



the **centre** for **volunteering**
igniting community spirit



Anti-Discrimination Legislation
October 2011

Acknowledgement

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Executive Summary

The NSW Government is developing a NSW Volunteering Strategy¹. As part of the process, the Government is considering amending the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 to better protect volunteers from discrimination. The new strategy, including any possible changes to the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977, will have important implications for the volunteer sector.

The Centre for Volunteering considers that the impact of the proposed anti-discrimination changes on volunteer engaging organisations will be better understood if there is access to good information about the structure of volunteer-engaging organisations. Therefore The Centre created a short survey with the aim of providing a snapshot of the structure of volunteer engaging organisations in NSW today. In order to get the most accurate picture possible and to assist the NSW Government in considering the potential impact of the proposed changes 981 individuals across NSW were asked to participate and 129 responded.

Survey participants were from an extensive array of community organisations. Staff engaged by the respondents' organisations total 28,130 or 12,421 Full-Time-Equivalent (FTE). They utilise a total of 59,669 volunteers or 3,619 FTE. There is an average ratio of actual staff to actual volunteers of approximately 1:2 but a ratio of FTE staff to FTE volunteers of almost 1:3.5. The average number of actual volunteers in the respondents' organisations is 501 with an average of 56 FTE volunteers per organisation. The staff ratio could indicate a high level of under-employment in the NFP sector. When combined with the high number of volunteers utilised it could be construed that the sector can only deliver its services and products by using un-funded labour. This leads to the assumption that the NFP sector in NSW is considerably under-funded and any additional costs imposed on it could create problems in maintaining effective levels of service delivery for less financially stable organisations. Ergo, it may be necessary to invest in compliance should the legislation be changed.

¹ More information about the Volunteering Strategy consultation and the anti-discrimination proposal is available at: <http://www.volunteering.nsw.gov.au/>

Introduction, with consideration of the following;

Importance of the study for an audience

There is the potential for any legislative change to have both positive and negative impact on those it effects therefore gauging the reaction to amending the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 to better protect volunteers is of importance to a wide range of community organisations.

Respondents to the survey came from the following NFP organisations:

Advocacy	International aid
Aged Care	International Development
Animal Welfare	Legal
Arts/Culture/Heritage	Local Government
Community Legal Center	Media/Information
Community Services/Welfare	Multiculturalism
Conservation/Environment	Professional Services
Disability	Refugees and asylum seekers
Disability Services	Religious
Education/Youth Development	Science Education
Emergency Services	Short-term Supported Accommodation
Health	Special Interest Group
Housing	Sport & Recreation

Staff engaged by the respondents' organisations total 28,130 or 12,421 FTE. They utilise a total of 59,669 volunteers or 3,619 FTE. There is an average ratio of actual staff to actual volunteers of approximately 1:2 but a ratio of FTE staff to FTE volunteers of almost 1:3.5.

The average number of actual volunteers in the respondents' organisations is 501 with an average of 56 FTE volunteers per organisation.

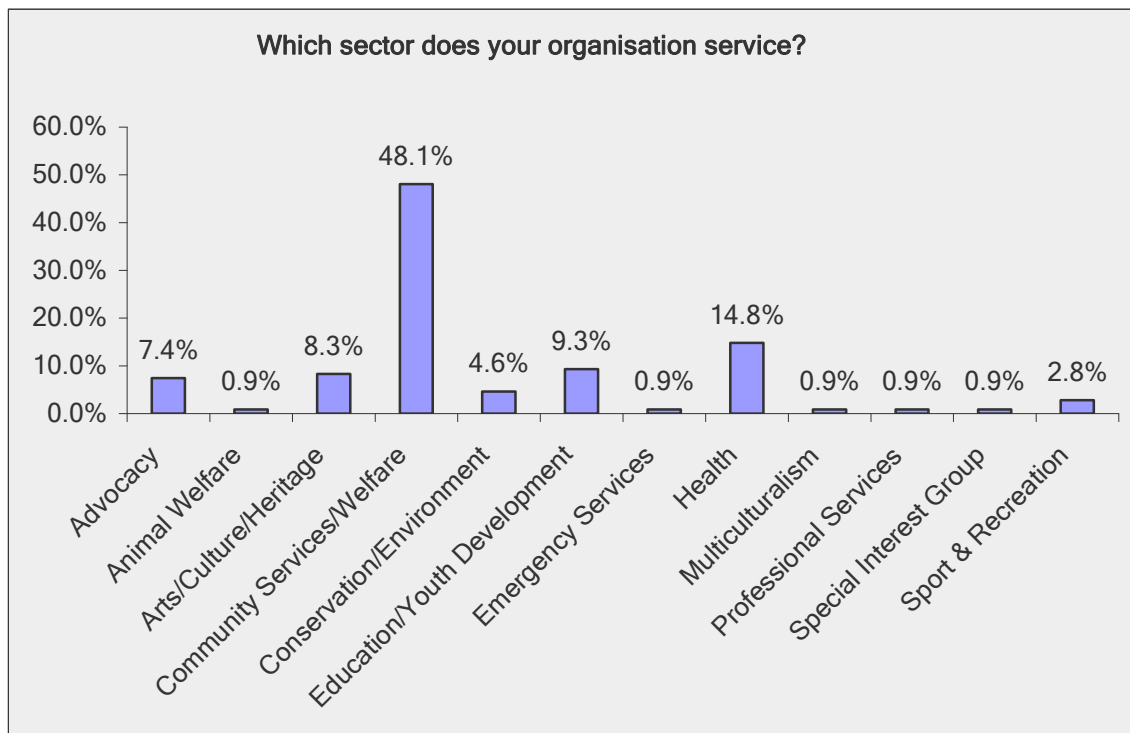
Data Collection and Analysis

An on-line questionnaire was created using SurveyMonkey and emailed to 981 participants. The following table shows how 13% responded.

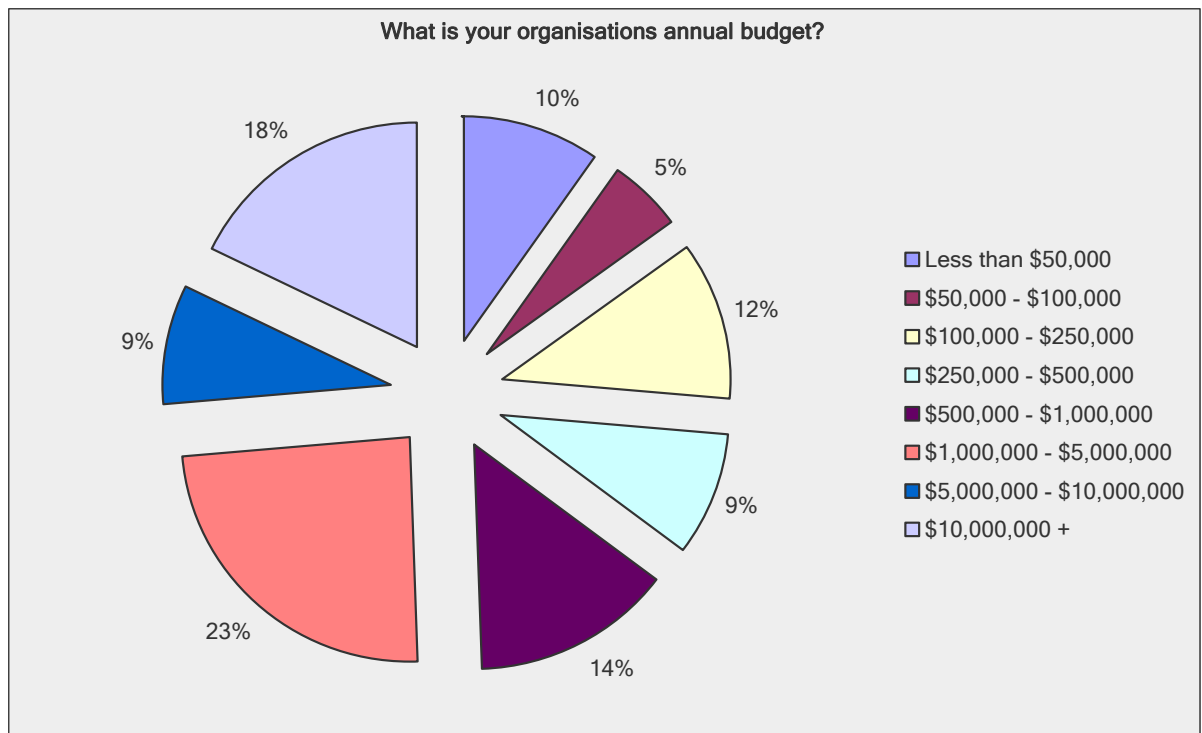
Recipients

Total Count:	981
Unsent/New:	0
Sent:	981
Responded (Partial/Complete):	129 (13 / 116)
Unresponded:	852
Opted Out:	5
Bounced:	65

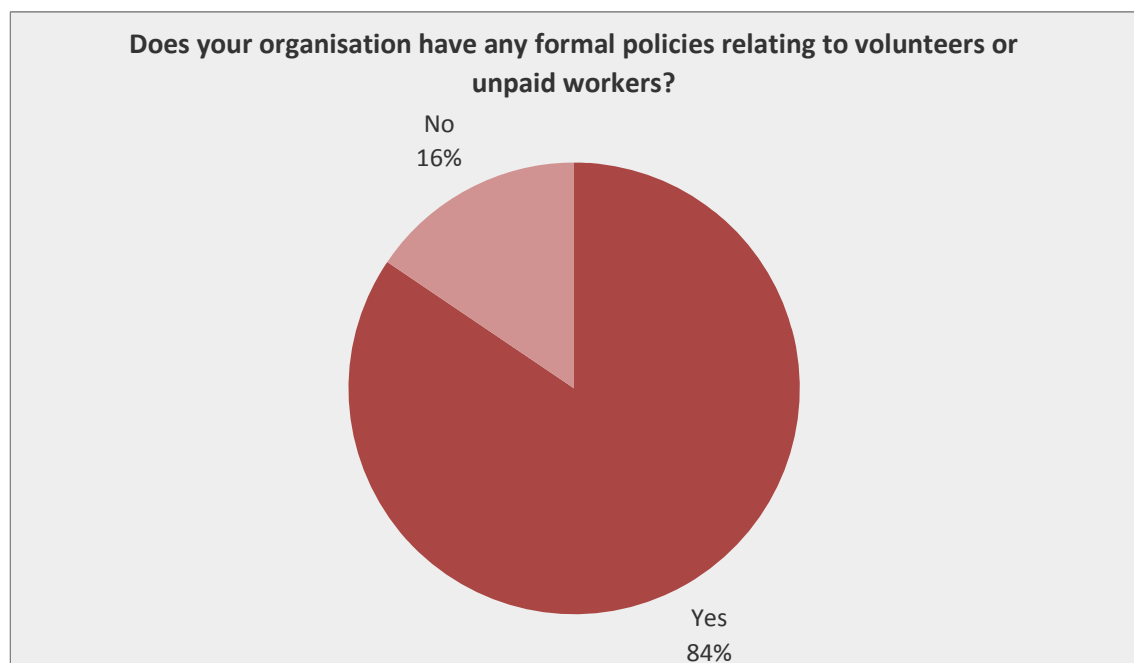
The majority of respondents (48%) came from Community Services/Welfare organisations, then in descending order of representation were Health services, Education/Youth Development, Advocacy, Arts/Culture/Heritage, Sport & Recreation (2.8%) and Emergency Services (0.9%).

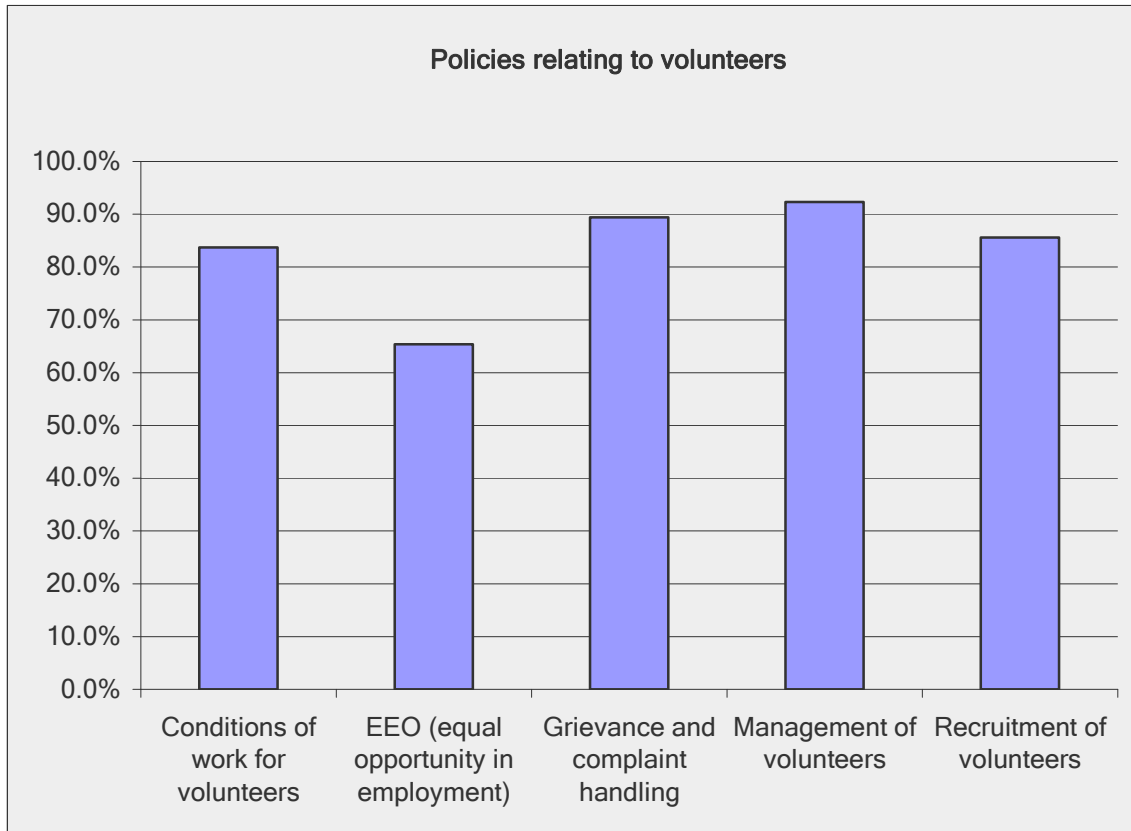


The majority of these organisations had annual budgets of between \$1,000,000 and \$5,000,000. With 26.5% having budgets greater than \$5,000,000 and one organisation with an annual budget of \$230 million.



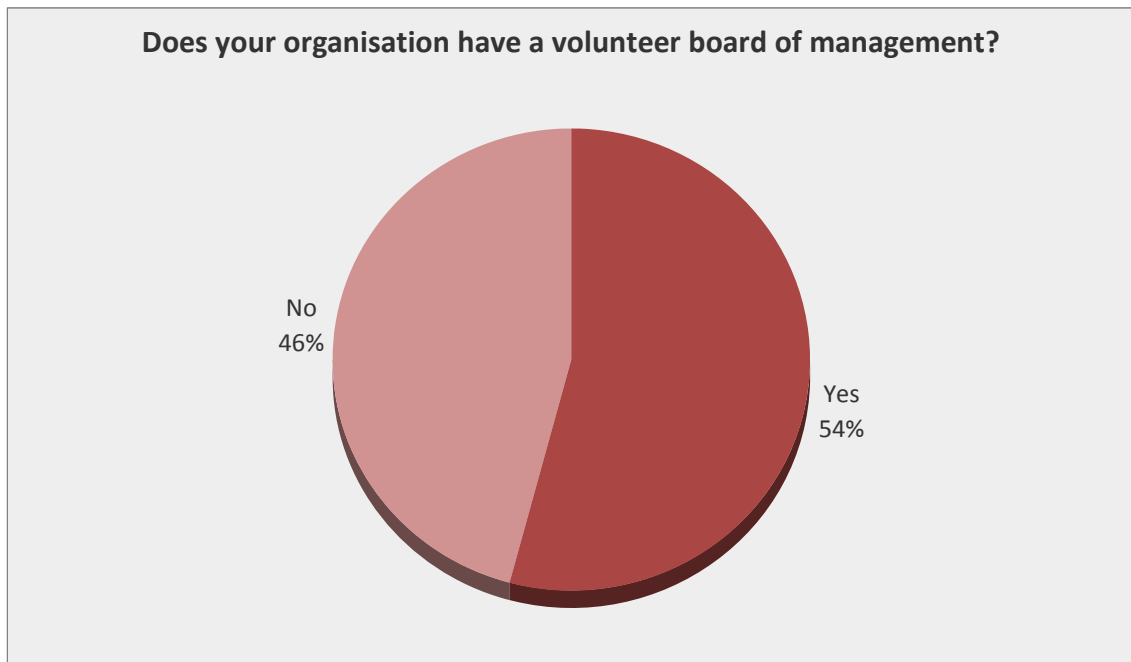
The vast majority have formal policies relating to volunteers within their organisations.



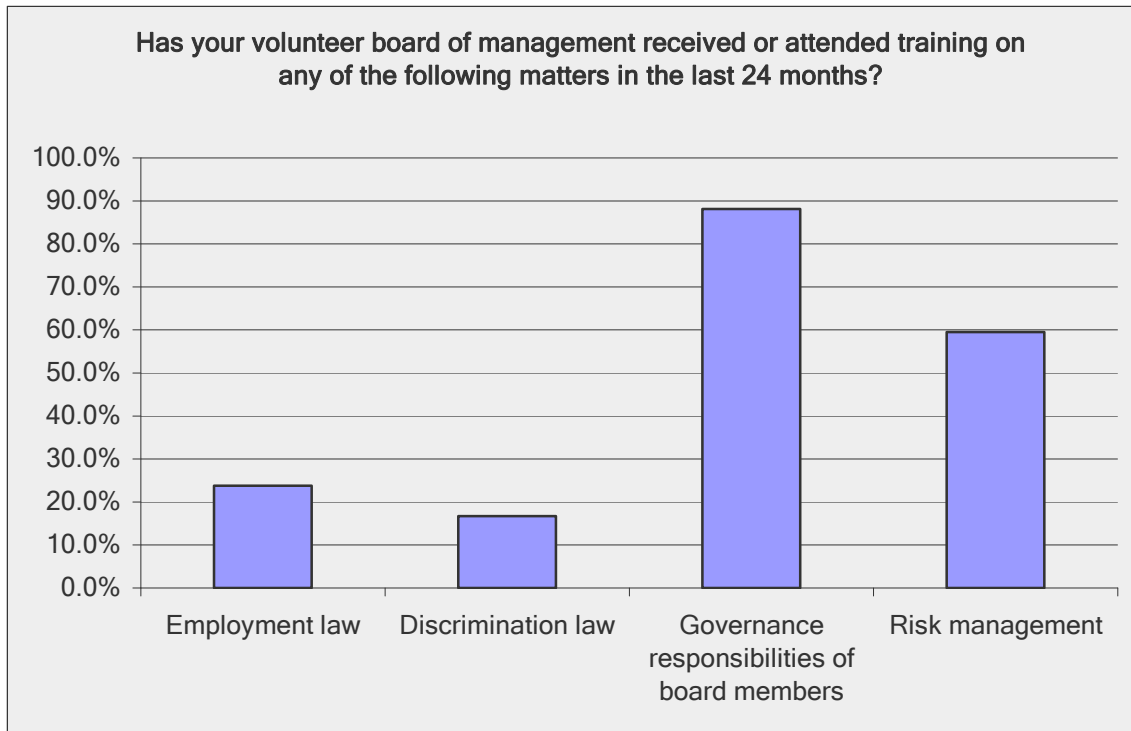


Thirty seven respondent organisations had a variety of other policies. These policies related to Orientation (12) eg handbooks, Checks (6) eg criminal and working with children and Position Descriptions (2).

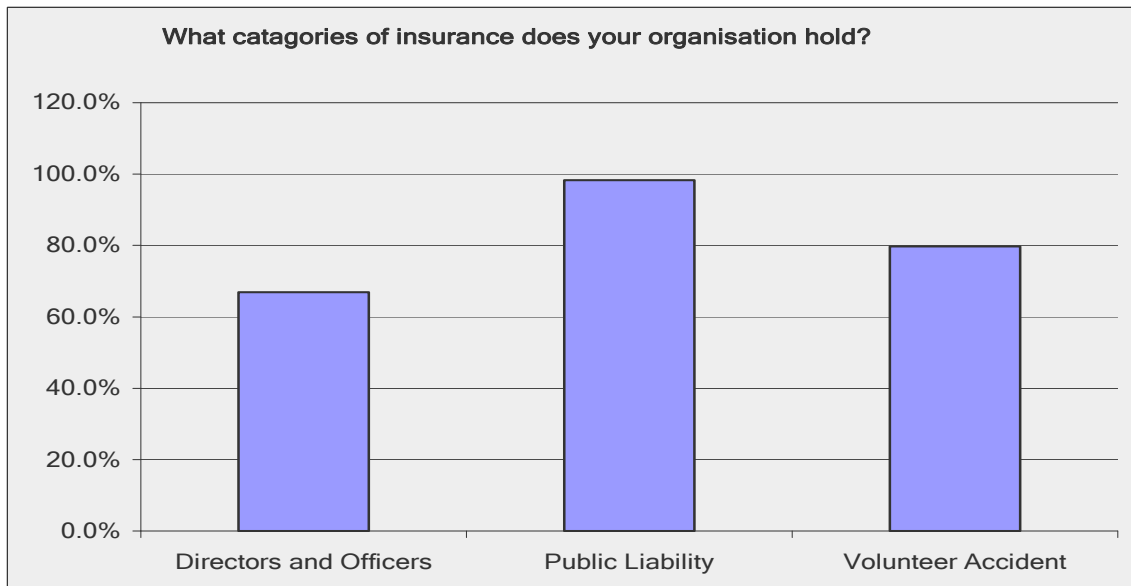
A small majority of the respondents' organisations are managed by volunteer boards.



Their boards have received training during the last two years in employment and discrimination law, governance and risk management with the later two being the main focus of board training.



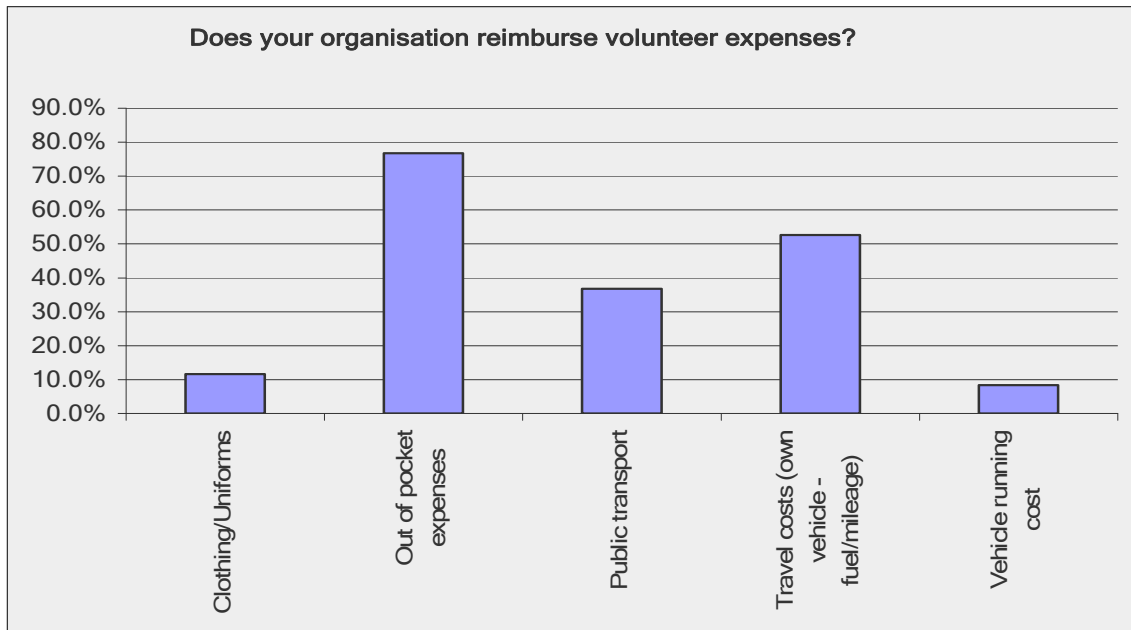
Most organisations hold insurance relating to D&O, Public Liability and Volunteer. Very few (5.2%) have had any difficulty in getting insurance for their volunteers. Typically age appears to be the most common issue ie insuring volunteers over 80 years. However one respondent did indicate a refusal to insure uncapped medical expenses as an issue.



Other insurances include workers compensation and insurances around safety and security of assets, Property and contents, vehicles, Industrial Special Risks, Professional Indemnity, TMF, Professional Indemnity, Association Insurance - full package for community sector, Hull and Machinery, Ship Repairers Liability, P and I, War and Terrorism

One respondent stated that their organisation's insurance was currently under view pending changes in OH&S legislation

Most respondents' organisations reimbursed out-of-pocket expenses of volunteers. About a third provides free meals and uniforms. Some recognised the importance of reimbursement to retaining volunteers. Most recognised travel as a valid expense and sought to reimburse volunteers for this expense with one organisation paying for air travel to attend meetings from regional areas.



Appendices

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

Introduction

The NSW Government is developing a NSW Volunteering Strategy. As part of the process, the Government is considering amending the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 to better protect volunteers from discrimination. The new strategy, including any possible changes to the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977, will have important implications for the volunteer sector.

More information about the Volunteering Strategy consultation and the anti-discrimination proposal is available at: <http://www.volunteering.nsw.gov.au/>

The Centre for Volunteering considers that the impact of the proposed anti-discrimination changes on volunteer engaging organisations will be better understood if there is access to good information about the structure of volunteer-engaging organisations.

The Centre has put together the following short survey with the aim of providing a snapshot of the structure of volunteer engaging organisations in NSW today. The Centre will provide this information (disaggregated and confidential) to the NSW Government to assist it in considering the potential impact of the proposed changes.

In order to get the most accurate picture possible, it is important that as many volunteer engaging organisations as possible complete the survey. By participating in the survey, your organisation will assist in the process of reform in an important area affecting the volunteering sector.

The survey should take approximately 10 minutes. We encourage you to complete the survey now.

This survey will close on Wednesday 5th October.

1. Which sector does your organisation service?

- Advocacy
- Animal Welfare
- Arts/Culture/Heritage
- Community Services/Welfare
- Conservation/Environment
- Education/Youth Development
- Emergency Services
- Health
- Multiculturalism
- Professional Services
- Special Interest Group
- Sport & Recreation

Other (please specify)

2. What is your organisations annual budget?

- Less than \$50,000
- \$50,000 - \$100,000
- \$100,000 - \$250,000
- \$250,000 - \$500,000
- \$500,000 - \$1,000,000
- \$1,000,000 - \$5,000,000
- \$5,000,000 - \$10,000,000
- \$10,000,000 +

Other (please specify)

3. How many paid staff in your organisation?

Actual staff members

Full-Time-Equivalent staff

4. How many volunteers in your organisation?

Actual volunteer members

Full-Time-Equivalent volunteers

5. Does your organisation have any formal policies relating to volunteers or unpaid workers?

- Yes
- No - go to question 7

6. If you answered Yes to question 5 please select those policies from the list.

- Conditions of work for volunteers
- EEO (equal opportunity in employment)
- Grievance and complaint handling
- Management of volunteers
- Recruitment of volunteers

Any other matter relating to volunteers (please specify)

7. Does your organisation have a volunteer board of management?

- Yes No - go to question 9

8. Has your volunteer board of management received or attended training on any of the following matters in the last 24 months?

- Employment law
- Discrimination law
- Governance responsibilities of board members
- Risk management

Other (please specify)

9. What categories of insurance does your organisation hold?

Directors and Officers

Public Liability

Volunteer Accident

Other (please specify)

10. Has your organisation had difficulty accessing insurance for older volunteers?

Yes

No

If Yes please specify

11. Does your organisation reimburse volunteer expenses?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clothing/Uniforms | <input type="checkbox"/> Travel costs (own vehicle - fuel/mileage) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Out of pocket expenses | <input type="checkbox"/> Vehicle running cost |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public transport | |

Other (please specify)

12. Does your organisation provide?

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Free meals | <input type="checkbox"/> Uniforms |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Travel pass | |

Other (please specify)

Survey complete

Thank you for this worthy contribution to the future of volunteering in NSW. The Centre appreciates your time and effort.

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