

24 July 2017



Senior Adviser
Individual and Indirect Tax Division
The Treasury
Langton Crescent
PARKES ACT 2600

Via: DGR@Treasury.gov.au

Cc: davidc@communitycouncil.com.au

Re: Tax Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) Reform Opportunities

To whom it may concern:

Volunteering Australia writes to endorse the Community Council for Australia (CCA) submission on Tax Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) Reform Opportunities. The CCA submission has been prepared in coordination with CCA members and other key organisations from the not-for-profit sector, including Volunteering Australia.

While current regulations relating to DGR require reform, it is the view of Volunteering Australia that the Treasury Discussion Paper doesn't provide a policy response to DGR eligibility processes. This lack of clarity is reflected in options provided in the Treasury Discussion Paper, distorts the definition of charity and imposes unnecessary red tape on the not-for-profit sector.

In particular, Volunteering Australia acknowledges the following CCA principles for reform:

- That the government should make a clear and definitive statement about the benefits of increasing DGR contributions
- Any reform of the DGR within a context that explicitly acknowledges the benefits as well as possible costs
- State that the purpose of providing DGR status is enhancing our communities
- The current process to obtain DGR status requires reform, favouring larger charities, and can be lengthy and expensive
- DGR should be directly associated with charitable status
- Purpose, not activity, should determine both charitable and DGR status
- Auditing of activities through accounts and other record keeping is a waste of time and effort
- Advocacy by charities should be encouraged, not restricted
- All existing registers for DGR should be phased out
- The role of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) should be expanded and enhanced to cover DGR
- No sunset clauses are required in relation to annual reporting to the ACNC
- Regular reviews of DGR status organisations are not necessary
- The reform of DGR concessions need to be based on considered policy goals and careful application across the whole charities sector
- Where charities engage in illegal activities, the rule of law should be applied

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Volunteering Australia would also like to highlight the important role of the ACNC in relation to the application of DGR, and the significant role that they should be playing in the charities and not-for-profit sector more broadly.

To read the Community Council for Australia submission on DGR Reform Opportunities please view the attachment.

Volunteering Australia is the peak body for volunteering working to advance volunteering in the Australian community. Our mission is to lead, strengthen, promote and celebrate volunteering in Australia. We work collectively with the seven State and Territory volunteering peak bodies to deliver national, state and local volunteering programs and initiatives in accordance with the Government's priorities.

Volunteering Australia is happy to provide further information on the matters raised above. To discuss this further please contact Ms Lavanya Kala, Policy and Communications Coordinator at Volunteering Australia at lavanya@volunteeringaustralia.org or (02) 6251 4060.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Adrienne Picone', written in a cursive style.

Ms Adrienne Picone
Chief Executive Officer
Volunteering Australia

