

# ANNUAL REVIEW VOLUNTEERING AUSTRALIA 08/09

**IF YOU WANT TO  
LIFT YOURSELF  
UP, LIFT UP  
SOMEONE ELSE.**

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# WHO WE ARE

*Volunteering Australia is the national peak body working to advance volunteering in the Australian community. Our role is to represent the diverse views and needs of the volunteer sector while promoting the activity of volunteering as one of enduring social, cultural and economic value.*

## *Our mission*

**Volunteering Australia fulfils its peak body role by:**

- Providing sound policy advice on matters relating to volunteering;
- Providing a national focus for the promotion of volunteering and its principles;
- Establishing co-operative relationships with key national and international volunteering organisations;
- Encouraging the pursuit of excellence in volunteer management;
- Consulting with stakeholders to ensure proper representation of the volunteer sector.

# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

JANET STONE

President, Volunteering Australia



*The events of the past year have exemplified the importance of a volunteering infrastructure in the support of volunteers and volunteer involving organisations in our community.*

As has been proven so many times in the past, volunteers are here to help, not only in everyday circumstances, but also in times of hardship and tragedy and perhaps like never before as our community faced extraordinary hardship and tragedy in 2008-09.

The global financial crisis has placed enormous strain on not-for-profit organisations and it will be the volunteer workforce that sustains the sector through this greatest of challenges. Australia is often dubbed 'the lucky country' and we are lucky to have more than 5.4 million Australians ready and willing to help in their communities. Demand is growing for volunteering services, particularly in the community services sector, as the need for welfare support grows. This places increased stress on

not-for-profit organisations which not only have to cope with the growing demand for their services, but have to recruit and train volunteers. This comes at a cost for those agencies and organisations that help us recruit, train, equip, and protect volunteers in their work.

Through its advocacy and capacity building activities Volunteering Australia and its Foundation Members have continued to support volunteer resource centres throughout Australia as well as working directly with volunteer involving organisations to enhance volunteer management practice.

The tragedy of the Victorian bushfires and the devastation of the Queensland floods highlighted the need for a national capacity for disaster response, including



*The global financial crisis has placed enormous strain on not-for-profit organisations and it will be the volunteer workforce that sustains the sector through this greatest of challenges.*

the management and deployment of spontaneous volunteers. In collaboration with the Victorian State Government, Volunteering Australia established a national emergency registration process based on the GoVolunteer infrastructure that was utilised in registering 20,000 volunteers nationally in response to the bush fire event. The capacity of volunteer infrastructure to adapt and respond quickly in such circumstances epitomises the unique value that community based organisations offer in our society.

One of the key objectives of Volunteering Australia's strategic plan over the next 3 to 5 years is to optimise Australia's volunteering infrastructure. A strong message that came through the consultation process for the development of this strategic plan was the need for a more unified and cohesive national structure that can deliver improved capacity building, stronger advocacy, and a more robust evidence base for policy development and advice to government.

As a first step in this process the Volunteering Australia Board initiated a consultation process to seek a new relationship model between Volunteering Australia and its seven Foundation Members. This process involved consultations with each Foundation Board followed by an historic first face to face meeting of the full Volunteering Australia Board with Foundation Members' Presidents and CEOs. This forum agreed to move to the next phase which will be to achieve clarity around the role that the national,

state and local bodies should play in the volunteering sector in the future.

The ability to meet all of these challenges over the last 12 months would not have been possible without the excellent support, knowledge and expertise of the Volunteering Australia team. The Board acknowledges their leadership and dedication to the organisation, our networks and sector.

At our Annual General Meeting on November 20th, we saw the retirement of three long serving Directors - Major General Hori Howard, Richard Hammond and myself. As a valuable co-opt to our Board, Hori has pioneered a much closer relationship between emergency management volunteer agencies and Volunteering Australia over the past three years. His extensive background in the sector and current roles as Chair of the Australian Emergency Management Volunteers Forum (AEMVF) and the Australian Council of State Emergency Services has brought extremely valuable expertise and knowledge to our Board.

Richard has served Volunteering Australia through a period of unprecedented change. As a Director of Volunteering Tasmania, Richard has been an important link to one of Volunteering Australia's Foundation Members and, as a custodian of organisation knowledge, has provided essential continuity at a governance level for the current Board.

On behalf of the Volunteering Australia Board I would like to thank both Hori and Richard for their

valuable contributions and wish them all the best for the future.

My term on the Volunteering Australia Board has also come to an end, having served both as a Director and President over the last year. I have been honoured to serve the Australian volunteering community in leadership roles at both national and state levels, during a time of organisational, policy and funding changes. What hasn't changed though is the gifts of time, talent and energy I have been privileged to witness first hand across the nation. As I complete my service with Volunteering Australia I am looking forward to continuing to volunteer in my own community as I think it is critical to stay in touch with issues from the ground up. I wish Volunteering Australia all the best for the future and with thanks to my fellow Board members and everyone for the opportunities that being involved at this level has afforded me.

I would also like to thank our funding partners who have worked alongside of us and shared our commitment to volunteering. More and more public sector officials and businesses are recognising that they too cannot achieve their goals and objectives without partners in the not-for-profit sector and the volunteers who are the glue holding our society, environment and economy together.

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**JANET STONE**

*President, Volunteering Australia.*

# POLICY ADVICE

Volunteering Australia works to influence public policy at the national level and highlight the impacts that public policy has on volunteering. We receive funding from the Australian Government under the National Secretariat Program to provide Government with sound policy advice on volunteering issues.

All consultation with state and territory volunteer centres, and volunteer resource centres, is conducted in line with Volunteering Australia's Policy Consultation Framework and developed through the CEO network structure.

Volunteering Australia facilitates monthly network meetings between peak volunteer bodies from all states and territories and coordinates data collection and analysis of issues of national strategic importance to the volunteering sector. Outputs of this consultation with members are reflected in the submissions, presentations and representations on relevant forums.

## Key policy areas explored by Volunteering Australia during the year have included:

- The reduction of HECS debt through community service: comment on the initiative proposed at the 2020 summit (July 2008)
- Discussion Paper: Towards a National Volunteer Strategy (September 2008)
- A National Compact: A submission from the national, state and territory volunteering peak centres (September 2008)
- A proposal to the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) to support the establishment of a National Research Agenda on Volunteering: Funding Submission 2008/09 (October 2008)
- Feedback report on the discussion paper: Towards a National Volunteering Strategy (December 2008)
- Submission to the Productivity Commission on the Contribution of the Not for Profit Sector (May 2009)
- Comment on Golden Guru Initiative – Australian Government's response to the 2020 Summit (June 2009)

# OUR MEMBERS

## FOUNDATION MEMBERS





*The following organisations and individuals are pleased to be listed as our current members.*

#### ORDINARY MEMBERS (ORGANISATIONAL)

- Adventist Development & Relief Agency Australia
- Australian Business Arts Foundation (ABAF)
- Australia Cares
- Australian Multicultural Foundation
- Australian Polish Community Services
- Australian Red Cross
- Australian Volunteer Coast Guard
- Australian Volunteers International
- Conservation Volunteers Australia
- Families Australia
- Good Beginnings Australia
- Habitat for Humanity - Australia
- Jewish Emergency Management Plan (JEMP) Inc.
- Latitude Global Volunteering
- 'Life. Be in it.' Aust Ltd
- Lifeline Australia
- Mission Australia
- National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN)
- National Association of Testing Authorities, Australia (NATA)
- Prison Fellowship Australia
- Surf Life Saving Australia
- The Foundation for Young Australians
- The School Volunteer Program Inc.
- The Smith Family
- The University of Southern Queensland
- University of Technology Sydney
- YMCA Australia

#### ASSOCIATE MEMBERS (INDIVIDUAL)

- Leonie Bryen
- Tara Cantwell
- Martin Cowling
- Graham Cuskelly
- Bruce Edwards
- Christine Gray
- Richard Hammond
- Brian Howard
- Lewis Hughes
- Yan Ngan Huynh
- Leo Jago
- Lorraine Kerr
- Jason Lange
- Marc Levy
- Leonie Lockstone
- Paul Lynch
- Kym Madden
- Hazel Maynard
- Jacques Metzger
- Professor Jenny Onyx
- Dr Melanie Oppenheimer
- Jim Parke
- Megan Paull
- Ian Rentsch
- Harry Savelsberg
- Wendy Scaife
- Dr Karen Smith
- Janet Stone
- Art Stukas
- Dr Jeni Warburton
- Stephen Wearing
- Dr Joanne Wilkinson
- Richard Williams
- Joy Woodhouse

#### BOARD MEMBERS FOR 2008/2009 WERE:

- Janet Stone (President)
- Ian Rentsch (Immediate Past President)
- Paul Lynch (Vice-President)
- Jason Lange (Secretary)
- Bruce Edwards (Treasurer)
- Christine Gray
- Jeni Warburton
- Roberta Liddell
- Richard Hammond
- Hori Howard (Co-opted member)
- Catherina Toh
- Richard Williams
- Tara Cantwell

*Volunteering Australia acknowledges the contribution of our board members who served during this reporting year.*

# NATIONAL CONFERENCE

*The 12th National Conference on Volunteering was held from the 3 – 5 September 2008 at the Radisson Resort Gold Coast in Queensland, Australia and was attended by over 550 delegates from Australia and abroad.*

The theme for the conference, *catch the new waves*, offered the opportunity to explore current and emerging trends in volunteering including episodic volunteering, volunteer tourism, informal volunteer models and corporate volunteering.

The highly successful conference achieved its aim of being the key national forum in which to highlight the emerging trends of volunteering in Australian society, and discuss its

relevance to the topical issues of social capital, community capacity building and corporate social responsibility. It did this by attracting a number of high caliber speakers and a large cohort of interested and enthusiastic delegates. The event also played a significant role in connecting people from diverse sectors to discuss key issues and developments surrounding volunteering in Australia.

**The catch the new waves theme was broken down into three sub themes:**

- The shift in the way people are volunteering
- Flexibility in management
- The changing demographics of volunteering

The broad nature of the themes proved successful and was a key factor in the large number of delegates from varied sectors being represented at the event. The theme selection meant that papers submitted for consideration focussed on extremely diverse issues.

This diversity of papers received by Volunteering Australia meant that the selection committee could choose papers to incorporate into the program that would appeal to a wide audience. Throughout the selection process, the committee

was careful to ensure papers covered numerous issues and that they would appeal and were relevant to not only not-for-profits but also to corporates, volunteer managers, policy makers, government representatives (local, state and federal), researchers, academics and volunteers themselves.

Ninety-two papers were submitted for inclusion and 68 of these were included in the final program. The committee was careful to select presenters with extensive sector experience and knowledge so that a quality program was offered.

## Research Symposium

The Second National Research Symposium was held preceding the National Conference on 2nd September.

Over 70 researchers, academics and students attended the symposium and found it to be a beneficial event not only for knowledge and awareness transfer but also the networking opportunity.

It was a full day with 21 presentations followed by a general discussion on the major knowledge gaps in volunteering. A common theme amongst subgroups concerned definitional issues and understanding indigenous forms of community involvement and support. The day included presentations on completed and current research looking at a broad range of areas where volunteering is studied, such as education, sociology, psychology, emergency management, environment and religion, to name a few.

# THANK YOU CAMPAIGN

*The bushfires that ravaged Victoria whilst, at the same time, floods decimated parts of Queensland drew amazing public reaction. Demand was strong to mount a national thank you campaign to recognise the thousands of volunteers who assisted with the emergency response and recovery, and the many thousands more who offered assistance.*

Volunteering Australia accepted the challenge and, in partnership with Accelerator Communications, undertook to develop such a campaign.

Leading national insurer, AAMI, funded the campaign development and without their support the campaign would not have happened.

Mitchell Communications undertook to develop the media involvement and were able to deliver close to \$1million of radio, TV and press space. An amazing result and sincere thanks to Harold Mitchell who recognised the importance of thanking our volunteers.

Thank you also to the production companies involved in producing the advertisements.

Volunteering Australia strongly acknowledges the contribution of these organisations. Without their amazing support the campaign would not have happened.

**Thankyou to:**

- AAMI
- Accelerator Communications
- Burning House
- Mitchell Communications
- Good Audio Sense
- Channel Seven

Volunteering Australia also acknowledges Australia's media who embraced the campaign by providing considerable community service radio and television time, and press space. Thank you for your support of volunteering.

# NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

*National Volunteer Week (NVW) is the major event to promote the role of volunteers in their communities, and to encourage a public thank you to volunteers for their efforts.*

Volunteering Australia is responsible for conducting NVW, which began in 1989.

NVW provides the necessary focus for Australia's 100,000 plus community groups and not-for-profit organisations, 95% of whom rely on volunteers to survive, to promote the benefits of volunteering and thank their volunteers. Many of these organisations rely on VA to provide a range of resources and general support for NVW, support they would not necessarily attract through their own resources.

NVW 2009 was held from 11-17 May. The theme was *Volunteers: Everyday people, extraordinary contribution*. The theme carried the message that everyone has something of value to offer and that

every volunteer's contribution, no matter how big or small, is extraordinary because that person cares enough to be a volunteer.

The theme acknowledged the enormous contribution of volunteers and the value of volunteering. It encouraged new volunteers by reinforcing that everybody can become a volunteer.

NVW 2009 was widely accepted by the media with more than 1200 media clippings identified.



**NO ACT OF  
KINDNESS, NO  
MATTER HOW  
SMALL, IS  
EVER WASTED.**

# GOVOLUNTEER

*GoVolunteer continues to be the pre-eminent web site for not-for-profit organisations seeking volunteers and for volunteers looking for volunteer opportunities.*

The site continued to grow and experienced a substantial spike when Volunteering Australia took on the role of registering spontaneous volunteers who reacted to the tragic bushfires that ravaged Victoria during February. This was a new role for Volunteering Australia responding to an urgent call for assistance from the Victorian Government. Almost 20,000 registrations were processed with the information passed onto the Victorian Government for further action.

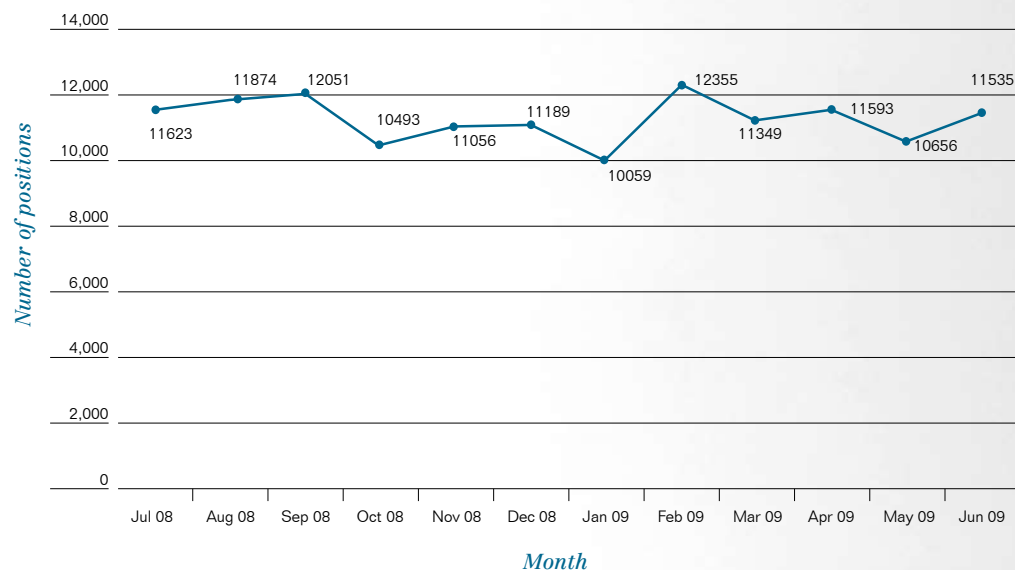
Visitor numbers overall grew strongly, averaging around a 30% growth over the year. Organisations registered to advertise volunteering opportunities peaked at an all time high of 1,720, about an 18% increase from the previous year.

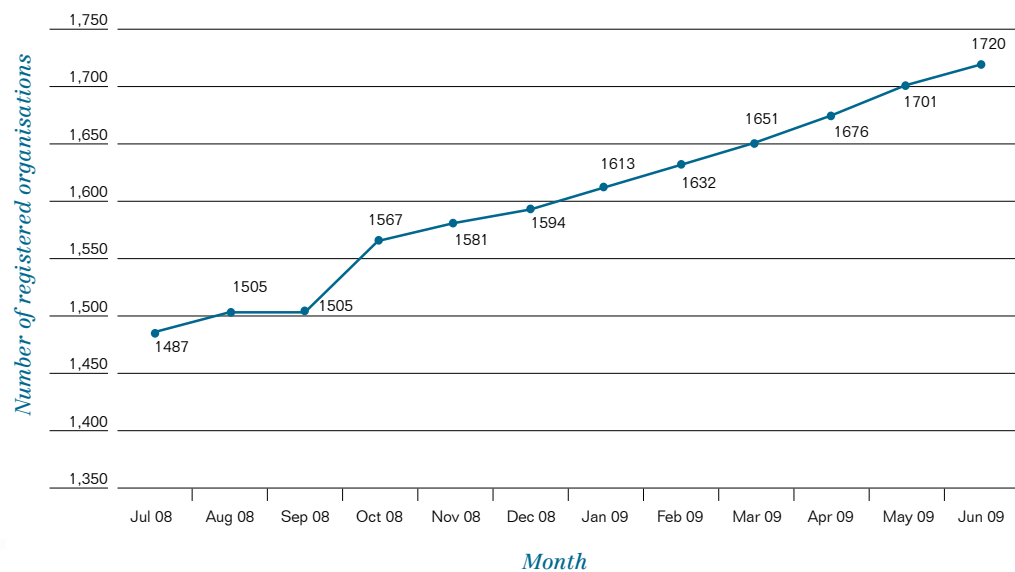
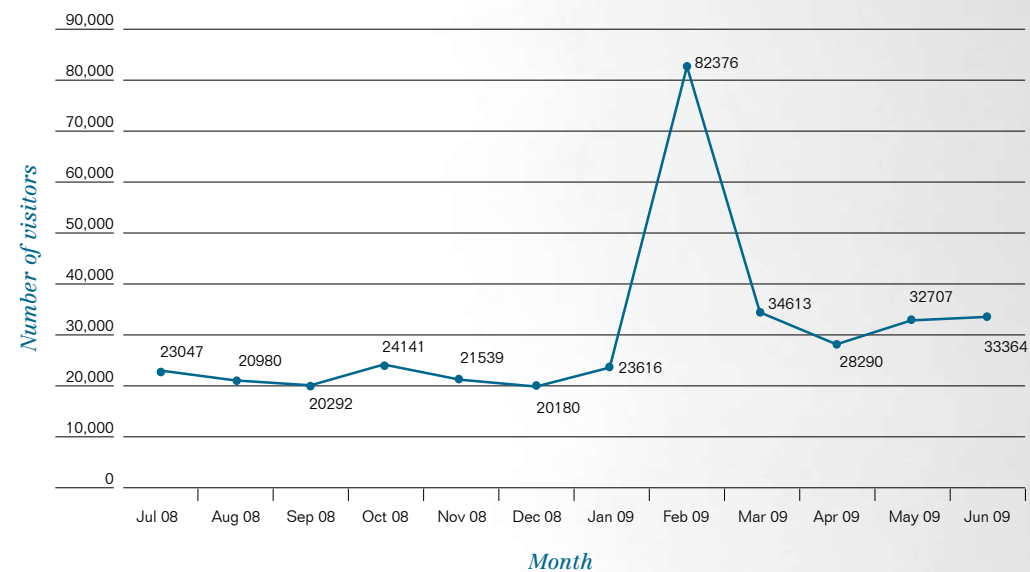
Volunteering Australia acknowledges the assistance of FaHCSIA for their funding support of govolunteer.

[govolunteer.com.au](http://govolunteer.com.au)

## NUMBER OF VOLUNTEER POSITIONS ADVERTISED

July 2008 to June 2009



**NUMBER OF ORGANISATIONS REGISTERED ON GOVOLUNTEER***July 2008 to June 2009***VISITORS TO GOVOLUNTEER***July 2008 to June 2009*

# EDUCATION AND SKILLS

*Through the work of the National Volunteer Skills Centre, Volunteering Australia continues to take a leading role not only in Australia but internationally in the development of quality support and resources for both volunteers and managers of volunteers.*

During 2009, Volunteering Australia undertook Phase 1 of a review of The National Standards for Involving Volunteers in Not-for-Profit Organisations (National Standards) – the universally recognised quality framework for management of volunteers in Australia.

As part of the methodology of Phase 1, Volunteering Australia undertook an online survey; held face to face meetings with state volunteering centres; held forums with volunteer resource centres; sought feedback from organisations that had implemented the National Standards and welcomed submissions.

## **Overall the results found that:**

1. Respondents called for a refinement of the National Standards rather than a major rewrite.
2. The National Standards are used in a variety of ways – from checklist, through to complete adoption. The term 'implementation' was found to be different, largely but not wholly due to the material and physical resource base of the organisation.
3. Accreditation of the National Standards was viewed very favourably. This will be explored fully in Phase 2. In the development of any accreditation model, consideration will be given

to organisations that have previously adopted the National Standards so that they too can be accredited in accordance with 'best practice' principles of volunteer management.

Other key achievements included the successful inclusion of the Certificates I, II and III in Active Volunteering, as well as the Certificate IV in Volunteer Program Coordination as part of the National Community Services Training Package. This is a significant milestone in having the profession of volunteer management recognised in Australia, as well as the importance of offering formal learning opportunities to volunteers.



# RESEARCH

*Volunteering Australia aims to advance and encourage research into volunteering in Australia to enhance our understanding that will aid the development of methodologies and understandings of volunteering practices, to assist in building the long-term sustainability of volunteering.*

Building on from the Volunteering Research Framework, in September 2008 VA established the Volunteer Research Agenda Advisory Group, to provide the platform to leverage and guide public policy, community standards and commercial enterprises on volunteering.

The agenda will attract projects of national significance which will in turn create products, services, policy, planning and legislation for Australia to be world leaders in volunteering.

**The Volunteer Research Agenda Advisory Group includes the following leading academics, researchers and practitioners in the field of volunteering:**

- Professor Jeni Warburton, John Richards Chair of Rural Aged Care Research, La Trobe University, Victoria (Chair of the National Research Agenda Advisory Group)
- Associate Professor Jo Barraket, Australian Centre for Philanthropy & Nonprofit Studies, Queensland University of Technology, Queensland
- Mara Basanovic, CEO, Volunteering WA
- Associate Professor Melanie Oppenheimer, University of Western Sydney, NSW
- Cary Pedicini, CEO, Volunteering Australia
- Professor Peter Shergold, Macquarie Group Foundation Chair, CEO Centre for Social Impact, University of NSW
- Professor Paul Smyth, General Manager, Social Action & Research, Brotherhood of St Laurence, Victoria
- Peter Devereux, School of Sustainability, Murdoch University, Western Australia
- Anne Irvine, Senior Manager, Centre for Corporate Public Affairs, NSW
- Evan Lewis, Group Manager, Mental Health Autism and Community Support, Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, ACT

# THE JOURNAL

*Volunteering Australia is publisher of the Australian Journal on Volunteering (AJV), the only refereed Australian journal that publishes articles exclusively on volunteering.*

During 2008/09, volume 13 number 2 of the AJV was published, with editions being available in both print and online format.

**The Journal aims to:**

- provide a forum for promoting awareness and discussion of volunteering within the volunteering community;
- stimulate debate and research on volunteering; provide useful information to the volunteering community; and
- promote awareness of the volunteering sector and its attendant issues in the broader community, including government and business.

In 2009 innovations in delivery platform were further extended, with individual articles now available for purchase with subscription available in online format only. Subscription provides access to current and previous editions.

Articles are published throughout the year with email alerts sent three times a year, Autumn, Winter and Spring. The AJV has been selected for indexing by: the National Library of Australia (APAIS/AA-FT); EBSCO; Elsevier and RMIT Publishing (Informit).

**WE MAKE A  
LIVING BY WHAT  
WE DO, BUT WE  
MAKE A LIFE BY  
WHAT WE GIVE.**

# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW 2008-09

*During the 2008 to 2009 year, Volunteering Australia had a turnover of over \$1.75m, an increase of 33% from the prior year. With this steady growth, the financial performance has remained strong.*

**The financial results were impacted throughout 2008 – 2009 by the following areas;**

- Grant income remained stable at \$938k, representing 54% of income
- Registration fees from the national annual conference raised \$360k, representing 21% of income. The national conference proved very successful with over 500 registrations and attendees
- Sponsorship revenue of \$240k was 36% higher than the previous year
- Merchandise sales remained strong for the Australian Journal on Volunteering and National Standards

In addition, the CPA Corporate Volunteer Placement Program continued to be successful.

As a not-for-profit organisation any financial surpluses generated by Volunteering Australia operations are reinvested into future growth of the incorporation.

Audited financial statements of Volunteering Australia are available for download from the website.

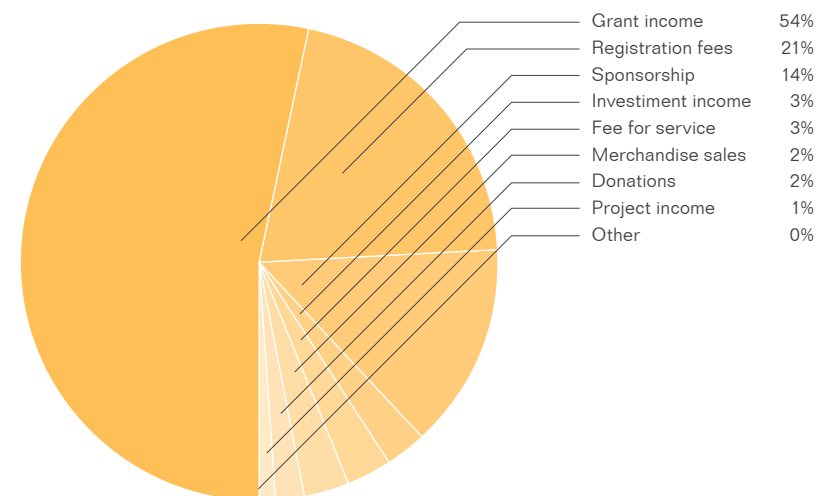


## FINANCIAL SUMMARY 2008 / 2009

	08/09 \$'000	07/08 \$'000	% Percentage	Variance
Grant income	938	941	54%	0%
Registration fees	360	0	21%	100%
Sponsorship	240	176	14%	37%
Investment income	51	59	3%	-14%
Fee for service	48	64	3%	-25%
Merchandise sales	44	52	3%	-16%
Donations	41	0	2%	100%
Project income	21	11	1%	87%
Other	7	11	0%	-34%
<b>Total income</b>	<b>1,750</b>	<b>1,314</b>		<b>33%</b>
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>(1,654)</b>	<b>(1,393)</b>		<b>19%</b>
<b>Surplus / (Deficit)</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>(79)</b>		

NB/ Overhead and salary recovery - not included

## THE MAJOR REVENUE AREAS FOR VOLUNTEERING AUSTRALIA



# PARTNERS

*Volunteering Australia acknowledges and thanks our partners. The contribution of our partners has been important in assisting our work to further the cause of volunteering.*



THE 2008 / 2009 FINANCIAL  
STATEMENTS ARE AVAILABLE TO  
DOWNLOAD FROM OUR WEBSITE.

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