



Department of Rural Health

**Sustainability of
Rural Volunteers in Tasmania**

August 2008

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Acknowledgements

This research was commissioned by Volunteering Tasmania Inc with funds made available by: the Commonwealth Department of Families, Housing, Community Services & Indigenous Affairs and Home and Community Care (HACC) – the joint Australian and Tasmanian government funded program, funded the survey on the impact of aging on volunteers and volunteering in Tasmania.

ISBN 978-1-86295-494-6

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1. Executive summary

This report is the outcome of a year long project. The University Department of Rural Health (UDRH) collaborated with Volunteering Tasmania to investigate the current status of volunteering in rural and regional Tasmania. Key areas of interest for the study were:

- the impact our ageing population has on current and future volunteers and their organisations;
- any barriers to future volunteer recruitment and strategies to overcome these barriers;
- the training and education needs of volunteers including mapping of existing training providers; and
- what is happening in Tasmania with regard to corporate volunteering, including any barriers to participation and strategies.

This report provides an in-depth analysis of the state of volunteering in rural and regional Tasmania. As such it has the capacity to inform the direction and policies of Volunteering Tasmania, organisations and government relying on volunteers and businesses seeking to contribute to volunteering in the State.

The project included case studies of three rural and regional locations based on interviews, a state-wide survey of volunteer programs and a survey of businesses. The personal accounts of volunteer experiences were mapped to the survey responses of volunteer program coordinators and of businesses. This report covers volunteer motivations, age ranges in volunteering, training needs in the sector, the management of volunteers and corporate volunteering. Conclusions and recommendations are drawn from the analysis.

Volunteers were found to have more than one motive for volunteering. We divided these motives into two key categories: those that have a personal focus and those that have a collective one. These findings support many other previous studies on volunteer motivation.

Although people expressed concern that younger people weren't involved in volunteering or that they would like extra younger people to be involved, this study found that younger people do volunteer. Older interviewees often made judgements about the motives (or lack of) of younger people. They suggested a shift away from a sense of community to a more individualistic approach as the reason why younger people weren't so evident in volunteering, that people are changing and more interested in money.

However, as volunteering is an expression of peoples' values and interests, it is not surprising to find that younger people may engage in volunteering in a different manner and area to older people. Some activities were perceived to better suit a particular age group. Radio was mentioned because you can be involved during the evening or night, plus they [younger people] enjoy the experience. Others suggested internet based activities were likely to appeal more to younger people.

The survey results showed that those 45-64 years of age made up the largest group of volunteers followed by those aged 25-44 years. Groups had an average of four volunteers aged less than 25 years and five volunteers aged over 65 years. These results suggest that the comments emerging from the qualitative data that 'young people do not volunteer' is a perception of older people, rather than the reality. This may be linked to older volunteers maintaining services that no longer attract general public support.

A list of 33 skills (See Table 10) was provided in the survey with respondents asked to tick all that applied. Administrative skills and fundraising skills were needed by about half of the respondent groups, and skills for befriending, clerical, coordination, maintenance, management committee work, preparing food, providing information, teaching/instruction, and supportive listening were needed by about a third of groups.

Training can deter rather than encourage volunteers if it is not consistent with the learning preferences of the volunteers targeted by the program. When a program considers up-skilling its volunteers it should take into account their existing skills and experience, how to capitalise on incidental, informal learning already occurring and the relatively low level of educational attainment in Tasmania, particularly in rural areas. This research found that some volunteers dislike formal training and learning, while other studies suggest previous negative educational experiences may be linked to a dislike of training. Because of the social nature of volunteering, it is important to many volunteers that any proposed training should consider a learning environment that is enjoyable and where the social aspects are emphasised.

Many volunteers bring experience from other areas of their life to their volunteer work. Over half of survey respondents felt that volunteers frequently or always bring skills from previous work which they then use in their volunteer role. For many organisations personal qualities and values are considered as necessary for volunteering as actual qualifications or skills.

There is a strong reliance on volunteers mentoring, teaching or training other volunteers, with around half or more programs frequently or always relying on volunteers mentoring other volunteers. New volunteers are likely to be supported by more experienced volunteers either frequently or always in around half of the respondent programs.

Providing liability insurance cover, providing formal recognition for volunteers and keeping a written record of volunteers were the most common management strategies, undertaken by around three-quarters of programs. Overall, a low proportion of programs ensured they have policies, budgets and evaluations of volunteer programs suggesting a lower level of formalisation in the rural participants of this study.

The interviews showed that coordinators need a wide range of people skills. While these skills can be taught coordinators tend to learn on the job (in the same way their volunteers do). Skill development is needed in some areas, particularly volunteer management as managers are in the best position to facilitate a positive volunteer experience.

The findings about volunteer management of programs shows that there is scope for some formalisation of management practices, balanced with the maintenance of a personal approach, and for training provision for volunteer coordinators.

Nearly half of the survey respondents indicated that they were struggling to meet their volunteer needs. The findings suggest that the culture of a volunteer program can be simultaneously inclusive to its long time volunteers and an unintentional deterrent to newcomers. In order to attract and retain newcomers, existing program culture may need to be challenged, and sound recruitment strategies implemented to increase membership.

A number of the interviewees were older volunteers who are or have been mutual obligation participants. This challenges the community concept that mutual obligation is the province of the young. Mutual obligation volunteers have a significant profile within the volunteer community and consequently are impacting on traditional concepts of volunteering.

The profile of corporate volunteering in rural and regional Tasmania is small and current models do not appear to interact successfully in rural communities. Small businesses are active in the voluntary sector and contribute through in-kind and donations more than with business time and labour. As participation in volunteering activities has a number of positive consequences for both business and the communities in which they operate, current contributions from small to medium businesses need to be acknowledged and new ways for the corporate and voluntary sector to interact should be encouraged.

Overall, this study has shed light on volunteering activity in rural Tasmania. Volunteers are busy providing community activities and services. Many operate in a more informal manner than national data sets would suggest, with lower levels of formal management practices and high levels of informal learning. These differences do not necessarily suggest that an organisation is performing badly, and may instead be linked to local level, grassroots organisations. Further research is needed to understand how and when formal management practices and training support grassroots organisations and when and why they deter participation.

2. Recommendations

Recommendation 1:

There is a need to take great care when trying to apply volunteering insights, policies and strategies developed from national aggregate data to local, especially rural, contexts. Local communities each have their own unique volunteers profiles and cultures and it is important that this translation from national to local is informed by sound understanding of, and sensitivity to, that local context.

Recommendation 2:

In seeking an understanding of volunteer motivation, case study research on organisations that are volunteer recruitment and retention exemplars is likely to be as productive as research that targets individual volunteers - if not more so.

Recommendation 3:

Volunteer organisations or programs that are experiencing difficulties with recruitment and retention need to consider:

1. Reviewing and refreshing volunteer recruitment and retention strategies;
2. Whether the existing organisational culture is unattractive to and/or difficult to penetrate for potential new members and whether the organisation needs to change to survive; and,
3. The possibility that the organisation in its present form is reaching the end of its natural life-span.

Recommendation 4:

Recognise that the rural volunteer section is dominated by, and has a strong preference for, informal learning. Moves to structure, formalise and quality control learning and skills development, where necessary, need to:

1. Take careful account of, and value prior learning
2. Employ delivery methods which are 'user friendly' to people with little or unsuccessful formal learning experience.
3. Be clearly relevant to volunteers' work functions.

Recommendation 5:

An increased focus on supporting volunteer coordinators and managers to improve their skills and to quality improve management structures and processes.

Recommendation 6:

Increased support to enable volunteer organisations facing recruitment and retention pressures to:

1. Improve their volunteer recruitment strategies
2. Undertake strategic reviews of organisational functions, cultures and future directions in order to increase their attractiveness to present and future volunteers.

Recommendation 7:

Recognise the value and diversity of existing relationships between – principally small and medium size but including corporate – businesses and local volunteer organisations and explore strategies to maintain and nurture these relationships.

3. Introduction

The University Department of Rural Health (UDRH) collaborated with Volunteering Tasmania to investigate the current status of volunteering in rural and regional Tasmania. Key areas of interest for the study were:

- the impact our ageing population has on current and future volunteers and their organisations;
- any barriers to future volunteer recruitment and strategies to overcome these barriers;
- the training and education needs of volunteers including mapping of existing training providers; and
- what is happening in Tasmania with regard to corporate volunteering, including any barriers to participation and strategies.

Background

Volunteering is a particularly important mechanism for maintaining community viability, especially in rural areas. Volunteers contribute a significant proportion of the labour that sustains our Australian way of life. In 2006, 36% of Tasmanians volunteered, higher than the national average of 34%. Nationally 5.2 million people aged 18 years and over, participated in some voluntary work (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006). It is arguable that volunteering has traditionally held a higher profile in rural and regional areas than in cities. At a national level, according to the ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006), 38% of people living outside the capital cities volunteer, compared to 32% within. However in Tasmania 37.3% of the rural population volunteer compared to 34% in the capital city (Tasmanian Department of Premier and Cabinet, 2008). Rural and regional communities have historically come together to supply a deficit or a need in the community that can only be afforded through volunteer contributions. This is exemplified by the volunteer Emergency services, but can and does include anything from local art groups to Meals on Wheels. The ABS identifies that:

- volunteers are more often women. Nationally this is 36% women and 32% men. In Tasmania it is 38.9% women and 33.1% men;
- the most likely age group for volunteers are people aged between 35 – 44;
- employed people (either full-time or part time) have a higher rate of volunteering than those who are unemployed or not in the workforce; and
- above average rates of participation in volunteering are associated with a higher level of educational achievement.

There is a shift in government policy to heavier reliance on the community sector (Ohlin, 1998). For example the Tasmanian Community Fund requires all applicants to document how they will involve volunteers (pers.com, 2008). According to the ABS (2006) the importance of volunteering is increasingly being formally recognised, with most states and territories “encouraging engagement in voluntary work in their strategic plans for social development” (p3). Some of the resultant changes impacting on volunteering, such as increasing training requirements, effect volunteer engagement.

This interest in volunteering has also seen the promotion of corporate volunteering. There has been a focus by government and volunteer umbrella organisations to encourage corporate Australia to contribute to volunteering. Hence this study aims to discover how well corporate volunteering operates within rural Tasmania.

The volunteer sector is diverse in both the people who volunteer and the types of activity with which they engage (Bussell and Forbes, 2006). It has also developed in an ad hoc way. Research into volunteering is relatively recent and the contributions made by volunteers are only beginning to be mapped. With the demographic and policy changes impacting on volunteering we need to better understand exactly what volunteers do contribute and what keeps them contributing.

4. Literature

Volunteering

Volunteering has been identified as a core component of social capital (Onyx and Leonard, 2000). It follows that if social capital is critical to the maintenance of a healthy and vibrant civil society (Onyx et al., 2001) then a sustained and sustainable volunteer workforce is essential to civil society.

At the very beginning of this project it became evident that there are many concepts of volunteering. People tend to understand volunteering in relation to their own experience. The range of activities undertaken by volunteers is enormous, nor can they be considered one large homogenous group (Bussell and Forbes, 2006).

Initially, to help de-limit the project it was decided to focus on formal volunteering. Volunteering Australia defines this as:

an activity which takes place through not for profit organisations or projects and is undertaken:

- *to be of benefit to the community and the volunteer;*
- *of the volunteer's own free will and without coercion;*
- *for no financial payment; and*
- *in designated volunteer positions only.*

(Volunteering Australia 2005).

Once the interviews commenced it became evident that people active in the not-for-profit sector didn't easily differentiate between formal and informal volunteering. Hank and Stuck found evidence for a complementary and interdependent relationship between volunteer work, informal help, and care activities (Hank and Stuck, 2008). Certainly many of the volunteers in interview, slipped from talking about volunteer activities to similar activities involving help or care, with ease.

Many people volunteer for more than one group or organisation over a range of activities. Some of these activities provide a lot of personal enjoyment, for example participating in a choir, a theatrical group or a gardening club. The researcher was contacted by a number of these individuals who were unsure as to whether they qualified as volunteers. They were uncertain because the activity gave them pleasure, and / or money was involved, such as charging for performances (usually to fundraise for another organisation). Thus within the volunteer spectrum there are people who meet the Volunteering Australia definition but who don't necessarily identify as volunteers, or whose activities may not be seen by others as a "traditional" volunteer activity.

Mutual Obligation:

In addition to these traditional understandings of volunteer activity, the federal government's unemployment scheme of "mutual obligation" presents a high profile within the communities consulted for this project.

Mutual obligation is a term applied to the obligations placed on a person in receipt of unemployment benefits. The social security law defines mutual obligation as:

...based on the principle that it is fair and reasonable to expect people receiving income support to do their best to find work and, in some circumstances, contribute something to their community in return for receiving income support. (Australian Government 2008)

Although "mutual obligation" does not fit within the definition ascribed above by Volunteering Australia, and the consequences of linking unemployment benefits to volunteer activity raises many questions (Levy, 2006, Planty et al., 2006), managers of "mutual obligation" personnel did identify these people as volunteers and individuals required to meet "mutual obligation" requirements identified as volunteers. As a consequence the research team agreed to include "mutual obligation" participants within the research project because the concept is impacting on community notions of volunteering.

Organisations participating in mutual obligation programs included large charitable organisations, an historical house, a golf club and Online Access Centres. Some organisations rely on mutual obligation participants to form a significant part of their workforce. Smaller organisations took the "odd one or two" to work as part of their volunteer team. It is apparent that "mutual obligation" is now part of the rural and regional volunteer fabric.

A number of older volunteers interviewed were or had been volunteering because of mutual obligation requirements. These mutual obligation participants included those who had been made redundant or taken an early redundancy and were too young to receive the pension. They lived in areas where permanent employment was limited or their age was a disadvantage. They were happy to be active and to contribute their experience and were likely to continue participating in the volunteering activity even if they were no longer required to.

Program

This project has interviewed volunteers from all industry sectors. Some of them are large organisations, some are programs and some are local groups. For the purposes of this report the word program will be used to mean volunteer organisations, programs and groups.

Motivation

Six functions of volunteerism are identified by (Clary et al., 1998) to understand and assess volunteer motivation. These include functions such as meeting values, social and career needs (p 1517-1518). Clary et al. argue that "acts of volunteerism that appear to be quite similar on the surface may reflect markedly

different underlying motivational processes,” and can contribute to a person’s motivation and ongoing commitment to volunteering (Clary et al 1998, p 1517). Tasmanian research (Fahey and Walker, 2001) observes that volunteer research and theory has frequently investigated volunteer motivation in order to improve recruitment and thus sustainability.

As the scope of this project is broad-ranging, rather than applying either the six motivation functions identified by Clary et al. or the four motivations described by Fahey and Walker (p 11), the two broad categories of collective and personal motivators are applied. The term collective, is used for motives that include having a collective vision, of benefit to the group, being part of the community and giving something back. Interviewees frequently talk about “giving something back to the community.” This concept infers an altruistic motive identified as the function of “values” by Clary et al.. Other research (Fahey and Walker, 2001, Swan, 1991, Federal Emergency Management Agency, 1995) suggests this concept should not be taken at face value and calls for in-depth analysis.

The motives identified as personal are those that are about social contact, about people who enjoy being with others and look forward to being part of a group activity. These cover the functions identified by Clary et al. as “social” and “career” and which Fahey and Walker identify as “fulfilling a personal need,” “the need for social contact” and “material incentives” (ibid p11).

Volunteer training

Training which is recognised as an incentive and a form of professional development for paid employees has been assumed to be equally an incentive for volunteers (Maynard, 2007). The volunteer participants in this study are all adults and any analysis of their training needs should be within an adult learning framework. Volunteers learn and train formally, informally and incidentally.

There has been much study of adult learning methods (The Research Forum, 2000, Foley, 1995, Brookfield, 1986, Tough, 1999). Tough (1999) discusses the way in which adults learn informally, often without being aware of it. (Brookfield, 1986) notes that “most adults’ learning occurs through participation in aspects of social life such as work, community or family, and does not occur primarily through formal education or courses” (p150 cited in (Kilpatrick and Fulton, 2003). Involving learners in the identification of their learning needs is “the highest professional and moral principle for adult educators.” (Cervano and Wilson, 1999).

As well as undertaking much of their learning in an informal way, every adult learner is different. “They come to a new learning experience with a unique set of past experiences, knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and aspirations” (Kilpatrick and Fulton, 2003), and these past experiences can also act as barriers to learning.

Training of volunteers is recognised as important for retention in some sectors such as the Tasmanian volunteer ambulance officers (Fahey et al., 2003) and community legal centre volunteers (Melville, 2002). Equally important is that the

training provided be quality training that adapts to the needs of the volunteer (Fahey et al., 2003). According to (Kilpatrick and Fulton, 2003) the design of learning programs for the primary industry sector needs “learning activities that provide information that is relevant to farmers’ needs, delivered in an entertaining way, and that draws on examples directly relevant to the participants” (p 2).

The types of skills that people use in the workplace whether paid or unpaid, are often defined as hard or soft skills (Bancino and Zevalkink, 2007, Hager et al., 2000, Costin, 2002). These terms are used when it is necessary to differentiate between the types of skills a volunteer activity requires. Applying Costin’s definition:

Hard skills are skills by which the individual interacts physically with technology during the generation of physical product.

and

Soft skills are skills by which the individual interacts with, interprets, structures, co-ordinates or otherwise informs the social and physical environments within which physical, societal and or personal product may be generated. (Costin, 2002: NP)

Volunteer management

Volunteer retention is the provenance of volunteer managers and so attitudes and approaches to learning and training are interwoven with volunteer management. In the past there have been two very different approaches to the management of volunteers that are identifiable today in Tasmanian volunteer programs. One is the ‘hands off’ approach where volunteers are seen as well meaning amateurs, (Cunningham, 1999) and any application of a business management approach is seen as inappropriate (Harrison, 1994). The other is a more proactive approach, that advocates clearly defining volunteer responsibilities (Hedley, 1992) with evidence that volunteers do want to be managed (Davis Smith, 1996).

Although effective management is now generally recognised as in the best interests of a volunteer program and may be desired by volunteers, it is not a simple matter of applying the management style applied to paid employees. While some of the knowledge about managing paid staff can be applied to volunteers (Paull, 2002) this knowledge needs to be adapted as “special consideration needs to be made of their voluntary status, and the nurturing approach” (ibid p 25) may be what serves best.

In the first six years of the previous decade, Commonwealth, State and Territory funding of community services expenditure increased as much as 18.9% per year (Ohlin, 1998). This increase in funding has coincided with new arrangements for service delivery including privatisation and the ‘contracting out’ of services (ibid p 3).

Community services work is undertaken in part by volunteers and the changes to service delivery have increased the stresses felt by the community services sector. The size of the volunteer sector, 5.4 million volunteers in 2006 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006, Levy, 2006), government's increasing expectation that the sector will be able to contribute to service delivery (Fahey, 2003) and contribute to sustaining communities (Warburton et al., 2004, Cuthill and Warburton, 2005), and the economic role of voluntary associations (Passey and Lyons, 2005) all suggest that effective volunteer management is now essential.

Indeed the professional development of the volunteer manager and the volunteer management committee has been identified as critical to the sustainability of the sector (Culp and Nolan 1999, cited in Boyd 2003) and of greater priority than the case for across the board training for volunteers. Competencies such as organizational leadership, systems leadership, organizational culture, personal skills, and management skills have been identified as important to effective volunteer management (Boyd, 2003).

Volunteer Coordinator

The people who coordinate, manage and organise volunteers have many different titles. In this report, for simplicity, this myriad group are given the collective title of volunteer coordinator.

Age

The ABS identify the largest group of volunteers (43%) as those aged between 35 – 44 years of age (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006). In Tasmania the impact of the ageing population is expected to be felt earlier than for the rest of Australia (Demographic Change Advisory Council, 2007).

While an ageing population is frequently framed as a problem, organisers of volunteering programs see older retired people as a potential pool of volunteers. The proportion of the population aged over 65 in rural areas of Australia is increasing and is expected to continue to increase as a result of 'seachange' internal migration and depopulation of younger age groups (Productivity Commission, 2005). While older people do not volunteer at the same rates as those in mid life, some studies show that they commit more hours to volunteering by both remaining longer with organisations and contributing more hours annually (Lyons and Hocking, 2000). Rural communities may therefore be well placed to encourage volunteering in older people.

In recent years, encouraging older people to stay active with volunteering has become a key primary health care focus because it is seen as one avenue for keeping older Australians healthy for longer (Leonard and Johansson, 2008, Warburton, 2008, Onyx and Leonard, 2007, Warburton and McLaughlin, 2005, Choi, 2003, Nisbet, 2008). There is some evidence that volunteering helps individuals maintain feelings of wellbeing, through social and physical activity (Onyx and Warburton, 2003), but this may be counterbalanced in rural areas by the poorer health status of rural dwellers. Older people living outside capital cities have lower life expectancy and higher death rates than those in capital

cities (Australian Institute Health Welfare (AIHW), 2002) and studies suggest the probability of volunteering is lowered for older Australians reporting only good to poor health (Warburton and Stirling, 2007). The complexity of the situation for older volunteers in rural Australia means that this is an important issue in volunteering policy.

This is the context in which Volunteering Tasmania has sought to gain a greater understanding of the issue of age in relation to volunteering.

Corporate Volunteering

Corporate volunteering is a relatively recent phenomenon and is defined by Volunteering Australia as “any effort by an employer to encourage and assist employees to volunteer in the community”(Volunteering Australia, 2005). Volunteering Australia surveyed 164 companies in 2005. Fifty companies responded providing a 30% response rate. Their survey data provides the most current understanding of corporate volunteering in Australia. According to their findings, most programs were established from 2003. A third of the respondent companies had a full-time employee dedicated to volunteer programs. Many of the companies who responded indicated they had a policy to provide paid work time for employees to volunteer anywhere between one and five days a year (Volunteering Australia, 2006).

Corporate volunteering programs are usually run within a company’s corporate social responsibility (CSR) division. CSR incorporates other social concerns such as a company’s ethics and its impact on the environment. These CSR issues stem from business’s relationships with and responsibilities to, the communities in which each business operates.

Corporate social responsibility (CSR)

There is evidence that the concept of corporate volunteering goes back to at least the mid 1980’s (Allen et al., 1986). Certainly the last twenty years or so have seen changes in the operating environments for both private and public sector organisations in Australia (O’Donohue et al., 2007). With an increasingly competitive environment survival can depend on gaining an advantage or point of difference from other businesses.

According to Allen “the growing demands for corporate social responsibility, are being driven by consumer concern, by anti-globalisation sentiment, by the increasingly visible bad behaviour of business” (Allen, 2003: 57). Business’s have engaged with corporate volunteering because they are driven by a sense of obligation to be socially responsible corporate citizens (Cavallaro, 2007, Muthuri et al., 2007). There is also much evidence that it is good for business (Peterson, 2004, Wilcox, 2006). Wilcox argues that contemporary corporations now enjoy economic and political power but this “brings with it an associated set of responsibilities and duties, particularly in the light of issues emerging in the global and local political environment” (Wilcox, 2006: 184). CSR also has benefits for employees (Zappala, 2004, Muthuri et al., 2007, Peterson, 2004). There are “positive effects that corporate community involvement can have on human resource management outcomes such as employee motivation, morale,

commitment, recruitment, retention, development and teamwork” (Zappala 2004, p 184).

Corporate volunteering is a component of Volunteering Australia’s key project area “National and International Links” (Volunteering Australia, 2008). Australian governments at both a state and federal level are also encouraging the corporate sector to contribute to communities (Centre for Corporate Public Affairs, 2007, Educational Performance Services, 2007) represented by events such as the “Volunteer for a Day” program initiated by the Tasmanian government in 2001.

A brief investigation of the literature suggests that there are at least four motivations for encouraging businesses to take on a CSR approach. These are:

- Business needs to be responsive to the changing environment in which it operates ;
- The profile of businesses can be enhanced through community engagement;
- Employee community participation has a positive impact on human resource management; and
- Governments recognise the benefits to its own service provision by increased volunteer activity.

5. Research approach

The project tackles the three main issues of ageing and its possible impact on volunteering, the training and skill needs of volunteers and the role of corporate volunteering using a mixed-method research approach. In-depth interviews with 67 volunteers were undertaken in three regional locations followed by a state-wide survey of volunteer organisations and businesses.

Timeline

The project commenced in October 2007 and the key steps and timelines are identified in Table 1. The project was formally launched on International Volunteer Day (December 5). This launch was organised for New Norfolk and the publicity for the launch coincided with a request to the New Norfolk community to participate in interviews.

Table 1: Project timelines

Inaugural meeting of Steering Group	October 1
Ethics application and clearance	October – November 2007
Organise launch	
Identify sites	
Develop interview	
Launch	December 5, 2007
Steering Group meeting	December 11, 2007
Interviews in New Norfolk	December – February 2008
Interviews St Helens	February – March 2008
Interviews Kings Meadows, greater Launceston	January – March 2008
Develop volunteer organisation survey	March – May 2008
Develop Corporate volunteering survey	March – May 2008
Steering Group meeting	April 16, 2008
Distribute, collect and collate survey data	June 2008
Data analysis	June – September 2008
Steering Group meeting	June 5, 2008
Progress report including themes	June 30, 2008
Final report	August 30, 2008

The Data collection occurred in two phases, with the qualitative data informing the design of the quantitative data collection tool.

Phase 1

- Site selection
- Launch
- Interviews
- Consultation with steering group

Phase 2

- Survey of volunteer programs
- Survey of businesses
- Consultation with steering group

Phase 1

Three case studies of rural / regional Tasmanian communities were undertaken. Each case was a geographically identified community with a different regional, remote and metropolitan areas classification (RRMAs). The agreed RRMA classifications were:

- 1 RRMA 3 – A suburban community within a large regional centre.
- 1 RRMA 4 – A large rural community
- 1 RRMA 5 – A small rural community

The site selection criteria also included:

- Level of volunteering activity/inactivity (evidence provided by Volunteering Tasmania and Steering Group members).
- Regional area (Northwest, North, Northeast, South, Southeast).
- Proximity to one of the University's rural teaching sites or commutable distance from such a site.

The three cases were:

1. Kings Meadows (RRMA 3)

Located in the north of the state, Kings Meadows is a suburb of a large regional centre with a mixed socio-economic population.

2. New Norfolk (RRMA 4 – 5)

Located in the south of the state, New Norfolk has experienced rapid growth as a commuter suburb superimposed on a rural socio-economic population.

3. St Helens (RRMA 5)

Located on the east coast, St Helens has a low socio-economic community with minimal services and a high proportion of older people.

Within case participant selection

Once the sites were identified a database of volunteer organisations was developed using data supplied by Volunteering Tasmania and by looking up local organisations on the Tasmania Online website.

Volunteer organisations were encouraged to participate via letter sent to organisations and through publicising the project using state and local media. Once the New Norfolk interviews were underway, further interviews at St Helens and Launceston / Kings Meadows began. Individuals contacted the researcher or were nominated by community members to the researcher. Sixty seven interviews were conducted across the three sites. The data collected included quantitative demographic data and extensive qualitative data.

Each interview was taped, transcribed and analysed with the assistance of NVivo software.

In order to investigate the sector's training and education needs, the researchers framed interview questions to encourage volunteers and their coordinators to reflect on the types of learning in which they have participated as part of their volunteering activity (see Appendices 1 and 2).

Case studies

The project identified three sites listed above. ABS data for each site allows for a basic profile comparison.

Table 2: Population profiles

	Kings Meadows	New Norfolk	St Helens	Australia
Population (No)	3427	5230	2004	
Median Age	41	39	46	37
65+	23%	17%	22%	
Per cent aged 15 or over with qualification greater than High School	30%	16%	26%	43%
Married	42%	45%	49%	
Australian born	85%	85%	82%	
No religion	19%	15%	20%	
Number in the labour force	1503	1964	733	
Number not in the labour force	1195	1844	813	
Median weekly income	\$379	\$337	\$319	\$466

(Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2007)

New Norfolk has the youngest population and the greatest number (per cent of population) that identify as a member of a religious group. People in New Norfolk earn more per week than those in St Helens but less than those in Kings Meadows. New Norfolk's median age is closest to the national median.

The median age of the St Helens community is almost a decade older than the national average. The number of married people is 7 per cent greater than that of Kings Meadows. It has more people born overseas than either of the other two sites and it is the only site to have more people not in the labour force than in the labour force. All sites earn considerably less than the Australian median weekly income.

Using the researcher as instrument, there was an evident "personality" difference between each of the sites. The St Helens cohort reflected the census data of being "older" with a predominance of people who had moved there. A difference between the more rural communities of St Helens and New Norfolk and the large rural centre of Kings Meadows in how the volunteers connect to the community was apparent. Rural volunteer communities know each other and speak about their volunteer experience as integral to their community participation. Some also have a good understanding of business contributions to local volunteer activity.

In Kings Meadows, the volunteers interviewed do not necessarily live in the area, or they live in the area but do not volunteer there. The volunteer community was harder to identify and contact. There did not appear to be such a direct or intimate connection with the physical location of the community and there was less evidence provided by interviewees concerning business contributions to volunteering.

Overview of study participants

Participants who self-selected for this project had the following characteristics:

- More women nominated to be interviewed than men (40:27). The highest participation age group were the 55 – 64 year olds (39%) with over half (58%) of the people interviewed aged 55 – 74 (see Table 3);
- Most people interviewed were not in the workforce (65%); and
- Just over a quarter (28%) of those interviewed had a diploma or higher.

These characteristics show that the interview participants were a different cohort to the average Australian volunteer as defined by the ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006).

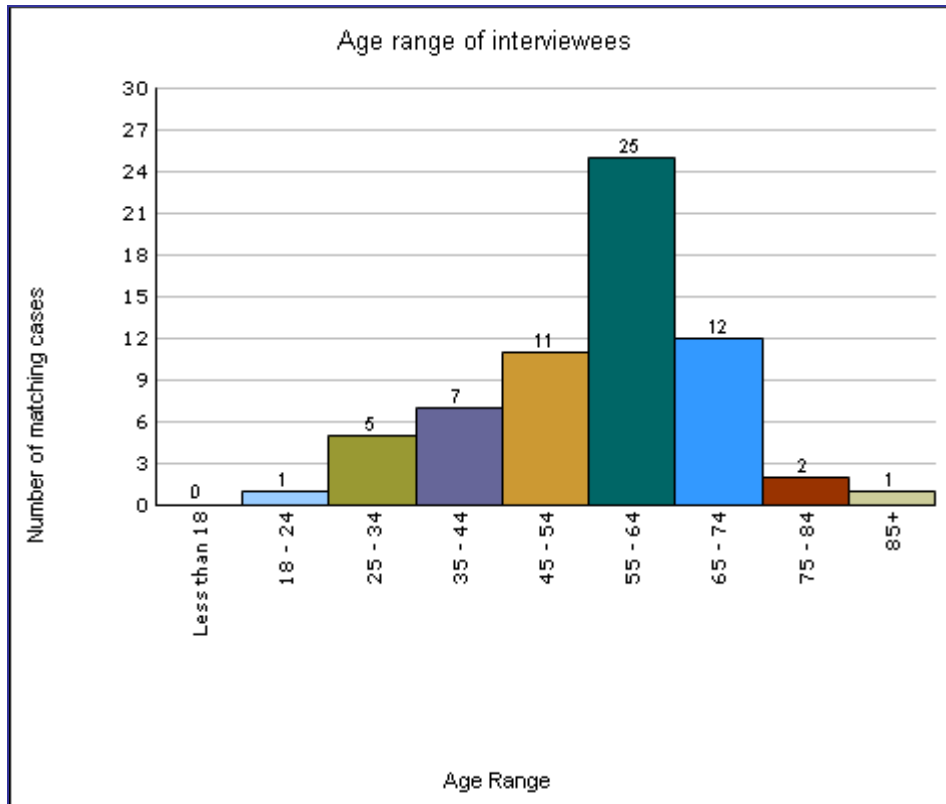


Figure 1: Age range of interviewees

Phase 2

Phase 2 involved a state-wide survey targeting the coordinators or managers of volunteers in volunteer programs. Additional participation was sought by advertising the survey phase of the project through state and local media with the help of the University media office. The survey was designed to explore issues raised in Phase 1 and to elicit quantitative data that would have a state wide application. A second database was built so that the survey could be sent to the contact person of volunteer programs at the local level. Using the ABS classifications of sectors, the project attempted to identify three programs within each sector in 27 locations around the State. Due to the size and / or volunteer activity in each location, some locations have a higher volunteer profile than others. The program survey (see [Appendix 3](#)) was sent to 419 volunteer programs and 152 programs responded. This gives a response rate of 24%. The proportion of responses from each sector can be seen in Table 5.

Volunteer programs survey

Volunteer survey respondent demographics

A total of 152 volunteer programs responded to the survey. Table 3 shows that more than half of the individuals completing the survey on behalf of the program were from a program executive governance level. Individuals at this governance level have an 'overview' position of the program and are therefore likely to have a better understanding of the organisations' policy position than whether policies are actually implemented adequately.

**Table 3: Position in volunteer program
(n=152)**

Respondent governance level	Percent
Executive level	53
Coordinator	39
Field worker	8
Total	99
Not stated	1
Total	100

The spread of programs by sector in the sample differed in some respects from the Tasmanian volunteer sector, as shown in Table 4. In the survey, community and welfare programs made up the biggest group of respondent programs. The comparison with ABS data shows that the response from community / welfare, arts/ heritage, emergency services, parenting / children / youth and environment / animal welfare was higher than the percent of Tasmanians identified by the ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006) with education / training and sport underrepresented. Some of this difference could be explained because of the rural nature of this study's population.

Table 4: Sector of interest

Volunteer group field of interest	Percent of total sent	Percent of total response	ABS % involved in TAS
Community / Welfare	15	22	16
Arts / Heritage	8	12	5
Emergency Services	6	12	1
Parenting / Children / Youth	5	10	3
Environment / Animal Welfare	11	10	3
Sport / Physical Recreation	13	10	24
Religious	11	9	11
Other	12	6	12
Education / Training	11	5	19
Health	8	4	6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

About half of responding programs had between 5-19 volunteers as seen in Table 5. Volunteering Australia's *National Survey of Volunteering Issues 07* has 23% of respondents in the category 1-19, compared to this survey where 63.1% of respondent programs had between 0-19 volunteers. This difference may partly be explained by the Volunteering Australia survey methodology, which relies on online responses, and again the rural population base of this survey.

Table 5: Approximate number of volunteers (n=152)

Approximate number of volunteers in program	Percent
0-4	12
5-19	51
20-199	34
More than 200	3
Total	99
Not Stated	1
Total	100.0

Using the location specified by respondents for the volunteer program, rural classifications were allocated. In Table 6 both RRMA and ARIA scores are listed for respondents. The results show that the volunteer programs were largely rural with 68.4% classifying as 'other rural centre' according to RRMA, and 50% as moderately accessible according to ARIA categories.

Table 6: ARIA and RRMA categorisation (n=152)

RRMA ¹	ARIA ²	RRMA Percent	ARIA Percent
1	HA	7	14
3	A	10	48
4	MA	7	33
5	R	69	2
7	VR	5	1
Not stated		2	2
Total		100.0	100.0

Corporate volunteering survey

A second survey (see [Appendix 4](#)) was developed for large businesses with a presence in Tasmania. Sixty large businesses were identified from the Telephone Directory. The business was contacted, often via a 1300 or 1800 number and the name, title of an appropriate contact person was sought to ensure that the survey reached the right person. The survey was then sent out. Thirteen businesses responded (See Table 7).

Table 7: Businesses by size

¹ RRMA

Capital cities (RRMA category 1) , Other metropolitan centres (2), Large rural centres (3), Small rural centres (4), Other rural centres (5), Remote centres (6), Other remote areas (7)

² ARIA

Highly Accessible (HA), Accessible (A), Moderately Accessible (MA), Remote (R), Very remote (VR)

Businesses by size	Project response	Tasmania	Australia
Non-employing		38359	2178240
0-19	1	13948	754504
20-199	5	1666	77656
200+	7	76	4918

(Source: (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2005)

Responses from each survey were analysed using SPSS statistical analysis software. The four overarching project themes were addressed using this data and data arising from the interviews.

Project limitations

The data collected for each theme offer extensive research potential. However, the projects' time constraints have required that this report be limited to an initial assessment of each theme in relation to volunteering in Tasmania.

6. Findings

Motivation

In the interviews, participants were asked how they became involved in their volunteer activity. Their responses covered a wide range of accidental, serendipitous and intentional motivations. People talked about being introduced to the activity by a friend or a family member. A few, who identified as Christians, volunteered as part of their engagement with their church and talked about being “born to it.” A proportion of all interviewees in each location had moved into the area.

Interviewees usually gave responses of more than one motive. These motives have been broadly divided into two categories, those that have a personal focus and those that have a collective one.

Personal

Volunteering can be linked to paid work. Out of the 67 people interviewed, 10 were participating in mutual obligation. Many other interviewees had been participants because either there isn't the paid work available, or they had been made redundant. Volunteering can be a replacement for the routine of paid work or it can be a route from or to paid work.

Sometimes it is a way of acquiring skills and experience to assist in the search for employment. One 27 year old had identified his vocation through volunteering, and was now studying with TAFE: “I should have been out in the workforce so many years ago already doing this, it would have been nice if I would have found out... this was for me many years ago, but yeah went through a few toughies you know searching around...”

Some people seemed to fall into volunteering. “The manager said ‘oh you're interested in tourism aren't you?’ And I said ‘not particularly,’ and he said ‘well come with me’ and I got kidnapped and the next thing I know is I'm at this meeting.” With the Scouts, parents often get involved because their children are involved. Interviewees talked about helping out a bit, or wanting to achieve a definite aim but then “you know a little bit of help became a lot of help.”

Some might put it down to serendipity, “I came on the wrong night when they had the meeting and they said about car accidents and I thought, ‘well that'll be interesting.’ So I've been here ever since.”

A strong emotional experience or a passion often triggers volunteer activity. A significant group of interviewees became engaged in their volunteering activity because of a passion for something, or through a particularly intense experience. This experience is usually something that has influenced or changed the course of their life. It frequently includes

another person or people. Working as a Legacy volunteer, because “I was a Legacy child myself” was one person’s motivation.

It might be the result of caring for someone they loved or losing a loved one, “I was really very very lost you know...” It might be being inspired by their capacity to get through to a difficult child, or it might be someone inspiring them to act:

Cornwall was dying, and she said Cornwall was where coalmining started and we’ve got to recognize that and we’ve got to recognize all these pioneers that went into the coalmine and worked with just a pick and shovel and a stick of dynamite.

People most frequently said they volunteered because of “I guess people, yeah, people.” They love, like, want to meet, have a connection with other people. They enjoyed or they loved it. It provides them with an interest, something to do, and something to learn about. It is rewarding, satisfying, it provides a purpose, it gives them pleasure. “I’ve chosen my volunteer organizations carefully and I’ve chosen ones where I can, I can get positive feedback if you like...” or “When I came over here I needed to meet friends...I joined everything within sight.”

For those involved in the Emergency services there are a couple of additional motivators. Many people want to know that the service is available for themselves or their immediate family, or may see a route into paid employment. In addition some Emergency Service volunteers mentioned the adrenalin factor, “you like the activity and the hype that goes with it.”

Collective

Interviewees spoke about getting together with like minded people, having a collective vision of how to add to their community. They spoke about working on a project that would benefit the group, working and socialising with the same people and being part of the community. Some people do what they do, because they enjoy helping, and a few individuals “do go above and beyond what most of us would do.” Some identified themselves as being a “joiner”, and others have just “done it” all their lives.

Interviewees felt they had something to offer, whether it was skills, getting something done, wanting to help, or wanting to be of use. A lot of people talked about “giving something back.” One interviewee challenged this concept:

I would like to say [I volunteer] for some noble reason like wanting to give back to the community ... but it wasn’t...who is the community that you’re supposed to [be] giving back to and why should you be giving back to it? I mean it’s... it escapes me.

Conservation activity was strongly tied to motives around the common interest, a community need, the desire to contribute to the community, and the pleasure to be found in being involved or connected. Many rural volunteers, in particular, are involved in retaining or conserving something. It might be the history of a local industry, a remnant of settlement, relating to culture, a needed service or the environment. This research indicates that rural and regional volunteer effort is frequently directed towards maintaining or retaining something that might otherwise disappear.

Age and Volunteering

Most volunteer programs had a mix of ages but others had volunteers clustered around certain age groups, such as mostly young people or mostly older people. One centre had previously been “a haven for IT tech heads, boys under the age of 22.” Another interviewee said, “Well I’m 51. I reckon I would be the oldest. And I reckon the majority of people that come in are young.” Some volunteer groups had “a range of ages so we’re fairly lucky” or expressed pride in the diversity of the program “we have people from 20 to 90 in our Club.”

Although people talked a lot about younger volunteers, expressing concern that younger people weren’t involved or that they would like younger people to be involved, an individual’s understanding of “younger” might mean pre-teen or less than 50. It’s all relative:

I can remember when I was younger in the workforce thinking people 55 to 60 were really old and dodderly and needed to get out of our way you know. But now that I’m a bit older I’m finding that the older generation have got so much to offer and are so much more skill rich than they used to be because they didn’t do, just do one function at all for work. Most of my people are just retired as well so.

Interviewees generally were conscious that the volunteers they know tend to be older, “we don’t have any teenagers, but we have people of retirement age and older.” Some mentioned the volunteer group started in their twenties had developed a social aspect. The membership of the group had remained the same and they were all now in their fifties, sixties and seventies.

There were many comments about young people’s level of commitment being different to the older volunteers or at least to their manager’s expectations. Their contribution is identified as shorter possibly due to family or work commitments. Some interviewees attributed these differences in the way younger and older people volunteered, to changes in the way society organises itself. This included the current expectation that both women and men work and the understanding that older people have more free time.

Emergency Service interviewees see the ageing population as a concern because they require physically fit volunteers for their activity:

Something like 40% are over 50 and I think there's something like 4,600 volunteer fire fighters.

Occasionally an older volunteer thought they were undervalued, "people want younger people, yet older people have got a lot more experience and knowledge and wisdom." One manager actively sought a mix of younger and older volunteers because a "grandparent brings completely different things to somebody who's a first time mum."

Organisations like the Scouts are based on an individual working their way up an age-based hierarchy. Older volunteers are seen to have a role mentoring younger volunteers, "they're the people that can teach the younger ones a lot of skills."

Fears about the consequences of an ageing population tended to be expressed by older volunteers. Older interviewees often made judgements about the motives (or lack of) of younger people. They suggested a shift away from a sense of community to a more individualistic approach as the reason why younger people weren't so evident in volunteering; that people are changing and more interested in money.

Some activities were perceived to better suit a particular age group. Radio was mentioned because you can be involved during the evening or night, plus they [younger people] enjoy the experience. Others suggested internet based activities were likely to appeal more to younger people.

When asked who'll be doing the volunteering in the future, interviewees expected that they themselves or people similar to themselves would, as "more older people, a bigger proportion of people who have retired will get involved in volunteer work of one sort or another." If older people are the ones with time to spare, then it was reasoned that they are the ones better placed to commit to long term volunteering. "Probably somebody similar to myself who's retired and doesn't actually want to lie fallow," is how one interviewee put it.

However, in the survey respondents were asked to estimate the numbers of individuals in several age categories (see Table 8). The age group best represented in the volunteer agencies was the 45-64 group, followed by the 25-44 years group. These results suggest that the comments emerging from the qualitative data that 'young people do not volunteer' is a perception of older people, rather than the reality.

Table 8: Approximate number of age groups (n=152)

Age group	24 years or younger		25-44 years		45-64 years		over 65 years	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Approximate number of volunteers in age group								
0	98	64.5	46	30.3	18	11.8	72	47.4
1-4	26	17.1	36	23.7	41	27.0	27	17.8
5-10	13	8.6	34	22.4	36	23.7	22	14.5
more than 10	8	5.3	21	13.8	36	23.7	19	12.5
Not stated	7	4.6	15	9.9	21	13.8	12	7.9
Total	152	100.0	152	100.0	152	100.0	152	100.0

Volunteer skills and training

The data provides a number of attributes that need to be considered in any discussion on the need for training in the volunteer sector. These attributes are:

- The vast majority of those interviewed (including volunteer coordinators) did not have post-school qualifications;
- The volunteers interviewed brought with them a wealth of work related experience; and
- Some interviewed expressed an active dislike of training.

A list of 33 skills (see Table 9) was provided in the survey with respondents asked to tick all that applied. Administrative skills and fundraising skills were needed by about half of the respondent groups, and skills for befriending, clerical, coordination, maintenance, management committee work, preparing food, providing information, teaching/instruction and supportive listening were needed by about a third of groups.

Table 9: Skills needed

Skills needed to volunteer in our group/program	Yes (percent)
Administrative skills	54
Fundraising skills	49
Management committee skills	39
Providing information skills	39
Preparing food skills	32
Coordination skills	32
Teaching/instruction skills	32
Supportive listening skills	30
Maintenance skills	30
Befriending skills	28
Clerical skills	28
Serving food skills	28
First aid skills	23
Recruitment skills	20
Protecting the environment	19
Coaching skills	18
Lobbying skills	18
Personal care skills	14
Gardening skills	14
Advocacy skills	12
Counselling skills	12
Policy/research skills	10
Repairing skills	17
Transporting people skills	10
Sale skills	9
Performance skills	8
Refereeing skills	8
Transporting goods skills	8
Media production	7
Fire fighting skills	5
Search and rescue skills	5
Working with animals skills	5
Judging skills	2

The skill responses were then collapsed into six larger themed categories in order to aid analysis. The results in Table 10 show that organisational skills and task specific skills (such as first aid and fire fighting) were used by the most programs.

**Table 10: Skills used
(n=152)**

Are these skills used in your organisation? (Data has been recategorised)	Yes (percent)
Uses organisational skills	68
Uses task specific skills	59
Uses caring skills	53
Uses fund raising skills	51
Uses PR skills	45
Uses transport skills	14

Respondents were asked to identify qualifications needed in order to volunteer for their program with up to three open-ended responses allowed. This data was thematically categorised. Actual qualifications or skills made up a third of responses, but personal qualities and values needed by volunteers (for example, 'Christian values') made up the remainder of the categories (see Table 11). While people skills were nominated by only 10% of the groups surveyed, they featured as important in the interview data:

You have to be a people person; you have to have good common sense and to be able to take criticism.

Table 11: Categorisation of qualifications needed

Qualities identified as necessary for volunteer groups	Percent
Group values and interests	55%
People skills	18%
Age or relationship requirement	8%
Character, health, or police check	26%
Professional qualifications or skills	59%
Organisational skills	9%
More than one response was allowed therefore total does not add up to 100	

Volunteers' existing skills

When interviewing the volunteers and their coordinators about training and skill development it became evident that many volunteers bring experience from other areas of their life to their volunteer work. The work experiences of volunteers included people who had operated their own business, a master mariner, a policeman, a Vietnam veteran, a fireman, public servants, a post office manager, a psychologist, teachers, special educators and administrators, those who have worked in retail, managed staff, worked in catering, run market stalls and those who had many years experience as volunteers.

Now I've been doing that for 13 years, I don't particularly need to train in how to set it up but I can train someone else in how to set it up

I've got quite a bit of experience just running and looking after staff and I co-ordinated, I mean we had about thirteen or fourteen staff and in a really busy business...

I've worked in the public service, local government, state government, commonwealth, community sector for 25 years.

To gauge the extent to which volunteers bring skills into volunteering from previous work experiences survey respondents were asked to judge the extent to which this occurred in their program. As Table 12 shows over half of respondents felt that volunteers frequently or always bring skills from previous work which they then use in their volunteer role.³

Table 12: Skills from previous work (n=152)

To what extent do your volunteers bring their skills from their previous work experience with them?	Percent
Never or hardly ever	9
Sometimes	35
Frequently	33
Always	19
Not stated	4
Total	100.0

³ An original five point Likert scale was collapsed to four points by combining never and hardly ever as there were limited numbers in these categories.

Learning and training

Volunteer work happens in many ways: formally, informally and incidentally. Some work is recognised as requiring skill, while other work is not. Many volunteers are members of management committees, yet the skills involved in working on a management committee were only infrequently identified by interviewees. A member of a management committee should have an understanding of the organisation's constitution, and that's "fairly heavy reading for the majority of people."

Volunteers most commonly mentioned "learning on the job", "learning as you go" or "just picking it up" as the way they learn what they need to know to fulfil their volunteer role. Table 13 shows that more than three quarters of survey respondents indicated that this informal style of learning occurred frequently or always.

Table 13: Reliance on volunteers 'learning as they go' (n=152)

To what extent do your volunteers learn as they go? Percent	
Never or hardly ever	2
Sometimes	16
Frequently	47
Always	32
Not stated	3
Total	100.0

For some this experience of learning on the job had a degree of anxiety attached to it, because they described it as being "thrown in the deep end."

I'm learning, I'm learning. I got thrown in pretty much so and so and yeah I'm getting better at it.

One woman who is very active in a local cancer support program became involved after she travelled the cancer journey with a friend. The experience provided her with a very strong motivation to learn as much as she could about the disease and the resources available. Although she had a very strong dislike of formal training she was equally driven by a strong desire to improve her own knowledge base. She learnt by "reading, by watching things on TV...but also by talking to the relevant people like the people at the Cancer Council." She would attend liaison lunches, listen carefully and identify who did what, "where they fit in you know and what, what can they help with." In addition to seeking out where and from whom to obtain information she learnt:

a lot about how families relate to people with a family member with cancer ...how some cope, some can't and some switch off, some walk away.

The difficulties of getting to your appointments and to your treatments 'cause it's ongoing when you go into chemo and radiation. All those difficulties, the expenses, different types of cancer, there's hundreds.

She said she made herself learn about how your food intake alters when you are on radiation and chemo, and then brings this information to the volunteer cancer support group with which she is involved.

A volunteer with a reputation for being knowledgeable about the local environment is self-taught, picking up her knowledge through many years of observation of the environment in which she lives and for which she feels passionately. The knowledge she has gained led to her being offered employment with the State Department of Parks and Wildlife. One woman, who was out of the paid workforce for 45 years learned how to use a computer in her volunteer work. Her motivation to learn included developing a point of connection with her daughters (one of whom is also her volunteer coordinator).

The most common form in which informal learning manifests, is that of mentor and mentee, or by being "buddied up". Volunteers learn from other volunteers. Large charitable organisations are likely to buddy a new volunteer up with a more experienced volunteer. As one experienced volunteer explained, "I have a checklist of things that they need to know to operate the register on their own". In addition, when a volunteer did not have anyone to fall back on for advice or assistance they learnt through solving a problem:

We just sort of ran through it and I just picked up the information booklet and I said, 'oh look here,' and we just went 'beep beep' and it was right. It's as simple as that. It stares you in the face all the time. Yeah ...ten hours I've been back through a book and back through it and back through it and missed it completely. Then I just left it for a week and gone back to it and so there it is.

The volunteer as mentor or trainer

There is a strong reliance on volunteers mentoring, teaching or training other volunteers. Support offered to new volunteers is an important aspect of the volunteer experience and is considered an important retention strategy. In the survey, respondents were asked about the levels of mentoring, with around half or more programs frequently or always relying on volunteers mentoring other volunteers (See Table 14). The survey asked respondents whether new volunteers were offered buddying, mentoring or induction by more experienced volunteers. New volunteers are likely to be supported by more experienced volunteers either frequently or always in around half of the respondent programs (See Table 15).

Table 14: Levels of volunteer mentoring (n=152)

To what extent are your volunteers mentored by other volunteers within the group / program?	Percent
Never or hardly ever	10
Sometimes	34
Frequently	36
Always	17
Not stated	3
Total	100.0

Table 15: Levels of support provided to new by more experienced volunteers. (n=152)

This group/program ensures each new volunteer is buddied up, mentored or inducted with more experienced volunteers	Percent
Never or hardly ever	19
Sometimes	28
Frequently	22
Always	27
Not stated	3
Total	100.0

Many of the participant interviewees talked about training or being taught or trained by other volunteers and about older volunteers teaching younger ones. If mentoring or buddying up is included, then learning from one's peers is the main way volunteers learn what they need to know. The training sessions were:

Good fun. I made them fun for people, and I'd sit on the computer and have somebody on each side doing them and I'd say you know, 'This is how it's done'.

Without teaching experience this volunteer developed her own teaching methods:

I'd do it in different stages and save it in different stages and I'd say, 'Now this is what it's got to look like'. Yeah, I would have loved to have been a Teacher. No I didn't really have the brain power.

Quite a number of volunteers were formally trained as educators, either as teachers or as training instructors, including the Certificate IV Assessor and Workplace Trainer:

There are a lot of ex-teachers.

Informal training

The most frequently cited training process is induction. Induction is common as it can address government policy requirements such as the privacy law, occupational health and safety regulations, client confidentiality and the rights and responsibilities of the volunteer.

Induction may also include an explanation of the need for a police check, the philosophy of the program and identification of any skills that the volunteer has or would like to develop. The format induction may take varies widely in terms of length, degree of formality and consistency of the induction process.

Survey responses showed that less than a third of respondent programs always provide induction or introductory training for volunteers (See Table 16).

Table 16: Levels of introductory training (n=152)

This group/program provides basic training for each new volunteer	Percent
Never or hardly ever	20
Sometimes	29
Frequently	18
Always	29
Not stated	4
Total	100.0

Formal Training

Formal training is that organised by professional educators with a defined curriculum, and often leads to a statement of attainment or qualification. Competency based training is one form of this type of training. The Emergency services offer a detailed, competency based training program. Large charitable organisations are more likely to buddy the new volunteer up with a more experienced volunteer. They will also send reliable volunteers to short courses.

Volunteers who undertake competency based training in addition to the Emergency services are the Scouts, organisations like St John Ambulance and programs such as Online Access Centres who agree to offer their mutual obligation volunteers formal training. Each of these services have a focus on hard skills such as certificates in multimedia, computing, pump operation, chainsaw operation and first aid.

Disincentives and incentives

Training provided to volunteers can act as both an incentive and a disincentive. A few programs which attract volunteers who have a need and / or desire to learn more do not have access to appropriate trainers, do not see any need to provide training or just “didn’t have a lot of formal training.” Volunteers in these situations were aware that there was limited scope for them to develop.

Paper work was frequently referred to as a disincentive for volunteering. This term in the volunteer context, is used to suggest formal processes, whether it is learning in a formal way (taking notes, reading and writing), attending presentations, or having to be accountable:

But not writing down pages and pages of written stuff or reading pages and pages of written stuff, reading books on this that and the other no, it doesn't interest me.

No I don't do computer at all...just don't hit me with any paperwork or anything like that. The days of paperwork are... I just don't want to be involved.

One person suggested that “volunteers...sort of maybe despise formal training.” Others said they didn’t need training as they already knew what they needed to know.

Balancing the educational needs of the Emergency services personnel with the demands on that service can be difficult. If a service is busy, then the volunteers are usually able to maintain the skills they have been trained in. In quieter locations, maintenance of skill level can be more problematic:

You come in here and you think I wish someone would do something, not because you want them to get hurt but you want to be able to practice your skills.

The competency based training offered by the Emergency services can act as an incentive because it allows for transferability of skill:

The Fire Brigade in particular offer skills training and that's all Certificated and is Australia wide training so if I leave here I can go to say to Melbourne to a Brigade and pick up and it's exactly the same training.

However competency based training when first introduced also met with some resistance from volunteers who thought they already had the skills, and didn’t want to undertake the formal training process. It was also identified as something that continues to deter people from volunteering in these services.

Sometimes an individual's encounter with volunteering is opportunistic. People volunteer because they were in the right place at the right time and shouldn't pass up the opportunity. This leads to them developing new skills:

They were looking for announcers and so I just went over one day I said to Sam, "I wouldn't mind being an announcer," and he said, "yeah great you've got a good voice for radio."

Some, such as the Emergency services are in a position to request or design training as they need it, "they're not backward in coming forward in what they want training [in]."

Mutual obligation participants are motivated to participate in formal and non-formal training by their agreement with Centrelink. Skill gaps that are recognised by a program or by the volunteer can be incentives for formal education and training. Some volunteers having undertaken some training develop a taste for more: "On the computer side I wouldn't mind a bit more on picture editing."

Arts and cultural programs understand the need to be skilled in finding funds and managing events. One identified the need for someone trained as a broker. Someone who

knows all of the potential funding schemes and could say, "right this is where we should put our effort," because you tend to chase a lot of rabbits down holes.

A need for more training was expressed by volunteers whose work required some sensitivity such as working with refugees.

Participants identified the value of volunteers who have "the passion to do what they do, they know exactly what they're talking about so they generally can communicate pretty well, they're problem solvers." In their view, this passion acts as a motivator to increase their knowledge about their particular interest.

Some volunteers understood the benefits of learning new skills, and recognised the reward value. Learning new skills can increase personal confidence. What starts off as a challenge "becomes like water off a duck's back."

In summary, many volunteers bring with them the skills they need for their volunteer work. Mentoring and informal training are the most common methods by which volunteer programs impart the knowledge and skills that their volunteers need to acquire. Therefore volunteer programs should ensure that the people who mentor new volunteers have appropriate mentoring skills. One exception is the Emergency Service organisations which provide formal training, in some cases attached to a qualification. Some volunteers value the new skills they learn through volunteering and

welcome more formal training but the majority of interviewees were motivated by the volunteer work, rather than the opportunity to learn.

Volunteer management

Volunteer coordinators indicated effective management of volunteers is time consuming and involves a range of skills such as developing strategies to recruit and retain volunteers, capacity building, enforcing discipline, trying to meet the expectations of volunteers, ensuring financial matters are dealt with properly, and providing meaningful tasks. For those with mutual obligation volunteers there are the additional tasks associated with meeting the mutual obligation contract or community service work order requirements stipulated by the federal government.

Formal Management Practices

There is increasing recognition that volunteer programs need good management practices in order to be sustainable. The survey listed 11 good volunteer management strategies and asked respondents to tick those used by their program. The results in Table 17 show that providing liability insurance cover, providing formal recognition for volunteers and keeping a written record of volunteers were the most common management strategies, undertaken by around three-quarters of programs. Overall, the low proportion of programs ensuring they have policies, budgets and evaluations of volunteer programs suggest that there is room for improved management of volunteer programs.

Table 17: Frequency of management practices

Management Practices Used by Programs	Percent Yes
Provide liability insurance cover for volunteers?	76
Formally recognise volunteer contributions?	69
Keep a written record on volunteers?	64
Provide support for the volunteer program at all levels of the organisation?	51
Maintain written policies for managing volunteers	46
Provide a newsletter for volunteers?	37
Have volunteers responsible for managing other volunteers?	37
Budget for the volunteer program?	33
Regularly evaluate volunteer and program performance?	31
Provide job descriptions for volunteers?	29
Provide training for employees who work with volunteers?	28

While some of the above management practices will not be suitable for very small groups, the results showed that it was not necessarily large volunteer programs using all relevant strategies and smaller groups not. Formal volunteer management strategies help to embed good volunteer

management into programs and without these there is a great reliance on the skills of volunteer coordinators.

Of the 67 interviews, 34% were either paid or unpaid coordinators and 90% of the survey respondents were either coordinators or executive level decision makers. One coordinator managed over 150 volunteers; others managed half a dozen or less. These people have volunteer management and program overview responsibilities and therefore require a set of skills to manage this work successfully.

Some of the recognised difficulties for volunteer coordinators showed in our data. The time and skill required for coordinating and managing volunteers is often not adequately recognised within programs. One coordinator spoke of the limitations of managing volunteers when the organisation itself had only a few part time staff. One suggests “you need at least some paid staff to do that overseeing” of volunteers. Another, that paid staff managing volunteers need “on their position descriptions [that] one of their jobs is to manage volunteers.”

Some of the differences between volunteer work and paid work mean that managing volunteers is frequently more difficult than managing paid staff. Some coordinators said that volunteers need to be handled differently because if they didn't like something they could always leave the program. Other coordinators said that volunteers were no different to paid staff (except they're not getting paid), and “should be treated exactly the same.” Coordinators also suggested that volunteers are in a position to get away with more. Because they are in a sense free agents, they are in a position to resist the application of position descriptions, “they just look at you... as if to say “well why would you be worrying about what I'm doing? You know, it's none of your business.” One difficult task for coordinators is managing difficult volunteers, such as where a volunteer behaves inappropriately or whose behaviour is disruptive to the other volunteers.

Volunteer management needs to strike a balance between having good structures and maintaining a personal working environment. This balance can be difficult for coordinators. Both volunteers and coordinators mentioned the lack of structure to volunteer work, expressing concern at what they believed was a lack of accountability. Some acknowledged the benefit of a formal interview process and clear guidelines for volunteers.

Coordinators were also aware, however, of the impact of government policy changes. The introduction of policy involves a “trickle feed” approach according to one coordinator who was aware that volunteers didn't want to get bogged down with policy and red tape. The capacity of policy implementation to have a negative effect on volunteer sustainability, was recognised, “they've got to be managed and motivated and in a much different way than a salaried person.”

People Skills

During interviews the skills identified as important for volunteer coordinators focused on the soft “people” skills. For example, one interviewee mentioned the skill of “making some intuitive judgments about peoples’ personalities and how they’re going to fit in” and accepting that people, who are learning as they go, are going to make mistakes. As one coordinator put it:

You’re having to constantly be creative and [apply] lateral thinking about what sort of things you’re going to do to get these people motivated to come to meetings or to undertake training or to follow the rules...

A number of interviewees spoke about the needs of volunteers. These could include volunteers who may only be available for a limited time, volunteers who have a skill deficit, or require some support, or are attracted to the volunteer activity because it doesn’t require great social skills. Each of these situations rely on the sensitivity of the coordinator to the needs of the volunteer.

Being flexible as a coordinator was mentioned on a number of occasions, with a mutual obligation volunteer praising her manager as “he’s just brilliant. He’s so easy going and gives you a lot of freedom.” One coordinator expressed concern that she might overuse her volunteers. A few felt that volunteers weren’t properly valued, and that it was up to management to address this issue. Others were conscious that some form of recognition or reward was important to maintaining volunteer morale. These types of concerns demonstrate that volunteer coordinators often rely on either previous experience or existing people skills and that guidelines and policies could help coordinators decision making.

Successful management of volunteers needs to take into account each volunteer’s attitude towards their volunteer work. If they’re retired the reason they volunteer may be “because they’ve got out of that, all the paperwork, all the you can and cants, they just want to come and give their time...” Many volunteers are active in multiple programs and the volunteer activity is just another job in a busy life. Volunteering may also be a means to an end, not just for mutual obligation volunteers but for individuals who want to develop skills and / or experience.

One coordinator stressed the importance of relationship building, between the program and the volunteers, between volunteers and between the volunteers and the community. Reciprocity was also mentioned as a fundamental part of the partnership between the coordinator and the volunteer:

I think you've got to make volunteering for them as much fun as you can. I think people forget you know that you can really, have a really good time and enjoy volunteering and that's what we try and do here.

Skill development can be a way of giving back to the volunteer:

We reciprocate it with our volunteers if they give us their time, we give them training, any areas they'd like to improve we do organised training.

The skilled volunteer coordinator stretches their volunteers by “making them step up a bit and take that on and deal with that.” This type of coordinator recognises the volunteer as a person with capacity and as someone who also can have “a bit of a vision happening so they'll think about how to improve something.”

In part the coordinator's role is to facilitate learning, sometimes through trust:

She knows. She does all the financials. Sends the.. I sign the invoice, sends them off makes the copies, files that, reconciles the cash at the end, reports the cash every week, spread sheets, auditing blah, blah, blah she does all that. [Then she] runs it through me, “is this OK?” “Yep.” Whoosh. Off it goes and that's just an on the job training sort of process as well.

The interviews showed that coordinators need a wide range of people skills. While these skills can be taught coordinators tend to learn on the job (in the same way their volunteers do). Volunteer coordinators were identified through the interviews and in the survey, as the person requiring training. They need the skill to recognise how to utilise and/ or develop the skills of the volunteers:

Educating the managers really. They have to understand that volunteers are the backbone really of the Shelter.

Training of volunteer coordinators needs to be a priority. Volunteer coordinators have a significant role in the implementation of the program and managing volunteers requires a set of complex skills. Their understanding of the role of volunteers within the program is critical in any effort to retain and sustain the volunteer workforce.

Program Sustainability

Coordinators also require some hard skills, in particular related to volunteer recruitment. A major responsibility for coordinators is often to maintain the sustainability of the volunteer program by ensuring there are adequate volunteers through recruitment and retention. The survey asked a range of questions to find out whether programs had enough volunteers and how they went about recruiting volunteers.

Respondents were asked to propose the ideal number of volunteers to meet the needs of their volunteer program (See Table 18). When comparing this number with the stated number of volunteers in Table 19, there appears to be some unmet demand for volunteers. A quarter of programs wanted 25 or more volunteers, and another quarter wanted between 15-24 volunteers, but 63% of programs had between 0-19 volunteers in their programs.

Table 18: Ideal number for a successful program (n=152)

Ideal number of volunteers for successful program	Percent
less than 10	14
10-14	21
15-24	24
25 or more	25
Not stated	16
Total	100.0

The survey asked more specifically about the current volunteer needs of programs. The results in Table 19 further support the finding that there is unmet demand for volunteers or that it is difficult for some programs to recruit volunteers. Nearly half of respondents indicated that they were 'struggling to meet needs'.

Table 19: Perceptions of current volunteer needs (n=152)

Present numbers of volunteers	Percent
Are struggling to meet our needs	49
Have enough volunteers to meet our needs	43
Can recruit more volunteers than we need	5
Not Stated	3
Total	100.0

It is also important for volunteer programs to plan for volunteer needs into the future. The survey asked respondents for their views on their volunteer recruitment needs in 'the future' (see Table 20). A third of respondents expected to be 'struggling', which was less than the number who were currently struggling, partly explained by the 21.7% who were unsure. This result suggests that there is data to assist forward planning, but it may also be that for some programs there is some doubt as to the continued existence of the program, as some volunteer programs have short life spans.

**Table 20: Perception of ability to meet future needs
(n=152)**

Future expectations of volunteer recruitment	Percent
Expect to be struggling to meet our needs	34
Expect to have enough volunteers to meet our needs	37
Expect to attract more volunteers than we need	4
Are unsure of what our position will be	22
Not Stated	3
Total	100.0

Word of mouth is still the most commonly used method of gaining new volunteers, reflecting the networking basis of much volunteering. Most programs (95.2%) still relied on word of mouth for recruiting volunteers. Table 21 shows how many programs used other methods with targeted advertising used by up to a third of respondent programs.

**Table 21: Recruitment method
(n=147)**

Recruitment Method Used or Not Used	Percent answering Yes
Do you attract new volunteers through Word of Mouth?	95
Do you attract new volunteers through targeted advertising in the local media (radio/newspaper)?	35
Do you attract new volunteers through presentations at events (e. local high school)?	20
New volunteers contact us (n=99)	54

Some programs approach recruitment with a focus on getting the best volunteer for the job and for others the high level of need leads them to take anyone who applies. Others are beginning to apply a marketing approach, expressed by one as:

You have to see volunteers as not what they can do for you but what you can do for them fundamentally. Because there is competition...for staff, there's competition for volunteers. So what's so great about your organization?

Overall, these results show that there is the capacity for programs and coordinators to improve their recruitment approaches.

Costs of Volunteering

While the benefits of volunteering have long been recognised there has only recently been acknowledgment of the financial costs of volunteering. Such costs have implications for volunteer programs as they may limit the socio-economic groups that can participate in programs. The survey asked two questions related to costs to volunteers, whether programs reimbursed volunteers for out of pocket expenses, and how often volunteers had out of pocket expenses.

Most volunteers experience out of pocket expenses. Only 20% of respondents felt that the volunteers in their program would never or hardly ever experience out of pocket expenses. The remaining volunteers experience out of pocket expenses sometimes, frequently or always.

**Table 22: Frequency of out of pocket expenses
(n= 152)**

Do you think your volunteers have out of pocket expenses because of their volunteer work?	Percent
Never or hardly ever	20
Sometimes	28
Frequently	24
Always	26
Not stated	3
Total	100.0

Table 23 shows that more than a third of programs never or hardly ever reimburse volunteers for out of pocket expenses and only 23% always reimburse volunteers.

**Table 23: Frequency of reimbursement
(n= 152)**

Do you reimburse your volunteers for out of pocket expenses?	Percent
Never or hardly ever	3
Sometimes	21
Frequently	16
Always	23
Not stated	3
Total	100.0

By comparing programs that had volunteer out of pocket expenses with programs offering reimbursement we found that no relationship exists between volunteer reimbursement and volunteers experiencing expenses (See Table 24). Those programs that never or hardly ever reimburse volunteers were spread fairly evenly across the programs where volunteers experience expenses. This result shows that for many volunteers there are financial costs incurred in volunteering.

Table 24: Reimbursement cross tabulation

		Do you think your volunteers have out of pocket expenses because of their volunteer work?				Total
		Never or hardly ever	Sometimes	Frequently	Always	
Do you reimburse your volunteers for out of pocket expenses?	Count	16	12	12	16	56
Never or hardly ever	Count	2	11	10	9	32
Sometimes	Count	2	8	5	9	24
Frequently	Count	10	12	8	5	35
Always	Count	30	43	35	39	147
Total	Count					

The findings about volunteer management of programs shows that managing volunteers requires a wide range of skills and that there is scope for some formalisation of management practices, balanced with maintenance of a personal approach, and for training provision for volunteer coordinators.

Corporate volunteering

Tasmania has a small population, and similarly it has, compared to the whole of Australia, a relatively small number (76) of large, and 1,666 medium to large businesses.

All Tasmanian businesses regardless of size, account for two per cent or less of the total of Australian businesses in each category.

According to the ABS (2006) nationally applied classifications, a quarter of Tasmania's population lives in a major urban area, with an equal amount living rurally or in a bounded locality. Within the national context, Tasmania has no major city, with the majority of its population living in inner or outer regional areas (ibid).

Interviewees in Phase 1 were asked to comment on any business engagement they were aware of in their community. This interview data provided some detail on the ways in which businesses generally contribute to communities in rural and regional Tasmania.

A few interviewees spelt out which businesses did and which businesses did not support their volunteer program. One interviewee was especially disgruntled because their program received no support even though they "did business" with the business concerned. By and large, volunteers felt very supported by local business. They identified them often by name as actively contributing to volunteering programs and fundraising activities.

These included local supermarkets, chemists, pharmacists, oyster farmers, some banks but not others, a cheese maker, an earth moving business, a bakery, a real estate agent, a resort, signage merchants, builders, accountants, lawyers, retailers, a local paper, a restaurant and the State government.

In addition to a lot of support from small and medium businesses, some volunteer programs sought support from businesses located away from their town, in the main urban centres or state wide. Businesses provided support by giving money, prizes, accommodation for visiting performers, donations of surplus stock, meals, advertising and hosting events.

Staff release, which is the core of corporate volunteering, is not written policy for the small and medium businesses that took part in this research but it does occur informally. One branch of the SES is operated by members of a family small business. Because of the unpredictable nature of their emergency work, they may be called away while working. This places pressures on the business because unlike formal corporate volunteering, they are unable to structure staff release into the work schedule. On two other occasions mention was made of building construction work undertaken by volunteers at no charge.

Interviewees made occasional reference to the provision of labour to their volunteer program by business, "there is one business this year that's come on board and they give us one staff in our home games to assist in the bar."

Some of the banks will have a Corporate Day and...they'll send like oh they usually choose who they want to come and they might come say four or five of them will come out for a day and they'll do whatever we want them to do in the Shelters.

However, those few interviewees who had heard of corporate volunteering were all coordinators. While they agreed with the concept, they had not been able to utilise it, "You can ask them if they can do something for you and they put it out [there] but unless somebody actually wants to do it then ... it's not always helpful to you." One volunteer coordinator said, "I could really do with a day off to do all my paperwork and catch up on it. I can't actually [use it for] that." Another had first heard of it two weeks prior to the interview and at a meeting organised by Volunteering Tasmania.

Interestingly a few interviewees made reference to a 'mutual benefit' relationship they had with a business. This is where the volunteer program offers a service to the business, rather similar to the bartering system known as LETS (Local Energy Trading System) where people trade goods and services using alternative currency (LETS in Australia, 2008):

We have one major sponsor which has a resort ... and they send their guests up here they pay us so their guests can play here free... they used to have their own Course...[now] they don't have to maintain their own Course so [it's] is pretty cheap for them yes.

Another volunteer program has an arrangement with a hotel where the hotel supplies product instead of financially contributing. The program serves alcohol at its fundraising activities and encourages members to patronise that hotel.

Survey

The project surveyed 60 businesses in Tasmania. Prior to sending the survey out, businesses were contacted to identify the appropriate person to respond. From this practice a number of interesting phenomena emerged:

- Many businesses identified as Tasmanian, have their main office in another state;
- Many of the large businesses (more than 200 hundred employees) had communication systems primarily set up to deal with clients or customers. This one-way communications system made it difficult to identify what department or personnel might be responsible for liaising with the community;
- Two businesses contacted by telephone gave an email contact for community requests. Each of these businesses was contacted by email. Neither responded;
- Front line staff (usually telephone receptionists or call centres) did not always understand the concept of corporate volunteering. This indicated that while the business may have a policy it had not necessarily filtered through to all departments within that business; and
- Although the task of identifying the person responsible for implementation of any policy relating to volunteering within the business was time consuming it revealed a valuable method for mapping a business's capacity to engage with a community.

Thirteen businesses out of 60 responded. While this selection and response is too small to be able to make generalisations it is useful. The five medium business responses out of a total of 1,666 medium businesses in the State are negligible. The seven large businesses that responded represent eight per cent of the 76 large businesses in the State. As corporate volunteering is primarily the domain of large corporations, the response indicates that there is reasonable awareness of corporate volunteering within the State.

Out of the 13 responses, only two businesses have formal policies on corporate volunteering with identified staff responsible for coordinating volunteer activity. The majority of the respondent businesses encouraged or facilitated employee participation in volunteer community activity.

7. Discussion

The sustainability of rural volunteering is at the core of the questions Volunteering Tasmania asked this research to address. With government placing increased reliance on the volunteer sector for the maintenance of services and volunteerism being identified as integral to the social capital that maintains community vibrancy and capacity to manage its future in rural areas, a thorough understanding of the sector in regional Tasmania will assist in identifying what factors contribute to sustainability.

The study was, therefore, designed to provide an in-depth exploration of the issues facing rural volunteers and volunteer organisations, not to provide a statistical snapshot of the Tasmanian volunteer scene. The latter is already addressed by existing data sources. This study seeks to add some 'flesh' to the bare bones of those statistics. The Phase 1 interviews provide an intimate insight into the world of the individual rural volunteer, while the Phase 2 surveys perform a similar function in regard to the organisations that employ and manage these volunteers. Taken together, they allow the study to address a number of crucial issues from a range of different perspectives. The Corporate volunteer survey addresses some very specific questions related to company involvement and contribution to volunteering.

Communities

While few, if any, of the findings in this study are presented in terms of the individual communities from which they came, it is important to note that rural volunteering shapes, and is itself shaped by, the communities in which it occurs. It became clear during the study that there were major historical, economic, demographic and social/cultural differences between our three sites and these appear to lead in turn to quite different volunteer profiles, cultures and experiences. This report focuses primarily on those findings that appear to hold across the different communities, however, the experience of the study suggests that there is no 'one size fits all' solution to nurturing and sustaining volunteerism in rural communities. It is certainly possible to identify broad policy issues and strategies but their application at the level of individual communities requires flexibility and sensitivity that is based on a knowledge and appreciation of local particularities.

One area in which this is very apparent is in comparing our suburban regional site with our two rural sites. Among Kings Meadows volunteers there was a much weaker link between where volunteers lived and where they volunteered. This is not necessarily to claim that Kings Meadows was less of a community but there was less of a tight local community focus in

volunteer activity with local services supported by out of area volunteers and local volunteering supporting services across the right regional centre. In social capital terms, there was more overlap of networks in the two smaller rural sites. Our two rural sites each had a very different 'feel' in terms of the volunteers, arising out of their very different histories and geographies. On one hand there was a vitality in the St Helens volunteer culture likely linked to the numbers of well educated early retirees attracted to its seaside and mild climate. New Norfolk exhibited a more restrained, traditional, volunteer culture likely reflecting their recent history of economic and social hardship linked to job losses in its two major longstanding industrial employers.

Recommendation 1:

There is a need to take great care when trying to apply volunteering insights, policies and strategies developed from national aggregate data to local, especially rural, contexts. Local communities each have their own unique volunteers profiles and cultures and it is important that this translation from national to local is informed by sound understanding of, and sensitivity to, that local context.

The issues addressed in the findings and below are those identified at the research design stage as most likely to be central to efforts to sustain volunteering in rural communities.

Motivation

There is already a large literature on the personal motivations behind volunteering. Where this study adds to that literature is in highlighting how, like volunteers themselves, motivations for volunteering are diverse, complex and in many cases serendipitous rather than rationally thought through. Questions about motivation appear to evoke a mixture of 'how' and 'why' explanations. These need to be disentangled since the reason people initially become involved are by no means necessarily the reason they stay involved.

Our interviewees – admittedly predominantly older people - nominated a very diverse range of reasons and circumstances for their initial involvement – a substantial number of these linked in some way to employment status. In terms of 'why', a consistent theme can be discerned within the range of responses, even if masked somewhat by the degree to which it was framed in terms of altruism: the rewards of being involved, engaged and contributing, especially as part of a social group pursuing a valued and worthwhile cause. Interestingly, there was also an underlying theme to many of these worthwhile causes; the desire to preserve or conserve that which was in danger of being lost from their (rural) communities. Overall, the findings suggest that, for this group anyway, sustainability will rely on fostering and sustaining this sense of being both valued as a contributing individual and feeling part of a worthwhile collective effort.

Recommendation 2:

In seeking an understanding of volunteer motivation, case study research on organisations that are volunteer recruitment and retention exemplars is likely to be as productive as research that targets individual volunteers - if not more so.

Ageing and Volunteering

The interview and survey data provide quite different perspectives on the issue of ageing and volunteering reflecting the very different age profiles of the samples. The interview recruitment strategy yielded a sample weighted very strongly towards older participants with 63% (n=39) of the sample 55 and over and only 8% (n=5) under 35 years of age. This group were very concerned about the future of volunteering. They believed younger people were increasingly less likely to volunteer – a view frequently borne out by experience in their own organisations- and that the volunteer burden would fall increasingly on an ageing population who, although skilled and willing, will in turn be increasingly unable to meet the community's needs. While many were sympathetic to the time, especially work, demands they saw as being behind this trend, some felt that it reflected a growing individualism that threatened community.

These concerns are not backed by either the organisation survey or national data: the survey data suggest that the largest volunteer age group is in the 45-64 years age group, slightly higher than the national figures which nominate 35-44 as the peak years of volunteering. Notwithstanding issues around commitment of younger volunteers identified in the wider literature, the discrepancy in this case can be largely explained in terms of the day to day reality for our interview sample. For many of these interviewees, the reality is that their organisations are experiencing volunteer ageing and having increasing trouble recruiting younger volunteers to provide succession. If younger people are continuing to volunteer as the figures suggest, they are finding more suitable or attractive options than the organisations represented by the majority of our interviewees. This suggests that many of these will be forced to find ways to change their organisations to reflect the interests and preferences of younger volunteers, or they will fold. Many of the volunteer organisations have likely evolved with life trajectory of members developing quite tight networks and powerful cultures that reflect their current membership and are unattractive to younger volunteers and/or difficult for them to penetrate. Some of these organisations will have a natural life-span and closures, although sad, are not necessarily detrimental to community as long their essential functions, if still relevant, are met in other ways. In other cases, the crisis brought on by the loss of key guiding members of an organisation appears to sometimes precipitate the necessary organisational re-invention.

Recommendation 3:

Volunteer organisations or programs that are experiencing difficulties with recruitment and retention need to consider:

1. Reviewing and refreshing volunteer recruitment and retention strategies;
2. Whether the existing organisational culture is unattractive to and/or difficult to penetrate for potential new members and whether the organisation needs to change to survive; and,
3. The possibility that the organisation in its present form is reaching the end of its natural life-span.

Training and Skills Development

A primary goal of this research was to develop an in-depth understanding of both the training needs of rural volunteers and their perceptions and attitudes around training. There is a growing 'top down' imperative to improve and extend volunteer skill building and training but not a lot about this is perceived and received by on the ground rural volunteers. Training for volunteers and training for volunteer managers are somewhat separate, although linked issues.

Rural volunteers as they appear in our study bring to their work a wealth of skills learned over a lifetime but few formal credentials and a wariness of formal learning. This accords with existing evidence about the resistance and barriers to formal learning experienced by those whose previous experience with formal learning has been restricted and/or unsuccessful. What is notable about the wide list of 'needed skills' in Table 9 is that while almost all of them exist in formalised, credentialed and professionalised forms, they can also be seen as personal qualities and life experience skills acquired informally over a lifetime. Looking down the list there are few skills that one would not expect individuals to have developed during a reasonably active and engaged life in a rural community. Both the interview and the survey data reveal an emphasis on social/people skills either in and of themselves or as an underlying component of task specific skills. The high number (59%) for 'professional qualifications and skills' in Table 11, is somewhat at odds with all the other data, especially the lack of such qualifications among interviewees but may reflect a looser interpretation of what constitutes 'professional' skills.

Rural volunteers, especially those in older age groups, clearly bring with them a wide range and high level of existing skills which they apply to their volunteer work. It appears likely that the chance to exercise and pass on these skills, and to apply them to issues chosen through interest or passion rather than economic imperative is a crucial factor in sustaining the volunteer effort. If this is the case, mandated training and credentialing could be seen as a potential slight on their perceived competency and a distraction from the main motivation for volunteering.

Regardless of the level of formal or structured training within volunteer organisations, most are undoubtedly, on the evidence of this study, very active and stimulating learning environments with a myriad of (informal) learning opportunities. This fits well with what is known about learning styles among rural people. Most of that learning is 'on the job', driven by need-to-know and facilitated through peer to peer interaction, mentoring and knowledge sharing although there is an apparent deficiency in basic formal structures supporting things like 'buddying' and induction. Again the sharing of skills with others is likely to be a strong motivating factor for volunteers that needs to be preserved. This is not to say the study found that all volunteers are resistant to formal training, especially those whose volunteering was related to exclusion from paid employment. However well suited this learning environment is to the needs and preferences of the volunteers, it does not address quality, safety and risk management issues facing volunteer managers.

In some areas, such as emergency services, the imperative for formal training is sufficiently strong, and the transferability of formal skills high enough, to some extent ameliorate resistance among volunteers although clearly there is still resistance where training is not well designed, carefully justified and competently and sensitively delivered. Other areas where these imperatives are less strong or obvious, require a delicate balancing act between providing for quality and safety and alienating volunteers. In many of the 'soft skills' areas such as management there is little recognition of the importance of high level skills. Such work requires knowledge of good governance and financial accountability procedures. Learning and training are integral to good management which in turn is integral to ongoing program viability.

Volunteer coordinators and managers, therefore, have particular training and skill building requirements over and above the basic volunteer skills. Their job is arguably more complex than, and as time consuming as, managing paid staff. They are required to accomplish all of the usual tasks of organisational management with a workforce whose ties and obligations to the organisation are voluntary. This means less reliance on the formal regulatory mechanisms and considerably more on appropriate structures and processes and good people management skills in maintaining organisational effectiveness and viability and ensuring sustainability, quality and safety in service delivery. Table 17 would suggest that there is some way to go in many volunteer organisations in at least the former the matter of formal structures and processes. The data also suggest that there is not a wide recognition of the size and challenges of this task and a major deficiency in the training available to meet this challenge.

The data suggest that our rural volunteers possess a strong willingness to extend and share their skills but are wary of enforced training. In order to minimise these barriers, training will need to recognise existing skills and tap into preferred informal learning styles and be delivered with only the minimum necessary formal structuring and a light management hand.

Recommendation 4:

Recognise that the rural volunteer section is dominated by, and has a strong preference for, informal learning. Moves to structure, formalise and quality control learning and skills development, where necessary, need to:

1. Take careful account of, and value prior learning;
2. Employ delivery methods which are 'user friendly' to people with little or unsuccessful formal learning experience;
3. Be clearly relevant to volunteers work functions.

Recommendation 5:

An increased focus on supporting volunteer coordinators and managers to improve their skills and to quality improve management structures and processes.

Recruitment and Retention

The sustainability of volunteering in rural areas was the primary driver underlying this research. This in turn, is largely about volunteer recruitment and retention. The study indicates that there is a strong unmet need within many of the organisations with some apparently under ideal strength, nearly half struggling to meet current needs and a third expecting to continue to struggle to do so into the future. This tends to bear out concerns expressed in interview about difficulties attracting younger volunteers although this is not borne out by national aggregate data. Without trying to reconcile these different pictures, it is clear that many local rural volunteer organisations will need to pay close attention to recruitment and retention. This means examining – and formalising - recruitment and orientation processes and strategies and reflecting deeply on the fit between the culture and mission of organisations and the interests of communities and current and potential future volunteers.

Recommendation 6:

Increase support to enable volunteer organisations facing recruitment and retention pressures to:

1. Improve their volunteer recruitment strategies;
2. Undertake strategic reviews of organisational functions, cultures and future directions in order to increase their attractiveness to present and future volunteers.

Corporate Volunteering

The growing interest in corporate social responsibility and corporate volunteering is part of the wider interest in acknowledging and fostering the role of social capital in sustaining community. On the surface our attempt to explore this concept in the Tasmanian setting has yielded disappointing results. This is partly because of the small number of large corporate style businesses headquartered in the state but also of the apparently small numbers of corporations nationally who have formal policies or structures set up around corporate volunteering making it difficult to generate survey responses. Despite this, the study has provided

important insights into the generally unremarked but actually wide and deep nature of social responsibility and community support among small and medium business. Much of this support is *ad hoc* and informal and takes many forms from the donation of goods and services to the release of employees for emergency duty. It is important that any focus on large business and formal processes do not overshadow recognition and nurturing of local and regional level relationship between volunteer organisations and small to medium business.

Recommendation 7:

Recognise the value and diversity of existing relationships between – principally small and medium size but including corporate - businesses and local volunteer organisations and explore strategies to maintain and nurture these relationships.

8. Conclusions

There is some unmet demand for volunteers within Tasmania but it does not appear to link in with the ageing of the population as many older people are active volunteers, and young people do volunteer but differently.

Comparing volunteering between different locations suggests that local environment factors influence volunteerism. It should be possible using a state-wide perspective for communities to learn sustainability strategies from each other.

A volunteer program's culture can be simultaneously inclusive and exclusive. This culture can act as an unintentional deterrent to newcomers. If the program wants or needs to survive and thrive, it should consider broadening the group's preferred qualities and values.

Volunteer programs may also have a natural lifespan and it should not be assumed that their indefinite continuation is necessary or desirable.

Many of the interviewees for this research are motivated by the social nature of volunteer work, by their desire to remain active and to contribute. They enjoy their volunteer activity.

Training and learning is a complex area of volunteering. More formal skill development is needed in some areas, particularly volunteer management. For a program considering up-skilling its volunteers, the following need to be taken into account:

- The broad range of skills existing in the volunteer community, particularly older volunteers;
- The degree of incidental and informal learning already occurring;
- The low level of educational attainment in rural Tasmania relative to the national average means that many volunteers lack confidence as adult learners; and
- A positive learning environment is likely to be one where the training emphasises the social aspects, is relevant and enjoyable.

A significant number of programs older participants are or have been mutual obligation participants. This challenges the community concept that mutual obligation is the province of the young. Mutual obligation volunteers have a significant profile within the volunteer community and consequently are impacting on traditional concepts of volunteering.

The volunteer coordinator is in the best position to facilitate a positive volunteer experience. They require a broad skill set to manage people who can easily leave if they cease to enjoy what they are doing. Consequently, training of coordinators should be given priority when a volunteer program is considering training.

Corporate volunteering has very small profile in rural and regional Tasmania. As participation in volunteering activities has a number of positive consequences for both business and the communities in which they operate, current and new ways for the corporate sector to volunteer should be encouraged.

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Appendix 1

Interview Schedule – Volunteer interview questions

Interviewee profile

1. Where is the organisation located?	<i>Please tick</i>
New Norfolk	
Kings Meadows	
St Helens	

2. (Please circle your answer)					
Age	Gender	Marital Status	Depend-ents	Which industry do you volunteer in?	Usual paid occupation
Less than 18	Male	Single	Yes	Arts / heritage	Employed full-time
18-24	Female	Married / Partner	No	Parenting/children/youth	Employed part-time or casual
25-34				Community / welfare	Unemployed
35-44				Education / training /	Not in labour force Retired
45-54				Emergency services	Not in labour force Other
55-64				Environment/animal welfare	
65-74				Other recreation/interest	
75-84				Health	
85+				Law / justice / political	
				Religious	
				Sport / physical recreation	
				Other	

3. Your highest education level	<i>Please tick one only</i>
Post graduate	
Grad Cert / Grad Dip	
Bachelor Degree	
Certificate Level III & IV	
Certificate Level I & II	
Secondary Level Senior	
Secondary Level Junior	
Primary school	
Other: Miscellaneous / non-Award	

4. What does your volunteer work involve?	<i>Please tick all that apply</i>
Administration / clerical/ recruitment	
Performing / media production	
Lobbying / advocacy/ policy research	
Coaching / refereeing / judging	
Fundraising/ sales	
Befriending/ supportive listening/ counselling	
Personal care	
Search and rescue/ first aid/ fire fighting	
Preparing/ serving food	
Transporting people/ goods	
Repairing/ maintenance/ gardening	
Protecting the environment	
Teaching/ instruction/ providing information	
Management committee work/ co-ordination	
Other	

5. Tell me about the organisations you are involved in?

Prompt – how many, what do they do, what is the main purpose of the organisations?

6. Tell me about your involvement in this organisation.

Prompt – the history of your involvement, your role, your contribution, are you paid or reimbursed for expenses, what you would do on an average day?

7. Tell me how you experience in contributing to this organisation.

Prompt What do you enjoy about it?
 What (if anything) makes it difficult?
 How does it fit with your life?
 How does your employer show support?
 What are the costs and benefits of your involvement?

8. Tell me about any changes that have impacted on your experience.

Prompt Management changes?
 Your circumstances?
 Changes to your community?
 New government or organisation policies?
 Personal issues or changes in circumstances

9. In your view how do you think this community work will be accomplished in five to ten years time?

Prompt Do you think you'll still be doing this work in five to ten years time? Will volunteers still be needed, wanted, or available? Will this activity not be needed?

10. Tell me about any necessary skills or training that your contribution/volunteering needs and how you have acquired these?

Prompt – did you come with the skills you needed? who provides formal training, how does the organisation contribute to your preparation, what are the gaps in training.

11. Tell me of the top three to five organisations you would link with in carrying out your volunteering.

Prompt – why do you link with them, how does the relationship work?

Appendix 2

Interview Schedule – Coordinators / Managers of Volunteers

Organisation profile

1. How many volunteers do you manage? (number)
2. What proportion of your workers are volunteers?

3. Where is the organisation located?	<i>Please tick</i>
New Norfolk	
Kings Meadows	
St Helens	

4. In which industry sector does the organisation operate?	<i>Please tick</i>
Arts / heritage	
Parenting/children/youth	
Community / welfare	
Education / training	
Emergency services	
Environment/animal welfare	
Other recreation/interest	
Health	
Law / justice / political	
Religious	
Sport / physical recreation	
Other	

5. Your highest education level	<i>Please tick one only</i>
Post graduate	
Grad Cert / Grad Dip	
Bachelor Degree	
Certificate Level III & IV	
Certificate Level I & II	
Secondary Level Senior	

Volunteering activity

6. What sort of work do volunteers undertake?	<i>Please tick all that apply</i>
Administration / clerical/ recruitment	
Performing / media production	
Lobbying / advocacy/ policy research	
Coaching / refereeing / judging	
Fundraising/ sales	
Befriending/ supportive listening/ counselling	
Personal care	
Search and rescue/ first aid/ fire fighting	
Preparing/ serving food	
Transporting people/ goods	
Repairing/ maintenance/ gardening	
Protecting the environment	
Teaching/ instruction/ providing information	
Management committee work/ co-ordination	
Other	

7. Tell me about your organisation's inclusion of volunteer/community members in activities.

Prompt: What do they do?
 How does their contribution add to the organisation?
 What do they add to the organisation's aims/vision?
 How long have volunteers been involved?

8. Tell me why you think people help your organisation?

Prompt: What obligations or benefits might prompt them?
 How do you attract volunteers?

9. Tell me about any changes that have impacted on your capacity to attract volunteers and the pool of people who are willing to help.

Prompt : Policy changes?
 Changing population?
 Changing socio-economic conditions?

10. Who do you think will be doing this work in five to ten years time?

Prompt: Do you think an ageing volunteer workforce is an issue for this industry?

11. Tell me how volunteers acquire any skills or training that are needed to carry out work in this organisation.

Prompt: What are the necessary skills?
 Are there regulatory requirements?
 Do volunteers come with the skills?
 Do you provide any training? Is it formal or informal?
 Who usually provides training? Do you think this is adequate for volunteer needs?

12. Tell me of the top three to five organisations you would link with in carrying out your volunteering.

Prompt – why do you link with them, how does the relationship work?

13. What role do you think this organisation will have in the community in five to ten years time and how will that look?

Prompt will volunteers still be involved? Will policies be different? Will communities be different?

Appendix 3

Volunteer program survey

1. Type of volunteer group / program

Please tick one

Arts / Heritage <input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/> Community / Welfare <input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/> Emergency Services <input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/> Other Recreation / Interest <input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/> Health <input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/> Sport / Physical Recreation <input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/> <input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/>	Parenting / Children / Youth <input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/> Education / Training <input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/> Environment / Animal Welfare <input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/> Law / Justice / Political <input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/> Religious <input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) <input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/> <input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/>
---	---

2. What is your position?

(please specify)

3. Location

4. Approximately how many volunteers does this group /program have?

Please tick one

0 – 4 <input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/> 5 – 19 <input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/>	20 - 199 <input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/> More than 200 <input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/>
---	---

5. Approximately how many volunteers in each of the age ranges?

24 or younger <input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/> 25 - 44 <input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/>	45 - 64 <input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/> 65+ <input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/>
--	--

6. Ideally how many volunteers do you need to successfully meet the needs of the group / program?

7. Approximately how many of your volunteers are part of a

“mutual obligation” or “work for the dole” arrangement with Centrelink?

8. At present we

Please tick one

Can recruit more volunteers than we need.

Have enough volunteers to meet our needs.

Are struggling to meet our needs.

9. In the future we

Please tick one

Expect to attract more volunteers than we need.

Expect to have enough volunteers to meet our needs.

Expect to be struggling to meet our needs.

Are unsure of what our position will be.

10. To volunteer in this group /program you need to have some of the following skills:

Please tick as many as apply

Administrative	<input type="checkbox"/>	Personal care	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advocacy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Policy Research	<input type="checkbox"/>
Befriending	<input type="checkbox"/>	Preparing food	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clerical	<input type="checkbox"/>	Protecting the Environment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>	Providing information	<input type="checkbox"/>
Coordination	<input type="checkbox"/>	Recruitment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Counselling	<input type="checkbox"/>	Refereeing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fire fighting	<input type="checkbox"/>	Repairing	<input type="checkbox"/>
First aid	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sales	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fundraising	<input type="checkbox"/>	Search and rescue	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gardening	<input type="checkbox"/>	Serving food	<input type="checkbox"/>
Judging	<input type="checkbox"/>	Supportive listening	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lobbying	<input type="checkbox"/>	Teaching / instruction	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maintenance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Transporting goods	<input type="checkbox"/>
Management committee work	<input type="checkbox"/>	Transporting people	<input type="checkbox"/>
Media Production	<input type="checkbox"/>	Working with Animals	<input type="checkbox"/>
Performance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. To volunteer in this group / program you need to have the following qualifications

Please list

--

For each question, please circle the response that most closely reflects your group /program's situation.

12. To what extent do your volunteers bring their skills from their previous work experience with them?

Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never
--------	------------	-----------	-------------	-------

13. To what extent are your volunteers mentored by other volunteers within the group / program?

Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never
--------	------------	-----------	-------------	-------

14. To what extent do your volunteers learn as they go?

Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never
--------	------------	-----------	-------------	-------

15. This group /program ensures each new volunteer is either "buddied up", mentored or inducted with a more experienced volunteer?

Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never
--------	------------	-----------	-------------	-------

16. This group /program provides basic training for each new volunteer

Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never
--------	------------	-----------	-------------	-------

17. Do you reimburse your volunteers for out of pocket expenses?

Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never
--------	------------	-----------	-------------	-------

18. Do you think your volunteers have out of pocket expenses because of their volunteer work?

Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never
--------	------------	-----------	-------------	-------

19. In relation to your volunteers, does your group /program do any of the following? **Please tick as many as apply**

- Formally recognise volunteer contributions
- Keep a written record on volunteers
- Maintain written policies for managing volunteers
- Provide support for the volunteer program at all levels of the organisation
- Provide job descriptions for volunteers
- Provide liability insurance cover for volunteers
- Provide training for employees who work with volunteers
- Budget for the volunteer program
- Have volunteers responsible for managing other volunteers
- Provide a newsletter for volunteers
- Regularly evaluate volunteer and program performance

20. How do you attract new volunteers? Please tick as many as apply

- Word of Mouth
- Targeted advertising in the local media (radio, newspaper etc)
- Presentations at events (eg the local High School, Agfest)
- They contact us

21. Approximately how many new volunteers has your program taken on in the past year?

22. Approximately how many volunteers have left your program in the past year?

23. Is there any thing about volunteering that you would like to add?

Appendix 4

Corporate Volunteering survey

1. Type of Business:

Accommodation, cafes and restaurants	<input type="checkbox"/>	Manufacturing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communication services	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mining	<input type="checkbox"/>
Construction	<input type="checkbox"/>	Personal and other services	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cultural and recreational services	<input type="checkbox"/>	Property and business services	<input type="checkbox"/>
Electricity, gas and water supply	<input type="checkbox"/>	Retail trade	<input type="checkbox"/>
Finance and insurance services	<input type="checkbox"/>	Transport and storage	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health and community services	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wholesale trade	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. What is your position within this business?

3. Total number of employees in the whole business

Please tick

one

0 – 4 5 – 19 20 – 199 More than
200

4. How many employees do you have in Tasmania?

5. Where is your organisation’s head office based? *Please tick*

one

International	<input type="checkbox"/>	Interstate	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hobart	<input type="checkbox"/>	Launceston	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

(please name town / city)

6. Where in Tasmania do you have branches? *Please list*

--

7. Does your business contribute to volunteer organisations in any of the following ways? **Please tick as many as apply**

By providing prizes	<input type="checkbox"/>
By providing food / drink	<input type="checkbox"/>
By providing financial donations	<input type="checkbox"/>
By contributing "in kind" (staff / organisation expertise)	<input type="checkbox"/>
By encouraging / assisting employees to volunteer in the community	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please explain)	<input type="checkbox"/>

--

8. Does your business have any policy on corporate volunteering?

Please tick Yes No

9. If "Yes"

Can you attach the policy to this survey? or if you prefer, briefly describe this policy below:

--

For businesses that **do encourage** and / or assist employees to volunteer in the community please go to Q 10

For businesses that **don't encourage** and / or assist employees to volunteer in the community please go to Q 15

10. What volunteer activities have your employee(s) contributed to?

Please tick as many as apply

Arts / Heritage	<input type="checkbox"/>	Parenting / Children / Youth	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community / Welfare	<input type="checkbox"/>	Education / Training	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emergency Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	Environment / Animal Welfare	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Recreation / Interest	<input type="checkbox"/>	Law / Justice / Political	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health (organisations that operate in a health service setting)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Religious	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sport / Physical Recreation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----------------------------	--------------------------	-------	--------------------------

11. Approximately **how often** does the business contribute to a volunteer organisation?

Please tick

one Monthly Every 2 – 3 months Every year

Other (*please explain*)

12. Under the banner of the business, approximately how many **employee hours** on each occasion are contributed?

When 5 = “Highly motivated” and 1 = “Never motivated,”

13. How motivated is your business towards corporate volunteering?
Because

Please answer each statement by circling one number

Staff want to contribute to the community **5 4 3 2 1**

This business has an obligation to contribute to the community **5 4 3 2 1**

Contributing promotes our organisation **5 4 3 2 1**

Contributing provides staff development **5 4 3 2 1**

Other reasons (please comment) N/A	5	4	3	2	1
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When 5 = “Highly beneficial” and 1 = “Never beneficial”,

14. How beneficial for your business is corporate volunteering for

Please answer each statement by circling one number

Developing the business’s relationship with the community **5 4 3 2 1**

Promoting the business	5	4	3	2	1
Providing staff development	5	4	3	2	1

Other reasons (please comment)	N/A	5	4	3	2	1
--------------------------------	-----	---	---	---	---	---

Please now go to Question 16 to complete this survey

For businesses who don't currently participate in corporate volunteering

15. This business is more likely to participate in corporate volunteering if

Please tick as many as apply

Staff were interested	<input type="checkbox"/>
We had the time and / or resources	<input type="checkbox"/>
We could see the benefits of corporate volunteering to our business	<input type="checkbox"/>
We wouldn't be interested	<input type="checkbox"/>

For all businesses

16. Is there anything you wish to add in relation to corporate volunteering?