foxtel Digital from Australia Day next year and will be devoted to broadcasting footage from community groups and individual documentary makers from across the country. The station will be based on similar community stations in England, the United States and Canada.

The channel, which will start airing six hours a day repeated four times and then increase to 12 hours a day repeated twice, is seeking community groups who want to provide regular or one-off programs.

Aurora TV spokesman Marque Owen said the station would provide a national audience for groups to show what they were doing and how they were doing it. He said many organisations were filming their events or their work now but – apart from their live audience – the wider community never saw it.

Aurora TV will broadcast:

- Programs made by, for or about Australian Community Groups
- Documentaries from an Australian perspective
- Australian series
- Community news
- Films from Australian independent producers and students
- Music
- Short films
- Local and children's sports and results
- Interviews, discussions and opinion shows
- Political round-ups
- Programs celebrating Australia's cultural diversity, social issues, history, personalities or personal stories of interest.

There is a cost of \$200 for each 15 minutes of content but groups are able to sell a 30 second add within that time to help recoup costs.

"One example is the case of the local art show. They can go to their sponsor and say not only will you get the local kudos but we are producing a 15 minute show putting all the images of the paintings to music, interspersing it with some interviews from artists and giving it a national audience. It not only provides a wider audience for the show but for the sponsors."

"Or it could be a particularly good lecture or lecture series where you can take it from a limited audience and give it a far wider audience with very little effort or cost. Or a performance by a drama group or dance group. Or a student putting together a short film on a community activity."

Mr Owen said another example was working with the Sydney Kings basketball team to broadcast their annual game between kids taking part in their outreach program and the basketball stars. "It is part sport but it is 100 per cent community and that is something we are keen to show," Mr Owen said.

"There are so many examples of community groups putting together videos to present to sponsors or business that never see the light of day. Aurora TV will provide an opportunity to take that message to a wider audience," he said.

All programs will be required to be of a high standard and quality. For more information on Aurora TV or for a copy of the guidelines you can visit the website at www.auroratv.org, email info@auroratv.org or call (02) 9439 6153.

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6. Our Community Leaders – Great Australian Leaders in Focus: David Morgan

The CEO of Westpac Bank, David Morgan is the subject of this month's *Great Australian Leaders in Focus* segment, a series which features the thoughts of some of Australia's best-known community leaders.

He joins the list of leaders we have already interviewed including Ian Kiernan, Sir Gustav Nossal, Professor Fiona Stanley, Peter Garrett, John Eales, Stephanie Alexander, Molly Harriss Olson, Professor Allan Fels, Justice Michael Kirby, Justice Paul Stein and Dr Jim Varghese.

All those interviews can now be read on the [Leadership Centre](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au) at www.ourcommunity.com.au. Also on the Leadership Centre, which is a joint initiative with the Department of Family and Community Services, is a series of free [Help Sheets](#) and Australia's [largest free database of leadership courses](#) and opportunities.

David Morgan joined Westpac Bank in 1990 and has had responsibility for all major operating divisions including Westpac Financial Services, Retail Banking, Commercial Banking, Corporate and Institutional Banking and International Banking before being appointed CEO in March 1999. David Morgan has extensive experience in the financial sector, having worked in the International Monetary Fund in Washington in the 1970s and the Federal Treasury in the 1980s where he headed all major areas before being appointed Senior Deputy Secretary.

Our Community: Who do you consider to be a great leader of our time? Why?

David Morgan: In my view, the essence of great leadership has always been, and will always be, personal integrity – remaining true to your own values, your own beliefs and your own sense of right and wrong, however assailed you are by circumstance, failure or disappointment.

For this reason, Nelson Mandela stands out for me as a great leader of our time. Despite his own incarceration for 28 long years, despite the apparent strength of a political system rooted in discrimination and injustice, Mandela never lost his belief in the essential decency of the human spirit.

Our Community: What are the three attributes you would consider to be essential to a leader? And why?

David Morgan: As I've said, the first would be personal integrity – being hard-wired to do the right thing. All leaders are faced with challenges that simply can't be anticipated or foreseen. Effective leaders rely on an internal moral compass to instinctively guide themselves and their followers through often uncharted waters.

Energy, drive and determination are other obvious attributes. The demands placed on leaders, intellectually, mentally, emotionally even physically, can be relentless. Dreaming, planning, strategising to use the modern jargon are all important but, in the end, leaders need the grit to push through and get the job done when others may falter.

Finally, I'd choose good judgement – vital not only for day to day decision-making but to recognise talent within their teams, to look beyond the present and identify future opportunities that others may not see and to be realistic about what's achievable.

What are the barriers to new leaders emerging in Australia?

David Morgan: Frankly, I'm a little uncomfortable talking about barriers. Australia really is a land of opportunity and no Australian, man, woman or child, should ever feel they need to limit their aspirations.

If pushed though, I remain concerned that the tall poppy syndrome still exists within our culture. Success should be celebrated and encouraged.

What advice would you give to a potential leader to take them to the next stage?

David Morgan: The first would be to be extremely choosy about who they work for. Aspiring to be an effective leader is all about continuous challenge, continuous improvement and continuous honing of your skills. Working with great people and a great organisation will give you the right environment, the right encouragement and role models to undertake this journey.

Secondly, do very hard jobs. Tasks that will stimulate and challenge you to be the best you can be.

Finally, I recommend that potential leaders focus only on the job at hand. Do it well and the next opportunity will present itself soon enough. Ambition is a good thing but not if it distracts you from achieving your immediate goals.

Our Community: Nature / nurture – are leaders born or bred?

David Morgan: This is an age old and very complex debate. Some of both, I think – someone's essential personality can either limit or enhance their leadership potential. For the most part though, I would opt for 'nurture'. We are all remarkably adaptable beings and our experiences, especially in our early formative years, are crucial in developing our capacities.

Our Community: What do you consider to be the top three leadership issues facing the nation?

David Morgan: Given my background, I'm concerned that we are not attracting quality leaders into the public sector. Our entire system - the strength of the economy, the security of our citizens, our ability to apply resources to projects that transcend narrow or immediate self-interest – is dependent, in many ways, on the skill and commitment of people working within the public service. All of us will be the losers if we can't find a way to grow and retain talent in this area.

More broadly, I think we should be vigilant about losing talent to other countries. I gained some fantastic experience and learning overseas so I am not for a moment suggesting we should try to limit these sort of opportunities. However, our home environment needs to remain an exciting and stimulating place where our best and brightest want to return to do great things.

Finally, I would nominate 'short termism', both politically and within the business world, as a key leadership issue facing the nation. There are many, and some would say increasing, pressures on decision-makers to produce short term 'wins' to satisfy narrowly focussed interests. True leadership is often about resisting populist pressure and we all should understand that profiting today at the expense of tomorrow is a misguided and ultimately self-defeating strategy.

Westpac Guide

As part of Westpac's community leadership, the bank has joined with Our Community to produce *The Guide for Community Treasurers*, a free 48-page practical guide to managing the finances for community groups.

The Guide can be downloaded by clicking on www.ourcommunity.com.au/treasurer or for a free hard-copy version call the Westpac Hotline on **Freecall 1300 660 953**.

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7. Almost 200 Help Sheets to assist in building community business partnerships on site.

We have added another 20 free Help Sheets to the Community Business Partnership Centre at www.ourcommunity.com.au/partnerships, taking the total of free Help Sheets on establishing, maintaining and promoting a partnership to almost 200.

The Help Sheets cover everything from preparing for a community business partnership to nurturing the relationship, expanding the relationship and also recognising the signs when it is not working. The Help sheets - and other resources – such as [The Essential Facts booklet](#) and [Are You Ready Wizards](#) are available from the site.

The Help Sheets are divided into five sections:

- **Before** you get started in a partnership. [Click here.](#)
- **Now** you're involved in a partnership. [Click here.](#)
- **If things go wrong** with your partnership. [Click here.](#)
- **Ending** a partnership. [Click here.](#)
- **General Resources.** [Click here.](#)

Here is a list of the new Help Sheets that are now available on the site.

- [Service Clubs as Informal Brokers](#)

- [Stop Meeting in Lounge Rooms - Sharing Premises in Community Business Partnerships](#)
- [Involvement in Your Partner's Board or Group](#)
- [Preparing for an In-Kind Partnership](#)
- [Businesses Come Forward - Getting Involved in a Partnership](#)
- [Spending Money and Taking Business Locally](#)
- [Helping the Environment Through a Partnership - Community Group](#)
- [Helping the Environment Through a Partnership - Business](#)
- [Helping Young People Through a Community Business Partnership](#)
- [Involving More Groups in Your Community Business Partnership](#)
- [If Things Go Wrong - An Overview](#)
- [Marketing and Your Community Business Partnership Part 1](#)
- [Marketing and Your Community Business Partnership Part 2](#)
- [The Media as a Community Business Partner](#)
- [The Benefits of Local Government Being Involved](#)
- [How Local Governments can Support Community Business Partnerships](#)
- [A Role for the Mayor](#)
- [Ethics and Finding Partners - Part 1](#)
- [Ethics and Finding Partners - Part 2](#)
- [Ethics Within Partnerships and Developing a Code of Ethics](#)

And don't forget Your Community Business newsletter

The latest edition of the newsletter on Community Business Partnerships is now available on the www.ourcommunity.com.au website. You can download a copy of the newsletter by visiting the centre at www.ourcommunity.com.au/partnerships.

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8. Volunteer rights – No pay does not mean no minimum standards.

We have had some questions recently about treatment of volunteers and the standards for volunteers. As a result we have run below the rights of volunteers as set out by Volunteering Australia (<http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/>)

Unlike paid staff, volunteers are not covered by awards or work-place agreements. Volunteers however do have rights, some which are enshrined in legislation and some which could be considered the moral obligations of an organisation involving volunteers. Volunteering Australia promotes the following as the basic rights of a volunteer.

As a volunteer you have the right:

- to work in a healthy and safe environment (refer various Occupational Health and Safety Act[s]);
- to be interviewed and engaged in accordance with equal opportunity and anti- discrimination legislation;
- to be adequately covered by insurance;
- to be given accurate and truthful information about the organisation for which you are working;
- to be reimbursed for out of pocket expenses;
- to be given a copy of the organisations volunteer policy and any other policy that affects your work;
- not to fill a position previously held by a paid worker;
- not to do the work of paid staff during industrial disputes;
- to have a job description and agreed working hours;
- to have access to a grievance procedure;
- to be provided with orientation to the organisation;
- to have your confidential and personal information dealt with in accordance with the principles of the Privacy Act 1988; and
- to be provided with sufficient training to do your job.

Check that:

- The organisation is a not-for-profit
- The purpose of the organisation matches your own values and beliefs
- The organisation carries volunteer insurance
- Your role is clear and specific
- The organisation can provide you with written information about its purpose and activities
- You are satisfied that the funds of the organisation are expended in accordance with its mission.

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9. Giving Australia research to draw a national picture of financial support for groups.

The picture on giving in Australia should be a bit clearer next year with a new project, funded by the Prime Minister's Community Business Partnership, trying to pull together the first really comprehensive look at levels of individual and business giving.

The Giving Australia: Research on Philanthropy in Australia project, is being coordinated by the Australian Council of Social Services, and will involve research by Roy Morgan Research and McNair Ingenuity Research as well as a re-analysis of previous studies looking at giving.

The Giving Australia project will look at:

- How much are individuals and business giving to community organisations?
- How do current levels of giving compare with estimates from earlier ABS surveys?
- How do individuals and business give (for example, partnerships/community projects, sponsorship, donation of money, donation of goods/services, volunteering)?
- How are individuals and business approached to give (that is, how they are asked)?
- What are the attitudes of individuals and businesses to giving?
- What are individuals' and business motivations for giving?
- What is the effectiveness of the various methods used by community organisations to raise support?
- What is the level of foundation support for the community sector (including family foundations)?
- What is the level of awareness of the various tax incentives introduced since March 1999 to encourage giving?
- How effective have the tax incentives been in motivating potential donors?
- What programs/resources exist to build the capacity of the community sector in relation to its development and fundraising activities? What is the uptake of these programs?
- What is the capacity of the range of community organisations to increase their resources through fundraising and development activities and volunteer programs?

Hopefully the project will create a picture of the overall giving scene in Australia and not be restricted to looking only at the charity sector or donations to the small percentage of groups that have Deductible Gift Recipient Status.

This month saw the release of the Giving Australia summary of key data that is already available on giving in Australia and while a lot of it has been featured in this newsletter over the past four years we thought it was worth repeating some of it.

- Total estimated business giving in 2000-01 was \$1,447 million (ABS, 2002);
- In 2000 the ABS total hours of volunteering in Australia were estimated to be 704.1 million hours – up from 511.7 million in 1995.
- 32% of taxpayers made a tax deductible claim for giving to a DGR in 1997 (McGregor-Lowndes, 2004)
- 68.7% of the adult population (9,112,533 people) gave annually to all nonprofits and 65.3% gave to non-government nonprofits according to an ABS estimate in 1997 (Lyons and Hocking, 2000)
- Between 79% and 82% of the population made any kind of donation between the years 2002 and 2004 according to Roy Morgan Research data.
- In an analysis of data from the ATO, Professor Myles McGregor-Lowndes noted that in the 2001-02 year:
 - (T)he average tax-deductible donation was \$241 in 2002, donating taxpayers earning over \$1 million per year claim an average of \$53,446 in tax-deductible which represents 1.9% of their taxable income, compared to the national average of 0.25%. 66% of taxpayers in this tax bracket make and claim a tax-deductible donation. In short he notes: 'The more one earns, the more one claims as a tax-deductible donation'.
 - On average, male Australian taxpayers who make tax-deductible donations to DGRs donate approximately 0.252% of their taxable income compared to 0.256% for Australian females.
- Lyons and Hocking (2000:100), in an analysis of all giving (not only those claimed for tax purposes) found fewer men give than women (57.6% of women compared to 52.7% of men), but on average men give more.

The paper is a good compilation of many of the giving statistics. Before we drown you in stats, stats and more stats, we were reminded of one study that gives credence of the importance of promoting membership and participation rather than just charitable giving.

A study by Lyons and Hocking (2000) found from the ABS Survey of Giving 1997 that the:

- giving rate among non-members of non-profit organisations was 62%
- giving rate among members of non-profit organisations was 77%
- giving rate among active members of non-profit organisations was 83%.

That's why we continue to promote the need to increase your membership and then once you sign them up to continue to actively communicate and engage your membership in the workings of your group. Not only does it help to hold your members, but active, happy, engaged members are also financially supportive donors.

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10. Community Briefs.

Congratulations to the Queensland Government which has pulled together a number of standing departments into a new super ministry of the Department of Communities.

The new Department of Communities will focus on delivering better services by building stronger partnerships between government agencies, non-government agencies and the community.

Launched by the Queensland Minister for Communities, Disability Services and Seniors Warren Pitt, the new department draws together components of the former Department of Families; the Community Engagement Division from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet; the Office of Youth Affairs, from Department of Employment and Training; the Office of Rural Communities, from Department of Primary Industries; and Smart Service Queensland, formerly with the Department of Innovation and Information Economy, Sport and Recreation Queensland.

The business of the new department will cover:

- Parenting information;
- Child care;
- Seniors Interests;
- Seniors Card;
- Concessions;
- Engaging young people;
- Youth and individual support;
- Youth justice;
- Youth Justice Conferencing
- Domestic and Family Violence support;
- Gambling Help;
- Homelessness;
- Rural and regional communities; and
- Accessing government services.

Mr Pitt said the structure of the new department would be based on an organisational culture of partnership. The department will operate across 10 regions of the State, with the boundaries of these regions drawn up along Local Government boundaries to reflect communities of interest and the regional centre focus for service delivery.

The 10 regions of the new department are: Far North Queensland; North Queensland; Mackay/Whitsunday; Fitzroy/Central West Queensland; Wide Bay Burnett; Darling Downs/South West Queensland; Sunshine Coast; Moreton; Gold Coast; and Greater Brisbane

Mr Pitt said the regional structure and local knowledge would drive the building of stronger partnerships with non-government organisations, service providers and the community and provides a whole-of-community approach to social problems. The new website for the Department of Communities is at <http://www.communities.qld.gov.au/>

ACT groups online for free.

Last month we ran a piece on a number of free sites where community groups could set up an online presence for free. One we overlooked was www.actcommunities.org.au which is the ACT Government's free online service for community groups and at present has thousands of groups and events listed.

Thanks very much to Simon Bolton for pointing this one out.

Socially responsible corporate t-shirts

Businesses and community groups looking to buy t-shirts for corporate fundraisers or community activities can now spread the giving with a non-profit enterprise now manufacturing t-shirts.

bsl.org.au is a Brotherhood of St Laurence social enterprise that manufactures wholesale t-shirts under the 'NoSweatShop' label for government departments, the business sector, community groups, non-government organisations and special event organisers.

The 'No SweatShop' label accreditation guarantees that garments are made in Australia, under fair working conditions, including union award wages, Work Cover protection, superannuation and reasonable working hours. Another benefit of purchasing bsl.org.au is that the profits from the sale of these garments support the Brotherhood of St Laurence, an independent non-profit agency, in its work towards an Australia Free of Poverty.

A team of fashion designers, graphic designers and sales professionals support www.bsl.org.au, ensuring a high level of design support and customer service. Visit www.bsl.org.au, email tshirts@bsl.org.au or call (03) 9385 6110 for more details.

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11. Fast Forward.

If you found this newsletter helpful, please feel free to send it onto your friends and fellow community groups in your area. We would also like your input into this newsletter.

If you have any thoughts or any issues you would like addressed we would appreciate hearing from you. You can send your comments to brianw@ourcommunity.com.au or call (03) 9320 6813.

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