



**volunteering** australia

**National Survey of  
Volunteering Issues**

**08**



# **Volunteering Australia**

## **National Survey of Volunteering Issues 2008**

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## Introduction

The *National Survey of Volunteering Issues* offers a rich snapshot of data which paints a picture of continuing strong commitment to volunteering across Australia.

The *National Survey of Volunteering Issues* explores both known and emerging issues in volunteering in Australia. In 2008, the survey continues with previous themes of how volunteers are contributing to social change and the impacts of volunteering related public policy issues on volunteers and not for profit organisations that involve volunteers. Other areas explored in this year's survey are volunteers' sense of community belonging, the level of training support offered to and accessed by volunteers, and the value of volunteering – is it quantified and how?

The *National Survey of Volunteering Issues* is conducted online, incorporating two subsidiary surveys: one survey each for volunteers and volunteer-involving not for profit organisations. Seventeen hundred and eighty five (1785) volunteers and 954 organisations participated. This was slightly down on the response rate received in 2007, but nonetheless represents a broad cross-section of volunteers and organisations from all states and territories of Australia.

This year's survey sought additional demographic data from volunteer respondents including gender, age and employment status. Consistent with ABS data<sup>[1]</sup>, volunteer respondents were mostly people employed either in full-time (40%) or part-time (23%) work (Table 10). In terms of the age demographics of volunteer respondents, the highest proportion were aged 55-64 years (23%) (Table 9). This is not consistent with ABS data which shows that the age group with the highest level of volunteering is 35-44 years<sup>[2]</sup>.

Where possible, 2007 and 2008 survey data is presented side by side in tables at the end of this report to aid with monitoring of change over the period.

## Summary Findings

### Volunteers, civil engagement and social inclusion

In 2008, the survey results again show that, overall, volunteers are positive about volunteering and its benefits to their communities and themselves:

- 98% of volunteers surveyed feel their work as a volunteer makes a difference to their organisation and its work (Table 26).
- 86% of volunteers surveyed feel that volunteering increases their sense of community belonging (Table 27).

### Organisational Performance

When rating organisational performance on management processes most volunteer respondents are positive:

- 83% of volunteers surveyed feel satisfied or very satisfied with their organisation's performance on recruitment, background checking and the training provided for volunteer roles (Table 19).

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<sup>[1]</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Voluntary Work, Australia*, Catalogue no. 4441.0, ABS, Canberra, 2006

<sup>[2]</sup> Ibid.

- 75% of volunteers surveyed feel satisfied or very satisfied with their organisation's performance on Occupational Health & Safety measures (Table 19).
- 48% of organisations surveyed have implemented the *National Standards for Involving Volunteers in Not for Profit Organisations* (Table 13).
- 42% of volunteers have not been given a written job description for their volunteer role (Table 16).
- 31% of volunteers do not have access to grievance procedures (Table 18).

### **Volunteer Training and Skill Development**

In general, volunteers surveyed feel they are well supported in their roles through the provision of training by their organisations:

- 78% feel that training has given them necessary skills for their volunteer role (Table 22).
- 35% reported that training has helped them acquire an accreditation or qualification (Table 22).
- 34% reported that training has given them skills useful to their current or future employment. (Table 22).
- 38% of organisations surveyed provide volunteers with accredited training e.g. First Aid or a module that forms part of a qualification (Table 21).

### **Public Policy Issues Impacting Volunteering**

The public policy issues reported by volunteers and organisations as having an impact (positive and/or negative) on volunteering are similar to what was reported in 2007 (Tables 28 & 30). They are presented in order of impact reported by respondents.

#### ***Costs of Volunteering (out of pocket expenses)***

- Fuel is the greatest expense incurred by volunteers and the greatest expense reimbursed by organisations (Tables 32 & 33).
- 28% of volunteers surveyed reported out of pocket expenses as having a negative impact on their volunteering, but 60% of these volunteers said it does not reduce their ability or desire to volunteer (Table 28 & 36).
- 47% of volunteers surveyed do not receive any reimbursement of their out of pocket expenses; 13% receive full reimbursement (Table 34).
- Less than one third (28%) of organisations surveyed offer full reimbursement of out of pocket expenses; 22% of organisations cannot afford to offer any reimbursement (Table 35).

### ***Background checking (police checks and working with children checks)***

- 47% of volunteers surveyed have been required to undergo both a police check and a working with children check (Table 37).
- 40% of organisations surveyed and 20% of volunteers surveyed report this as the issue that has most impacted them in the last 12 months (Table 28 & 30). Some of these impacts are:
  - Lengthy processing time for checks
  - The costs of checks and methods of payment
  - Complex processes
  - Lack of transferability of checks between states and between organisations

### ***Occupational Health & Safety (OH&S)***

- 31% of volunteers surveyed have been trained or briefed on OH&S during orientation; 57% of volunteers are regularly updated on OH&S (Table 41).
- 30% of volunteers surveyed and 18% of organisations surveyed report that OH&S had a positive impact on volunteering in the past 12 months (Table 28 & 30).
- 9% of volunteers and 10% of organisations reported that OH&S had a negative impact in the past 12 months (Tables 28 & 30).

### ***Insurance***

- 11% of organisations surveyed report that insurance is the issue that has most impacted on volunteering (Table 30), with qualitative data showing the main impact being the rising cost for insurance coverage of volunteers.

### **Barriers to Involving Volunteers**

More than half (55%) of organisations surveyed indicate they experience barriers to involving volunteers (no table published). Some of the barriers identified include:

- Lack of capacity (funding and time) to recruit, engage, manage and support volunteers
- Not enough resources (funding and time) to provide necessary volunteer training and skills development
- Costs and administration associated with legislative compliance and procedural requirements, e.g: “paperwork” or “red-tape”
- Attracting and recruiting suitable volunteers.

### **Seasonal Variation in Volunteer Numbers**

31% of organisations surveyed report variation in volunteer numbers as a result of events, seasonal requirements or episodic volunteering (Table 5a).

### **Corporate / Employee Volunteering**

38% of volunteer-involving organisations surveyed utilised corporate / employee volunteers in their activities in the last 12 months. 57% of those respondents report that volunteers from

companies and businesses have made an extremely valuable contribution to their organisation. A further 39% report that the contribution made was somewhat valuable (Tables 45 – 47).

## **The Value of Volunteering**

70% of organisations surveyed quantify and measure volunteer contribution to their operations. The most common measure used by organisations (81%) is the number of hours of volunteering (Tables 48 - 50).

## **Discussion of Key Findings**

### **Volunteers, civil engagement and social inclusion**

As in previous years, the survey results clearly show that the majority of volunteers are positive about the benefits their volunteering brings to the community.

- 98% of volunteers surveyed feel their work as a volunteer always or sometimes makes a difference to their organisation and its work (Table 26).

Motivations for volunteering are not specifically sought in this survey, but the data shows that the goals of an organisation strongly influence people's selection of where to volunteer.

- 67% of volunteers surveyed report that the organisation's goals were the major reason for being involved with it. Another 23% said that this was one of several reasons for getting involved (see Table 25).

There is growing evidence that social connectedness increases for those who volunteer and that this improves wellbeing. Interestingly, when considering the benefits of volunteering, many volunteers focus on their contribution to the community, often overlooking the benefits they personally derive. When asked whether volunteering increases their sense of community belonging overwhelmingly volunteers report positively. This is consistent with other known research that says volunteers tend to have higher levels of wellbeing than those who do not volunteer<sup>[3]</sup>.

- 86% of volunteers surveyed feel that volunteering increases their sense of community belonging (Table 27).

A sample of qualitative data from volunteer respondents provides substance to support this finding:

*"Before volunteering I did not feel part of the community, as I was posted to this community as part of my job. I had not made many friends as my work and child took up most of my time. Now I can walk down the street and people recognise me as the person who has helped them."*

*"Alleviated social isolation / boredom / depression and provided constructive engagement and social intercourse"*

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<sup>[3]</sup> Page 32, Australian Unity Wellbeing Report 2008

*“It has given me confidence and a feeling of well-being of a level never expected or experienced before or during my working life. Brought me into contact with many people I would otherwise never have met, and taught me to be more patient and considerate of the needs of others who are less fortunate than I.”*

## **Organisational Performance**

Most organisations surveyed report that they have volunteer management processes in place, slightly higher percentages than in 2007. Consistent with this, a majority of volunteers surveyed report, albeit at lower levels, that the organisations they volunteer in have management processes in place to support them:

- 97% of organisations report that they apply OH&S measures at the same standard for volunteers as paid employees, 75% of volunteers report this for their organisation (Tables 17 & 18).
- 96% of organisations have a designated contact person, an orientation process and insurance coverage for volunteers, 80-84% of volunteers report this for their organisation (Tables 17 & 18).
- 95% of organisations provide opportunities for volunteers to give feedback, 89% of volunteers report this for their organisation (Tables 17 & 18).

A majority of volunteer respondents rated performance by organisations on management processes positively. The data also shows a slight increase in satisfaction levels since 2007.

- 83% of volunteers surveyed feel satisfied or very satisfied with their organisation’s performance on recruitment, background checking and the training provided for volunteer roles (Table 19).
- 75% of volunteers surveyed feel satisfied or very satisfied with their organisation’s performance on OH&S measures (Table 19). This data is consistent with data shown at Table 25 which indicates that 30% of volunteers surveyed consider that OH&S has had a positive impact on their volunteering. This is discussed in more detail below.

Just over half (55%) of organisations surveyed have volunteer appraisal / performance management processes in place (Table 17). This remains at the same level reported in 2007. This is consistent with 54% of volunteers surveyed reporting that performance management processes are in place in their organisations (Table 18). Interestingly, volunteers’ dissatisfaction levels have markedly decreased in this area since last year’s survey (36% in 2007 to 15% in 2008) (Table 19).

Exit interview processes were included in this year’s survey and the data shows just over half of organisations (54%) report having this process in place (Table 17). Only 32% of volunteers surveyed report uptake of exit interview processes in their organisations, and 39% of volunteers do not know whether it is in place or not (Table 18).

A significant finding is that 42% of volunteers report they have not been given a written job description for their volunteer role (Table 16).

Nearly one third (31%) of volunteers surveyed either do not have access to, or do not know whether their organisation has, a grievance procedure (Table 18).

Less than half (48%) of the organisations that were surveyed have implemented the *National Standards for Involving Volunteers in Not For Profit Organisations*, Volunteering Australia's model of best practice for involving volunteers. This is, however, an increase since 2007 when just 40% of organisations surveyed had implemented them (Table 13).

## **Volunteer Training and Skill Development**

The extent to which volunteers are supported through the provision of training is an area of exploration in 2008. The survey results show that 92% of organisations surveyed (as in 2007) provide training and skill development for volunteers. The survey sought to determine what type of training is being offered by organisations and accessed by volunteers, and the impact it is having at an individual level.

- 38% of organisations surveyed provide accredited training for volunteers e.g. First Aid or a module that forms part of a qualification; 58% of volunteers surveyed have accessed this level of training (Table 21).
- 70% of organisations provide non-accredited workshops on job-related topics; 48% of volunteers surveyed have accessed this level of training (Table 21).
- 77% of organisations provide informal training, such as demonstration of tasks required for the volunteer role; 51% of volunteers take part in this informal learning to support them in their roles (Table 21).

Most volunteers surveyed (87%) feel they have been given enough training and the support they need to perform their volunteer roles (table not published). 78% feel that training they have accessed as a volunteer has given them the necessary skills for them to carry out their role (Table 22).

An interesting finding is that training and skills developed through volunteering can have a positive impact in other aspects of volunteers' lives, such as professional development and increasing qualifications to aid current and potential future employment.

- 35% of volunteers surveyed reported that training they have accessed has helped them acquire an accreditation or qualification (Table 22).
- 34% of volunteers surveyed reported that training they have accessed has given them skills useful to their current or future employment. (Table 22).

## **Public Policy Issues Impacting Volunteering**

Organisations and volunteer respondents were asked to rate a list of volunteering-related public policy issues as having 'negative impact', 'no impact', 'positive impact' or 'unsure' (of issue or impact) on volunteering in the past 12 months (Tables 28 & 30).

- 44-60% of volunteers surveyed and 48-66% of organisations surveyed said that the public policy issues listed had no impact (Tables 28 & 30).

The public policy issues reported by volunteers and organisations as having the most impact in the past 12 months are outlined below. For some policy issues, organisations report similar levels of positive and negative impacts e.g: background checking and insurance. There is a much higher positive impact reported by volunteers on the issues of OH&S and background checking than there is negative impact. Below is an interpretation of the data to explain these findings on public policy impacts.

### ***The cost of volunteering***

Out of pocket expenses continue to be important to volunteers and organisations, with fuel the greatest expense incurred and the greatest expense reimbursed. Other significant out of pocket expenses for volunteers are telephone calls from mobiles or home phones, postage and uniforms (Tables 32 & 33).

- 28% of volunteers surveyed report out of pocket expenses as having a negative impact on their volunteering (Table 28), but 60% of these volunteers say it does not reduce their ability or desire to volunteer. By contrast, in 2007 over half of the volunteers who reported out of pocket expenses as having the most impact on their volunteering said that it did reduce their ability or desire to volunteer (Table 36).

Though the data may seem to suggest that many volunteers continue to volunteer in spite of rising costs, research in 2007 indicated that one in ten volunteers changed their volunteer involvement and up to one quarter more were considering doing so because of the impact of out of pocket expenses.<sup>[4]</sup>

- Nearly half (47%) of volunteers surveyed do not receive any reimbursement of their out of pocket expenses; only 13% receive full reimbursement (Table 34).
- 28% of organisations surveyed offer full reimbursement of out of pocket expenses to volunteers; 22% of organisations cannot afford to offer any (Table 35).

The survey shows that in the past year there has been no increase in the capacity of organisations to reimburse volunteers' out of pocket expenses. In fact the data shows a decrease in the number of organisations who can partially reimburse expenses and an increase in the number of organisations reporting that they cannot afford to at all, or that it is against their policy (Table 35).

The following comments from organisations surveyed describe some of the impacts of the rising costs on volunteering.

*“Volunteers who previously refused the offer of re-imbusement, now seem to need the payments.”*

*“Some potential volunteers never go past expression of interest due to the cost of volunteering.”*

*“It reduces the frequency of their involvement. Increasing fuel prices impacting on those traveling in from outlying feeder towns to bigger centres in rural areas.”*

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<sup>[4]</sup> Research Bulletin, “What are the real costs of volunteering” Volunteering Australia, 2007

*“Not all volunteers claim expenses. Many see it as part of their volunteer experience. Obviously the more we reimburse the less (money) is raised by that particular event.”*

## **Background checking**

Background checking (police checks and working with children checks) is another important public policy area that is reported by volunteers and organisations as having an impact on volunteering. It is worth noting that not all volunteering requires a police check or working with children check. The high response rate from volunteers (44%) and organisations (57%) in the community/welfare and education/training/youth development sectors may account for the following findings:

- 40% of organisations surveyed and 20% of volunteers surveyed reported that it is the issue that has most impacted them in the last 12 months (Tables 29 & 31).
- 23% of organisations surveyed reported a positive impact and 22% reported a negative impact (Table 30).
- 38% of volunteers surveyed reported that background checking had a positive impact on their volunteering, which far outweighed the proportion of volunteers who reported a negative impact (7%) (Table 28).

From this data, it is difficult to explain what positive impacts organisations and volunteers are experiencing, though it was acknowledged in last year’s survey that working with children checks were an unequivocally positive development in volunteering. For volunteers, it perhaps indicates that background checking is a process issue that they are prepared to put up with to ensure a degree of protection to vulnerable community members accessing support services. Some of the comments from the qualitative data provide further insight.

*“While these (background checks) do not affect my desire to work as a volunteer, it is adding to the endless amount of paperwork that needs to be completed, which in turn adds to the amount of time I need to spend in a volunteer capacity to ensure I am able to run my Guide unit.”*

*“Fundamental to risk management and a safe environment for volunteers and children, however it would be REALLY good if you did not have to REDO a police check for every organisation you volunteer with - this is costly in terms of time, and money, even if the volunteer does not personally pay, and could be streamlined.”*

*“I believe police checks are essential for the peace of mind and safety of all involved.”*

*“I am full of praise for this system although in certain areas I feel some people perhaps have to wait too long before they have to apply.”*

Some of the negative impacts of background checking reported by volunteers and organisations alike are:

- Lengthy processing time for checks
- The costs of checks and methods of payment
- Complex processes
- Lack of transferability of checks between states and organisations

- 47% of volunteers surveyed have been required to undergo both a police check and a working with children check (Table 37) which is slightly increased on last year's data (42%). In spite of this, 95% of volunteers say background checking does not reduce their ability or desire to volunteer (Table 38). As noted earlier, this is likely to be related to high specific sector representation in the survey (Table 4).
- 51% of organisations surveyed are conducting police checks once only at the time of recruitment (Table 40).
- 41% of organisations are conducting police checks every one to three years, depending on legislative, policy or funding requirements (Table 40). With increased frequency of checking more commonplace in some sectors e.g.: aged care, the need for greater efficiency in the police checking process is paramount to avoid further negative impact on organisations and volunteers:

*“One organisation I volunteer with has lost 3 long-time volunteers who were told last year they must have police checks to visit the nursing home clients they have befriended for many years. They have continued to visit them as personal friends but have ceased to belong to the volunteer visitors scheme.”*

### **Occupational Health & Safety (OH&S)**

OH&S is among the top volunteering-related public policy issues for volunteers and organisations surveyed. Again, as the survey sought to qualify whether reported impact is positive or negative, both volunteer and organisation respondents reported higher positive impact.

- 30% of volunteers surveyed and 18% of organisations surveyed reported that OH&S had a positive impact on volunteering in the past 12 months (Tables 28 & 30).
- 9% of volunteers and 10% of organisations reported that OH&S had a negative impact (Tables 28 & 30).
- 31% of volunteers surveyed have been trained or briefed on OH&S during orientation; 57% of volunteers are regularly updated on OH&S (Table 41).

Quantitative data from the survey indicates that many organisations are placing a strong emphasis on OH&S as part of their management processes to ensure the safety of their volunteers (Table 17 & 18). This is supported through high volunteer satisfaction levels (Table 19); 30% of volunteers reporting that OH&S has a positive impact (Table 28) and 88% of volunteers reporting that their organisations understand how OH&S laws apply to volunteers.

It must be noted, however, that 12% of volunteers surveyed have not been trained or do not know how OH&S relates to their volunteering (Table 41).

Qualitative comments from volunteers surveyed support the positive findings on OH&S. The comments also give some insight into the data showing negative impact:

*“The level of awareness has increased thus improving conditions and reducing injuries. It has also provided some better equipment.”*

*“Increasing my awareness of the rights and responsibilities of OH&S has made me feel more confident and safer.”*

*“A safe environment is a happy one and knowing that we are all aware of the OH&S procedure is important.”*

*“For a volunteer organisation it has a major impact on cost and time. The cost of training is beyond most volunteer organisations and the extra work involved is not appreciated by the members. The amount of paperwork is over the top for volunteers.”*

*“It has created more work and many members think it is too involved for volunteers.”*

*“OH&S has become just as relevant in my volunteering the same as normal paid work.”*

## **Insurance**

Insurance was included in this year’s survey as a management process and a public policy issue for respondents as it is an area of increasing enquiry to Volunteering Australia.

- 11% of organisations surveyed report that it was the issue that had most impacted on volunteering (Table 31).
- 11% of organisations surveyed report a positive impact and 12% report a negative impact (Table 30).

The main impacts on organisations reported in the qualitative data are the rising cost of insurance and finding appropriate insurance to cover all known risks related to volunteer roles. In particular, where risk is considered to increase with the age of volunteers. The consequence is often that organisations restrict the involvement of volunteers who are aged outside of policy coverage – younger and older.

*“A significant portion of our income is spent on covering public liability insurance for our volunteer groups’ events, leaving less resources for project work.”*

*“Finding the right cover for public liability for all members and volunteers.”*

*“Insurance Companies will only insure up to 80 years and I am working on trying to get an open policy for all ages. Just because people are over 80 this should not stop them from volunteering and being covered while doing so.”*

*“Aging population of volunteers - ensuring that all volunteers are covered despite this for all of the activities that they undertake including driving.”*

*Personal accident insurance coverage for volunteer organisations limits the number of agencies we can refer people to. A particular issue for people under 18, where such coverage is even more limited.”*

Another significant area of public policy which volunteers (22%) and organisations (21%) report as having a positive impact is equal opportunity and anti-discrimination (Table 28 & 30). Greater general awareness of the principles of valuing diversity in areas of public life may account for this finding.

## **Barriers to Involving Volunteers**

More than half (55%) of organisations surveyed indicate they experience barriers to involving volunteers (no table published) which is a slight increase from 51% in 2007 survey. Some of the barriers identified include:

- Lack of capacity (funding and time) to recruit, engage, manage and support volunteers
- Not enough resources (funding and time) to provide necessary volunteer training and skills development
- Costs and administration associated with legislative compliance and procedural requirements e.g.: “paperwork” or “red-tape”.
- Attracting and recruiting suitable volunteers.

A common theme in the qualitative data is that a lack of funding limits the capacity of some organisations to effectively manage their volunteer programs. In spite of valiant efforts by many organisations surveyed who strive for best practice in volunteer management (see Organisational Performance), they often still struggle to afford costs associated with recruitment, necessary training, insurance and reimbursement of expenses incurred by volunteers. This has an impact on their ongoing ability to recruit and support volunteers.

*“As the organisation has limited funding the paid manager volunteers “alot” of their own time. This makes it difficult for the manager to allocate time to training volunteers and mentoring them into new roles.”*

*“No reimbursement for fuel costs, no extra resources for police checks, some unreliability of clients they assist, clients who need help don't live where the volunteers live so travel distance a factor, lack of paid support staff to assist volunteers, insufficient funding for adequate program coordination.”*

Increasing amounts of paperwork for volunteers and “red tape” are reported by some organisations as a barrier to involving volunteers.

*“Too much bureaucracy and paperwork - some prospective volunteers balk at having to fill out so much paperwork and forms when all they want to do is just help out a little. Usually these people don't volunteer.”*

*“The majority of volunteers within the organisation have expressed their concerns and frustrations about the amount of ongoing “Mandatory Training” they are required to attend, with many volunteers stating they just want to come and volunteer and don't want to be involved with all of the “other stuff or legal requirements” / organisational policies.”*

Where resources are limited, some organisations are challenged with involving and supporting volunteers from diverse backgrounds such as people with disabilities, people who may require extra support and direction, and people who are culturally and linguistically diverse.

*"We have a number of volunteers who come to us seeking volunteer opportunities to build their self esteem and skills before they begin to look for work, and we have limited ability to support them well."*

*"Recruiting volunteers from cultural and linguistic backgrounds and volunteers from local area where significant high need, low socio-economic area, significant new immigrant area, high Indigenous population."*

Attracting and recruiting suitable volunteers is a challenge for many organisations. In rural areas, this often means organisations compete for available volunteers. As patterns of volunteering change, organisations find it more difficult to involve volunteers who will make the required commitments to their operations e.g: time, duration, nominated tasks. Training volunteers who only stay for short periods of time puts a further drain on limited resources. Linking available volunteers into activities that they find interesting and engaging is another challenge reported by organisations in the qualitative data:

*"Finding enough people and giving them worthwhile and fulfilling work. Especially for retiring baby boomers."*

*"Numbers of volunteers has diminished over the years; reduced time of staying with organisation; much more assertive and unwilling to do many tasks previous volunteers completed; less willingness to take responsibility to commitment agreed to."*

*"Most volunteers are busy people involved in more than one organisation and we need inventive ways to manage their time with us."*

## **Seasonal Variation in Volunteer Numbers**

- 31% of organisations surveyed report variation in volunteer numbers as a result of events, seasonal requirements or episodic volunteering (Table 5a). Depending on need, increases reported can be as few as 5-10 at any one time or as great as 20,000 (no table published). Qualitative data shows the most common requirement of organisations surveyed being 20-50 extra volunteers for special events that may occur once or multiple times (monthly, quarterly) in a 12 month period. This provides added management challenges for organisations needing to recruit, train and support additional short-term or episodic volunteers and as an emerging trend in volunteering, could be the subject of future research.

## **Value of volunteering**

The 2008 survey explores whether organisations are quantifying volunteer contribution and if so, what methods are being used.

Ironmonger (2000) estimates that volunteering is responsible for around \$42 billion of economic activity annually<sup>[5]</sup>. The total imputed dollar value of the time donated to welfare service alone by volunteers (\$27.4 billion) is almost double the total cash amount spent by all governments and non-government sources (\$13.7 billion) in Australia.<sup>[6]</sup> Australia has in excess of 700,000 third-

<sup>[5]</sup> Ironmonger, D Federation Press 2000 *Volunteers and Volunteering*

<sup>[6]</sup> Michael Bittman and Kimberly Fisher, Social Policy Research Centre, University of New South Wales 2006, *'Exploring the economic and social value of present patterns of volunteering in Australia'* Pg 5

sector organisations, the majority of which involve volunteers in some capacity. ABS data shows that although most of these do not have paid staff, they are responsible for 3.3% of GDP, and if you include the financial value of volunteer activity, the figure rises to 4.7%<sup>[7]</sup>.

- 70% of organisations surveyed report that they quantify and measure volunteer contribution to their operations (Table 48).
- 81% of organisations measure volunteer contribution by hours of volunteering (Table 49). The qualitative data shows that many organisations multiply the number of volunteer hours contributed over a given period by an hourly rate, varying between \$12 - \$30 an hour to determine an economic value to the organisation and / or community.
- 49% measure by results / impacts (Table 49) such as feedback from clients, number of successful relationships established, survival rate of trees planted by volunteers, number of people assisted over a period of time, quality of work done by volunteers, number of hours patrolled, number of incidents reported etc.

The following examples typify the methods used by organisations to estimate the value of volunteering:

*“Place monetary evaluation on time donated by volunteers. Measure impact/results by surveys and evaluations filled out by volunteers.”*

*“We estimate each volunteer hour equates to \$15 per hour. With our volunteers doing over 3000 hours for us in 2006/2007 - that is a lot of money saved. We try and filter this up to head office.”*

*“We document each volunteer event and track in a spreadsheet. Report to council monthly volunteer hours and financial value at a cost of \$30/hr.”*

*“We measure the impact our volunteers have by the quality of the work they do and the positive relationships they make within the organisation. People impacts are hard to measure but obvious to everyone!”*

*“Returning to planting sites - assessing percentage of successful plants.”*

*“Safe beaches, number of incidents recorded, number of hours patrolled.”*

## **Methodology**

*The National Survey of Volunteering Issues* is conducted using a subscription-based online survey provider. Access to the survey is posted on Volunteering Australia’s website and through its inVOLve e-newsletter, which reaches 9000 subscribers nationally. It is widely promoted across Australian not for profit sector newsletters to tap into existing and informal not for profit networks. Though the survey sample is broadly representative of views on volunteering, respondents self select to complete the survey, therefore it cannot be considered a random sample or representative of all volunteers’ or volunteer-involving organisations’ views.

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<sup>[7]</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Non-profit Institutions Satellite Account, Australian National Accounts 1999/2000*. Catalogue No. 5256.0, ABS, Canberra, 2002.

The online survey incorporates two subsidiary surveys: one survey each for volunteers and volunteer-involving not for profit organisations. Many of the questions were complementary allowing for some analysis of findings on similar themes for both cohorts. Volunteers are asked to answer according to their experience of working with the main organisation with which they volunteer.

The email distributed through the not for profit networks linked directly to the online survey. In 2007 hard copies of the survey were offered upon request but did not return consistent quantitative data for accurate analysis, though qualitative data was utilised. As a result, no hard copies were distributed in 2008. To ensure equity of access to a greater number of volunteers in the future, other options for inclusion will be considered, including translation into other languages.

Representatives from businesses, government and media (95) entered the survey, but if they did not identify as a volunteer or as a manager of volunteers no responses to the survey were sought, only interest in the survey registered. For future surveys, respondents from corporates or businesses who have responsibility for corporate / employee volunteer programs will be invited to participate in the survey.

*The National Survey of Volunteering Issues* has two major objectives. The first is to consider the experiences of volunteers and organisations with respect to well known public policy and volunteer management issues. The second aim is to explore emerging, or lesser known, volunteering issues. Some open ended questions are used to invite survey participants to comment on a range of specific issues and to provide an opportunity to comment on other relevant aspects of volunteering.

Some of the questions were restructured in the 2008 survey, particularly the public policy questions which prompted respondents to consider the impact level of each listed issue on their volunteering e.g.: 'negative impact', 'no impact', 'positive impact', 'unsure' (of impact or issue). Additional demographic information was sought from volunteer respondents which provide the opportunity for determining how representative the 2008 respondent sample is when cross referenced with ABS data (age and employment status).

The response rate was lower in this year's survey and could be attributed to the shorter access time of four weeks compared to six weeks in 2007. For the future, a longer access period will be facilitated.

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#### Volunteering, civil engagement and social inclusion

23. Volunteer participation in organisational decision making
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25. Importance of organisational goals in influencing volunteers
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#### Impacts of public policy on volunteering

28. Impacts of public policy issues on volunteering: volunteers
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30. Impacts of public policy issues on volunteering: organisations
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- 32. Sources of out of pocket expenses: volunteers
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### **Background checking— police checks and working with children**

- 37. Requirements for volunteer background checking: volunteers
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- 41. OH&S training: volunteers
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### **Corporate / Employee volunteering**

- 45. Corporate / employee volunteering: organisations
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### **Value of Volunteering**

- 48. Measuring volunteer contribution: organisations
- 49. How volunteer contribution is measured: organisations
- 50. How volunteer contribution information is used: organisations

## Respondent Demographics

### 1. Organisation types – international / national / state / local: volunteers and organisations

Organisation type	Volunteers		Organisations	
	2007 (n = 2284)	2008 (n = 1670)	2007 (n = 1038)	2008 (n = 893)
International	14%	23%	n/a	n/a
National organisation	31%	22%	26%	25%
State based	30%	32%	30%	31%
Locally based	25%	23%	44%	44%

### 2. Rural/regional and metropolitan responses: volunteers and organisations

Location	Volunteers		Organisations	
	2007 (n = 2282)	2008 (n = 1670)	2007 (n = 1038)	2008 (n = 893)
Metropolitan area	58%	56%	65%	64%
Rural/regional area	42%	44%	35%	36%

### 3. State/territory: volunteers and organisations

State/territory	Volunteers		Organisations	
	2007 (n = 2284)	2008 (n = 1670)	2007 (n = 1038)	2008 (n = 893)
ACT	7%	6%	6%	2%
NSW	18%	34%	24%	24%
NT	3%	1%	3%	1%
QLD	17%	18%	13%	12%
SA	17%	6%	16%	12%
TAS	4%	3%	4%	3%
VIC	21%	22%	26%	23%
WA	14%	10%	9%	12%
National focus (organisations only)	n/a	n/a	n/a	10%

#### 4. Industry sector: volunteers and organisations

Industry sector	Volunteers		Organisations	
	2007 (n = 2283)	2008 (n = 1670)	2007 (n = 1038)	2008 (n = 893)
Arts/culture	6%	6%	5%	5%
Business/professional/union	1%	1%	1%	1%
Community/welfare	27%	27%	47%	50%
Education/training/youth development	7%	17%	6%	7%
Emergency services	22%	27%	3%	3%
Environment	7%	4%	4%	5%
Foreign/International	1%	3%	1%	1%
Health	13%	7%	17%	15%
Law/justice/political	1%	1%	3%	1%
Religious	1%	2%	1%	1%
Sport/recreation	14%	4%	5%	3%
Volunteering infrastructure	2%	2%	4%	4%
Local government working across two or more sectors	n/a	n/a	4%	4%

#### 5. Number of volunteers: organisations

Number of volunteers in organisation	2007 (n = 1037)	2008 (n = 893)
1-19	23%	23%
20-49	19%	19%
50-99	17%	18%
100-299	18%	16%
300+	24%	24%

#### 5a. Seasonal variation\*

Seasonal variation in volunteer numbers	2008 (n = 893)
Percentage of organisations that experience variation in number of volunteers in organisation eg: seasonal, event, episodic volunteering	31%

\*No comparative data available as questions not asked in previous surveys

**6. Duties undertaken by volunteers in organisations: volunteers (main involvement) and organisations<sup>^</sup>**

Volunteer duty type	Volunteers performing duty type		Organisations with volunteers performing duty type	
	2007 (n = 2283)	2008 (n = 1670)	2007 (n = 1037)	2008 (n = 893)
Administration/clerical	51%	46%	69%	65%
Arts/crafts/performing	7%	10%	24%	24%
Campaigning/lobbying	18%	15%	12%	12%
Coaching/umpiring	9%	5%	8%	5%
Community/sporting events	23%	19%	23%	24%
Counselling/mediation/advocacy	19%	16%	22%	20%
Disability support services	6%	6%	24%	24%
Education/tutoring/mentoring	31%	32%	34%	34%
Emergency response/safety/rescue	27%	30%	9%	10%
Food service	8%	8%	22%	25%
Fundraising/retail	30%	32%	38%	35%
Gardening/outdoor activities	10%	11%	24%	27%
Historical research &/or preservation	n/a	5%	n/a	8%
Hospital/allied health assistance	7%	5%	13%	13%
Information technology/library services	9%	8%	18%	16%
Marketing/public relations/media	18%	16%	21%	17%
Material relief	2%	2%	6%	6%
Professional/management/committee	26%	22%	36%	31%
Providing information/visitor guiding	16%	14%	25%	23%
Technical/mechanical/maintenance	8%	8%	10%	9%
Virtual volunteering (through technology)	n/a	4%	n/a	6%
Visit/social support/driving	11%	9%	42%	41%
Working with animals	4%	3%	5%	5%
Working with children/youth	27%	31%	36%	33%
Working with the aged	8%	8%	38%	39%
Writing/editing/research	13%	10%	16%	15%
Other	11%	9%	17%	16%

<sup>^</sup>Volunteers may give multiple reasons. Therefore totals do not add up to 100%.

## 7. Number of organisations volunteered with: volunteers

How many organisations do you currently volunteer for?	2007 (n = 2284)	2008 (n = 1670)
1 organisation	50%	50%
2 organisations	28%	30%
3 organisations	14%	12%
4 organisations	4%	5%
5 or more organisations	4%	4%

## 8. Gender of respondents: volunteers\*

	2008 (n = 1670)
Male	39%
Female	61%

## 9. Age of respondents: volunteers\*

	2008 (n = 1670)
Under 18	2%
18-24 years	10%
25-34 years	15%
35-44 years	18%
45-54 years	21%
55-64 years	23%
65-74 years	10%
75 and over years	2%

## 10. Employment status of respondents: volunteers\*

	2008 (n = 1670)
Employed full time	40%
Employed part time	23%
Unemployed / seeking employment	5%
Not in labour force (retired)	21%
Not in labour force (other)	11%

\*No comparative data available as questions not asked in previous survey

## Survey results

### *Involving volunteers in not for profit organisations*

#### 11. Locating volunteer work: volunteers

How did you find volunteer work?	2007 (n = 2282)	2008 (n = 1670)
GoVolunteer website <a href="http://www.govolunteer.com.au">www.govolunteer.com.au</a>	1%	1%
Other website	4%	6%
Through a friend/relative	38%	40%
Volunteer centre	3%	3%
Advertising/article by organisation – local newspaper	13%	10%
Advertising by organisation – community notice board	3%	4%
Advertising by organisation – newsletter	6%	4%
Centrelink / Job Network / Work Co-ordinator	n/a	1%
Other	33%	30%

#### 12. Factors influencing selection of volunteer role (aside from nature of role itself)<sup>^</sup>

Which of the following factors did you consider when you decided to begin volunteering?	2007 (n = 2283)	2008 (n = 1670)
Number of hours per week	48%	47%
Total length of commitment (e.g. ongoing, short term)	44%	40%
Working hours of volunteer role (e.g. do the required times suit me?)	46%	46%
Out of pocket expenses associated with role	24%	21%
Level of training/expertise required to perform volunteer role	49%	48%
Regulatory requirements/'red tape'	12%	14%
Other	29%	31%

#### 13. Implementation of the National Standards for Involving Volunteers: organisations

Has your organisation implemented the <i>National Standards for Involving Volunteers in Not-for-Profit Organisations</i> ?	2007 (n = 1010)	2008 (n = 871)
Yes	40%	48%
No	24%	20%
Don't know	36%	32%

<sup>^</sup>Volunteers may give multiple reasons. Therefore totals do not add up to 100%.

#### 14. Use of volunteer policies in not for profit organisations: volunteers

Use of volunteer policies in organisations	Yes		No		Unsure / Don't Know	
	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008
Organisation has written volunteer policy (n = 2263) (n = 1661)	64%	69%	20%	12%	17%	19%
Organisation has a volunteer policy <b>and</b> it is provided to volunteers for reference (n= 1437) (n = 1139)	97%	95%	4%	5%	n/a	n/a

#### 15. Use of volunteer policies in not for profit organisations: organisations

Use of volunteer policies in organisations	Yes		No		Unsure / Don't Know	
	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008
Organisation has written volunteer policy 2007 (n = 989), 2008 (n = 864)	84%	86%	11%	9%	5%	5%
Organisation has written volunteer policy and reviews policy regularly 2007 (n = 824), 2008 (n = 737)	83%	86%	8%	8%	9%	7%
Volunteers participate in reviewing processes/issues affecting them 2007 (n = 971), 2008 (n = 836)	75%	77%	18%	17%	6%	8%

#### 16. Position descriptions: volunteers

Have you been provided with a written job description for your volunteer role?	Volunteers (n = 1513)
Yes	58%
No	42%

## 17. Volunteer management–adoption of management processes: organisations

Volunteer management process	Process used		Process not used		Unsure whether process is used	
	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008
<b>2007 (n = 970), 2008 (n = 836)</b>						
A designated contact person	95%	96%	4%	3%	1%	1%
Open recruitment/background checking process	89%	91%	7%	6%	4%	4%
Orientation process	93%	96%	5%	3%	2%	1%
Training for volunteer roles and skill development	92%	92%	6%	7%	2%	1%
Opportunities for volunteers to give feedback	93%	95%	4%	3%	3%	3%
OH&S measures at the same standard as for paid employees	94%	97%	3%	2%	3%	1%
Insurance coverage for volunteers*	n/a	96%	n/a	1%	n/a	4%
Volunteer appraisal/performance management processes	55%	55%	37%	37%	9%	8%
Grievance procedures	83%	86%	10%	9%	6%	6%
Exit interview/feedback process for volunteers who have ceased volunteering*	n/a	54%	n/a	37%	n/a	11%

## 18. Volunteer management – use of volunteer management processes: volunteers

Volunteer management process	Process used		Process not used		Unsure whether process is used	
	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008
<b>2007 (n = 2184), 2008 (n = 1591)</b>						
A designated contact person	89%	91%	8%	7%	3%	3%
Open recruitment/background checking process	69%	80%	18%	10%	13%	10%
Orientation process	78%	85%	17%	11%	5%	4%
Training for volunteer roles and skill development	82%	88%	14%	9%	4%	3%
Opportunities for volunteers to give feedback	87%	89%	8%	6%	5%	5%
OH&S measures at the same standard as for paid employees	67%	75%	16%	10%	18%	15%
Insurance coverage for volunteers*	n/a	80%	n/a	4%	n/a	16%
Volunteer appraisal/performance management processes	45%	54%	35%	27%	20%	19%
Grievance procedures	65%	69%	17%	11%	18%	20%
Exit interview/feedback process for volunteers who have ceased volunteering*	n/a	32%	n/a	29%	n/a	39%

\*no comparative data as question not asked in previous surveys

## 19. Volunteer satisfaction with volunteer management within not for profit organisations involving volunteers

Volunteer management process	Very satisfied - satisfied		Not very satisfied - dissatisfied		Unsure/Don't Know	
	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008
<b>2007 (n = 2184), 2008 (n = 1591)</b>						
A designated contact person	84%	86%	6%	6%	10%	7%
Training for volunteer roles	76%	83%	12%	9%	12%	8%
Orientation process	77%	83%	9%	9%	14%	8%
Open recruitment/background checking process	73%	84%	9%	4%	14%	12%
Opportunities for volunteers to give feedback	77%	77%	11%	12%	12%	11%
Occupational health and safety measures at the same standard as for paid employees	66%	75%	9%	8%	25%	17%
Grievance procedures	60%	62%	9%	9%	31%	29%
Insurance coverage for volunteers*	n/a	75%	n/a	4%	n/a	21%
Volunteer appraisal/performance management processes	49%	57%	36%	15%	15%	28%
Exit interview/feedback process for volunteers who have ceased volunteering*	n/a	24%	n/a	18%	n/a	48%

## 20. Learning / training opportunities in organisations: volunteers^

Which of the following opportunities to develop your skills are available / have you accessed to support you in your volunteer role? (n = 1513)	Available	Available & accessed	Not Available	Don't Know
	Training opportunities	31%	57%	9%
Working in different areas of organisation	41%	37%	14%	8%
Temporary or permanent changes in role	43%	30%	14%	13%
Participating in staff meetings or other processes with paid staff	29%	35%	25%	11%
Pathways to and/or references for paid employment	36%	14%	28%	21%
Chance to meet new people / develop networks	37%	59%	2%	2%
Learning about my community	37%	52%	5%	6%

\*No comparative data as question not asked in previous surveys

^Volunteers may give multiple reasons. Therefore totals do not add up to 100%.

## 21. Training and skill development: volunteers and organisations\*

Training provided by organisations / training attended by volunteers	Volunteers (n = 1513)	Organisations (n = 836)
Training NOT provided by organisation / training NOT attended by volunteer	12%	5%
Accredited training or workshops e.g.: First Aid or module that forms part of formal qualification	58%	38%
Non-accredited training or workshops eg: formal information session on a job-related topic	48%	70%
Informal training eg: demonstration of tasks required for volunteer role	51%	77%

## 22. Value of training experience: volunteers^

How would you describe your training experience?	Volunteers (n = 1513)
Not applicable as not training attended	12%
Gave me the necessary skills for volunteer role	78%
Gave me skills useful to current / future employment	34%
Helped my acquire an accreditation / qualification	35%
Was not useful for my role	3%

## *Volunteering, civil engagement and social inclusion*

### 23. Volunteer participation in organisational decision making

Do you have the opportunity to participate in decisions that affect you or your work in the organisation where you volunteer?	2007 (n = 2140)	2008 (n = 1575)
I have enough opportunities to participate in decision-making	70%	68%
I have opportunities to participate, but I would like more	14%	17%
I do not have any opportunities to participate in decision-making	8%	10%
I am not interested in participating in decision-making in my organisation	7%	5%

\*No comparative data as question not asked in previous surveys

^Volunteers may give multiple reasons. Therefore totals do not add up to 100%.

## 24. Volunteer influence on strategic directions and actions of organisations

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Do you feel that you have an opportunity to influence the strategic directions and actions of your organisation?

	2007 (n = 2140)	2008 (n = 1575)
I have enough opportunity to influence the strategic directions and actions of my organisation	54%	52%
I have some opportunity to influence the strategic directions and actions of my organisation, but would like more	16%	20%
I do not have any opportunity to influence the strategic directions and actions of my organisation	17%	19%
I am not interested in influencing the strategic directions and actions of my organisation	13%	10%

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## 25. Importance of organisational goals in influencing volunteers

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How important were the goals of your organisation in your decision to volunteer for them?

	2007 (n = 2140)	2008 (n = 1575)
Highly important – this was my major reason for getting involved	62%	67%
Somewhat important – this was one of several reasons for getting involved	26%	23%
Not important at all – I got involved for other reasons	12%	10%

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## 26. Volunteer contributions to achieving organisational missions: volunteers

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Do you feel that your work as a volunteer makes a difference to your organisation and what it is trying to achieve?

	2007 (n = 2140)	2008 (n = 1575)
Yes – always	72%	68%
Yes – sometimes	27%	30%
No - never	1%	2%

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**27. Volunteering increasing sense of community belonging: volunteers\***

**Do you feel that your work as a volunteer has increased your sense of belonging to your community?**

	<b>2008 (n = 1575)</b>
Yes	86%
No	7%
Unsure	7%

***Impacts of public policy on volunteering***

**28. Impacts of public policy issues on volunteering: volunteers^  
2008 (n = 1472)**

**Which of the volunteering-related areas of public policy have impacted on your volunteering in the last 12 months?**

	<b>Negative impact</b>	<b>No impact</b>	<b>Positive impact</b>	<b>Unsure</b>
Occupational health and safety	9%	46%	30%	14%
Insurance	11%	53%	18%	17%
Compensation for workplace injuries	4%	60%	12%	23%
Out of pocket expenses incurred through volunteering	28%	44%	15%	13%
Understanding visa requirements for volunteers from overseas	3%	57%	3%	37%
Background checking (working with children, police checks)	7%	44%	38%	10%
Equal opportunity or anti discrimination	4%	58%	22%	16%

\*No comparative data available as questions not asked in previous surveys

^Volunteers may give multiple reasons. Therefore totals do not add up to 100%.

## 29. Single greatest impact of public policy on volunteering: volunteers

In the last 12 months, which of the following has MOST impacted your volunteering?

	2007 (n = 2067)	2008 (n = 1472)
Occupational health and safety	10%	19%
Insurance	n/a	8%
Compensation for workplace injuries	5%	1%
Out of pocket expenses incurred through volunteering	21%	28%
Understanding visa requirements for volunteers from overseas	0%	1%
Background checking (working with children, police checks)	5%	20%
Equal opportunity or anti discrimination	3%	6%
None of the above or other	56%	17%

## 30. Impacts of public policy issues on volunteering: organisations 2008 (n = 790)

How have the volunteering-related areas of public policy impacted on your organisation in the last 12 months?

	Negative impact	No impact	Positive impact	Unsure
Occupational health and safety	10%	59%	18%	13%
Insurance	11%	58%	12%	20%
Compensation for workplace injuries	5%	63%	12%	23%
Out of pocket expenses incurred through volunteering	25%	45%	18%	12%
Understanding visa requirements for volunteers from overseas	6%	58%	3%	34%
Background checking (working with children, police checks)	23%	48%	22%	7%
Equal opportunity or anti discrimination	3%	66%	21%	10%

### 31. Single greatest impact of public policy on volunteering: organisations

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In the last 12 months, which of the following has MOST impacted your organisation?

	<b>2007 (n = 921)</b>	<b>2008 (n = 790)</b>
Occupational health and safety	19%	17%
Insurance	n/a	11%
Compensation for workplace injuries	2%	2%
Out of pocket expenses incurred through volunteering	13%	25%
Understanding visa requirements for volunteers from overseas	1%	2%
Background checking (working with children, police checks)	27%	40%
Equal opportunity or anti discrimination	1%	4%
None of the above or other	34%	11%

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### *The costs of volunteering*

### 32. Sources of out of pocket expenses: volunteers<sup>^</sup>

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Do you incur any of the following out of pocket expenses as a result of volunteering?

	<b>2007 (n = 424)</b>	<b>2008 (n = 417)</b>
Fuel	90%	86%
Public transport	17%	18%
Uniforms	25%	30%
Compulsory safety equipment	13%	10%
Telephone calls from mobile or home phone	80%	78%
Postage	n/a	36%
Other	33%	24%

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<sup>^</sup>Volunteers may give multiple reasons. Therefore totals do not add up to 100%.

### 33. Sources of out of pocket expenses: organisations<sup>^</sup>

In the last 12 months, did any of your volunteers incur any of the following out of pocket expenses as a result of volunteering?

	<b>2007 (n = 114)</b>	<b>2008 (n = 194)</b>
Fuel	93%	86%
Public transport	52%	51%
Uniforms	4%	5%
Compulsory safety equipment	4%	3%
Telephone calls from mobile or home phone	67%	63%
Postage	n/a	18%
Other	16%	19%

### 34. Reimbursement for out of pocket expenses: volunteers

Does your organisation offer to reimburse any out of pocket expenses?

	<b>2007 (n = 424)</b>	<b>2008 (n = 417)</b>
Yes – in full	13%	13%
Yes – in part	40%	40%
No	42%	40%
Don't know	5%	7%

### 35. Reimbursement of out of pocket expenses: organisations

Does your organisation offer to reimburse any out of pocket expenses?

	<b>2007 (n = 117)</b>	<b>2008 (n = 194)</b>
Yes – in full	27%	28%
Yes – in part	52%	38%
No – we can't afford it	18%	22%
No – it's against our policy	1%	7%
No – we haven't thought about it	1%	4%
Don't know	1%	3%

<sup>^</sup>Volunteers may give multiple reasons. Therefore totals do not add up to 100%.

### 36. Impact of out of pocket expenses on volunteer motivation: volunteers

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Do out of pocket expenses affect your ability or desire to volunteer?

	2007 (n = 423)	2008 (n = 417)
Yes – expenses reduce my ability/desire to volunteer	54%	36%
No – expenses do not reduce my ability/desire to volunteer	36%	60%
Unsure	10%	6%

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### *Background checking of volunteers – police checks and working with children checks*

### 37. Requirements for volunteer background checking: volunteers

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Over the last 12 months, have you been required to hold a working with children check, or undergo a formal police check, in order to volunteer?

	2007 (n = 108)	2008 (n = 287)
Yes – working with children check only	31%	28%
Yes – police check only	11%	16%
Yes – both police check and working with children check	42%	47%
No	17%	9%
Don't know	0%	0%

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### 38. Impact of background checks on volunteer involvement: volunteers

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Does having a working with children check or police check affect your ability or desire to volunteer?

	2007 (n = 90)	2008 (n = 260)
Yes – checks reduce my ability or desire to volunteer	9%	4%
No – checks do not reduce my ability or desire to volunteer	90%	95%
Don't know	1%	1%

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### 39. Use of police checks: organisations<sup>^</sup>

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Why does your organisation conduct police checks on volunteers?

	2007 (n = 184)	2008* (n = 260)
Managing risks to vulnerable clients	77%	87%
Managing risks of volunteers in driving roles	3%	32%
Managing financial risks	7%	30%
Unsure	2%	4%
Other	11%	16%

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### 40. Frequency of police checking: organisations\*

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How frequently do you conduct police checks on volunteers?

	2008 (n = 260)
Once only, at time of recruitment	51%
Every few years as a requirement of a funding body	41%
After a volunteer has had a break eg: 6 months or more from volunteering	12%
Don't know	9%
Other	5%

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## Occupational health and safety (OH&S)

### 41. OH&S training: volunteers

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Have you been trained or briefed on OH&S in your organisation?

	2007 (n = 201)	2008 (n = 271)
Yes – during orientation	28%	31%
Yes – volunteers are updated on OH&S regularly	55%	57%
No	16%	10%
Don't know	2%	2%

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\*No comparative data available as questions not asked in previous surveys

<sup>^</sup>Respondents may give multiple reasons. Therefore totals do not add up to 100%.

#### 42. Availability of information about OH&S: volunteers

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Have you been able to access adequate information about how to prevent workplace accidents and promote workplace safety for volunteers?

	2007 (n = 201)	2008 (n = 271)
Yes – I have accessed the information I need	84%	82%
No – I require more information about this issue	11%	10%
No – I have not sought information about this issue	6%	9%

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#### 43. Understanding OH&S law for volunteers: organisations

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Do you feel your organisation understands how/whether OH&S laws apply to volunteers in your organisation?

	2007 (n = 165)	2008 (n = 126)
Yes	84%	88%
No	9%	6%
Don't know	7%	6%

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#### 44. Access to information about OH&S law for volunteers: organisations

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Have you been able to access adequate information about the level of protection for volunteers under OH&S laws?

	2007 (n = 165)	2008 (n = 126)
Yes – I have accessed the information I need	65%	75%
No – I require more information about this issue	21%	14%
No – I have not sought information about this issue	15%	11%

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## **Corporate / Employee Volunteering**

### **45. Corporate / employee volunteering: organisations\***

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**In the last 12 months, has your organisation involved corporate / employee volunteers?**

	<b>2008 (n = 764)</b>
Yes	38%
No	53%
Don't know	9%

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### **46. Corporate / employee volunteer involvement in organisations\*^**

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**How have corporate / employee volunteers been involved in your organisation?**

	<b>2008 (n = 284)</b>
Professional skills	45%
Virtual volunteering	10%
Project / activity teams	63%
Part of regular volunteer programs	49%

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### **47. Contribution of corporate / employee volunteers in organisations**

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**Has the contribution of corporate / employee volunteers been valuable to your organisation?**

	<b>2008 (n = 284)</b>
Yes, extremely	57%
Yes, somewhat	39%
No	1%
Unsure	3%

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\*No comparative data available as questions not asked in previous surveys

^Respondents may give multiple reasons. Therefore totals do not add up to 100%.

## ***Value of Volunteering***

### **48. Organisations that measure volunteer contribution\***

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<b>Does your organisation measure volunteer contribution?</b>	<b>2008 (n = 757)</b>
Yes	70%
No	19%
Don't know	12%

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### **49. How volunteer contribution is measured\*^**

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<b>How is volunteer contribution measured in your organisation?</b>	<b>2008 (n = 535)</b>
By number of volunteers	73%
By hours of volunteering	81%
By results / impacts	49%
By assigning a dollar value	29%

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### **50. How volunteer contribution information is used\*^**

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<b>How does your organisation use this information?</b>	<b>2008 (n = 535)</b>
Reporting to management	89%
Reporting to funding bodies or sponsors	63%
Including in annual reports	71%
Giving feedback to companies who send their staff to volunteer	16%

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\*No comparative data available as questions not asked in previous surveys

^Respondents may give multiple reasons. Therefore totals do not add up to 100%.



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