



Volunteering Tasmania Inc.

Strengthening Communities

**RESPONSE TO
DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE IN TASMANIA:
CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES
DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE ADVISORY COUNCIL**

April 2007

'The Not for Profit Sector and the economic contribution of our unpaid workforce – our volunteers - adds 5.6% to GDP in Australia. The invisibility of the NFP sector is to the detriment of our society and our economy. Tasmania's analysis of the changing composition of our population is an opportunity for the NFP sector and volunteerism to take its proper place in economic analysis in our State.'

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Demographic Change in Tasmania: Challenges and Opportunities

Volunteering Tasmania Response to Discussion Paper March 2007

Volunteering Tasmania Inc. welcomes the invitation to advise the Demographic Change Advisory Council about issues arising from changing composition of the population in Tasmania. We highlight issues to be addressed and look forward to commenting and making recommendations in detail as the public consultations continue.

The Discussion Paper is a useful research document in itself as it sets out key aspects of the nature of change in the composition of the population and speculates on consequences.

The Not for Profit (NFP) Sector

Volunteering Tasmania wishes to raise the importance of linking the third, or Not for Profit (NFP) sector with the economy.

There are 5,000 Not for Profit organizations in the State. Volunteers are providing services in: Arts/Culture; Business/Professional/Union; Community / Welfare; Education/Training/Youth Development; Emergency Services; Environmental/ Animal Welfare; Foreign/International; Health; Law /Justice / Political; Religious; Sport / Recreation; and the ;list goes on..ⁱ

The significance of the sector is not commonly understood. In 2002, the Australian Bureau of Statistics reported on the sector in the following terms:

: : ‘...the contribution of non-profit-institutions (NPIs) to the economy can be compared against traditional industries as a point of reference. The NPI contribution of 3.4% to gross value added in 1999-2000 is greater than the contribution made by the communications; electricity, gas and water; accommodation, cafes and restaurants; personal and other services; and cultural and recreational services industries. *NPI gross value added is only slightly less than agriculture, forestry and fishing (3.5%). If an imputation is also made for the value of services provided by volunteers, the adjusted gross value added of NPIs (4.9%) is greater than that for government administration and defence (4.1%) and mining (4.6%) (VT emphasis).*

The future of the NFP sector is directly linked with our volunteers. Extrapolated Volunteering Australia and ABS data suggests that 41% ⁱⁱ of the Tasmanian community volunteers in a wide range of areas.

In the discussion paper, the Not for Profit, or non-government sector, is described in three short paragraphs on page 16 under the heading of ‘Social Issues’. The view of VT is that the sector should be extracted from a social only context and placed alongside Government and Business as requiring analysis on the basis of its input to the economy and the changes likely to occur as a result of changing composition of the population.

Volunteers – the ‘Unpaid Workforce’

In each area where there is analysis of the labour force, the discussion paper should ensure that there is equal attention given to that part of the ‘labour force’ of the NFP sector that is voluntary. It is necessary to bring to light that the 41% of volunteers referred to are probably ageing faster than the rest of the population.

At the same time, it is important not to assume that young people will not choose to be part of the volunteering sector.

In 2005, the largest number of hours on average was contributed by older and younger volunteers in Australia - 178 hours for the year by those aged 55-65 and 132 hours for those aged 18-24. (Giving Australia, 2005).ⁱⁱⁱ

Contrary to popular opinion, our youth do seek to contribute to our civil society. Young people are volunteering in a wide range of areas and engage in the sector in a variety of ways. The capacity of young people to deal easily with new technology presents a major opportunity in the volunteering sector.

Volunteers are everywhere – in the Not for Profit Sector, in Government and increasingly, in programs organised by the business sector. The most common volunteering activities are fundraising, management, teaching and administration.

Volunteers are fire-fighters, ambulance workers, community transport drivers, health and community carers, teacher’s helpers in classrooms and in schools events, organisers and referees in sport and recreation, tourist, heritage and museum guides and conservationists. There is no data available to pin down exactly how many volunteers support various organisations in the State. However, VT works with careful estimates of some key services as set out below:

Volunteers in some Organisations in Tasmania Careful Estimates by Volunteering Tasmania^{iv}

Organisation	Volunteers
Ambulance	500
State Emergency Services	1500
Tasmanian Fire Service	530
Community Transport Services Tasmania	430
Museums	200
National Trust	800
Meals on Wheels	2800
Red Cross	1250
Coast care	2000
Community Services Online – Access Centres in Libraries and other public venues	900

VT stresses that there are volunteers across a wide range of areas of endeavour. The above table by no means reflects the size and diversity of the whole of the volunteering sector.

As volunteers age, the service they provide may have to be taken up as a cost of the Government.

There seems to be an assumption that as the population ages there will be more volunteers available. Whilst this may be true on the surface a more considerate exploration will reveal that the volunteers who will be in the 65+ cohort in 2026 will bring with them different views and attitudes to volunteering. They will not necessarily take on the same roles as today eg; meals on wheels. They are likely to prefer to volunteer in roles that reflect their current skills and values.

Community Transport Services Tasmania (CTST) is a good case in point. CTST has 432 volunteer drivers providing services to 4,000 clients each year. A costing of the driving function is \$5 million per annum. Not only might this cost have to be taken up by Government but it may well be, as the Discussion Paper points out, there is increased demand as well for community transport. The volunteers of 2026 and earlier may not take on such volunteer roles.

In each part of the Discussion Paper, VT recommends that attention is given to the NFP sector and the 'unpaid workforce'. On page 6 of the report, there are Challenges and Opportunities addressed in the context of paid workers. Similar themes need to be taken up for volunteers – productivity, participation, working age population and so on.

A key finding in *VT Survey 2006*^v showed that NFP organizations are struggling to replace existing voluntary groups with new incomers. Other research on volunteers shows that where there are new volunteers, people tend to seek different experiences to the volunteers of the past. A baby-boomer volunteer is unlikely to wish to give the daily commitment that many drivers do at CTST but rather to seek project driven, short -term engagement in the NFP sector.

VT looks forward to opportunities arising from the changing composition of the population. but suggests that there will be an extended transitional period where NFP organizations adapt to the changing landscape of volunteers and find ways to continue, or not, to provide services similar to the past.

Recommendations

Nationally and internationally, there is increasing recognition that the NFP sector is neglected and underestimated as is the independence of the economy upon it. VT strongly recommends that: future papers on Demographic Change in Tasmania:

- separate the NFP sector from the 'Social Issues' heading in the discussion paper,;
- define what the NFP sector is, analyse what it does and how it contributes to the economy;

- recognise the need for new strategies to link the sector with Government and Business in plans for the future;
- analyse the effects of the changing composition of the population on the volunteering sector – the ‘unpaid workforce’ – in similar terms as the paid workforce;

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VOLUNTEERING TASMANIA INC.

Volunteering Tasmania is the peak body for volunteering in Tasmania. VT is affiliated with Volunteering Australia, has an ongoing agreement with Department of Premier and Cabinet and is a partner of Tasmania Together. Programs are funded through Home and Community Care (combined Australian and State Government funding) and Department of Family and Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

There are about 5.000 not for profit organizations in Tasmania and about 116,000 volunteers providing community services in welfare, education, arts and music, tourism, heritage, sport and recreation and conservation. Volunteers are in the three sectors of business, government and not-for-profit.

In Australia:

6.3 million people volunteer in any year

This is 41% of population 18 years of age or older

These volunteers average 132 hours service per annum

The value of this work has been valued at \$30-50 billion per annum.

This value is equivalent to 5.6% of national GDP.

ABS compared industries in 2002: : ‘...the contribution of non-profit-institutions (NPIs) to the economy can be compared against traditional industries as a point of reference. The NPI contribution of 3.4% to gross value added in 1999-2000 is greater than the contribution made by the communications; electricity, gas and water; accommodation, cafes and

restaurants; personal and other services; and cultural and recreational services industries. *NPI gross value added is only slightly less than agriculture, forestry and fishing (3.5%). If an imputation is also made for the value of services provided by volunteers, the adjusted gross value added of NPIs (4.9%) is greater than that for government administration and defence (4.1%) and mining (4.6%)*

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ⁱ ABS *Volunteer Work Survey 2000*

ⁱⁱ Volunteering Australia, *Volunteering Fast Facts*, VolunteeringAustralia.org

ⁱⁱⁱ As Above

^{iv} Phone Survey, Volunteering Tasmania, November 2006

^v Pullen, Ian D. *Survey VT 2006*