![volunteering australia]

NATIONAL SURVEY OF VOLUNTEERING ISSUES
2010

Volunteering Australia

National Survey of Volunteering Issues 2010

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Executive Summary

Volunteering Australia's National Survey of Volunteering Issues (the survey) has surveyed volunteers, volunteer-involving organisations and companies on known and emerging issues in volunteering in Australia over five consecutive years.

This year's survey introduces new areas of inquiry and investigates previous findings from different angles and in greater depth. 1,834 people responded to the survey, with 1320 fully completing it.

The survey findings highlight the contribution of volunteering to social inclusion in Australia. It demonstrates the strengths of volunteer-involving organisations in engaging, training and supporting volunteers to undertake important work.

The findings point to shifts in the way volunteers find volunteer work, the extent to which and how they want to be involved in decision making about their work and the strategic directions of the organisation, and differences in the methods of recognition that make them feel most valued and the methods used by organisations.

Overall, the survey found a high level of satisfaction among volunteers in relation to volunteer management systems in organisations. However, some specific areas for further development were identified, including role clarity and relationships with paid staff, volunteer appraisal/performance management processes, exit interview/feedback processes and return to work procedures for sick/injured workers.

This year's survey also identified specific areas for training/skill development for volunteers involved in Boards of Governance or Committees of Management.

From volunteer-involving organisations' perspective, allocation of resources from funders or donors specifically tied to recruiting and managing volunteers and the introduction of new approaches to promoting volunteering would make the greatest difference to increasing their capacity to involve volunteers.

The survey also found that corporate employee volunteering makes a positive contribution to volunteer-involving organisations, and that it appears to be underutilised across the not-for-profit sector. Access to more resources is important to volunteer-involving organisations to improve their experience of involving corporate volunteers.

The most common challenges companies face in relation to their employee volunteering programs are employees having the time to volunteer, finding meaningful and suitable volunteer opportunities, and the financial costs of the program.

These survey findings help to understand the changing social and economic environment, how volunteers, volunteer-involving organisations and companies are responding to these changes, and possibilities for the future.

Key findings

Social inclusion

- Volunteering contributed to an increased sense of belonging to their community for eight out of ten volunteers.
- Volunteering provided pathways or assistance to paid employment for a third of volunteers.

Finding volunteer work

- Childhood involvement in volunteering is an increasingly significant factor in finding volunteer work.

Engaging, supporting and keeping volunteers

- Difficulty attracting and recruiting suitable volunteers and limited organisational capacity to recruit, train and support volunteers were the most common significant barriers for volunteer-involving organisations.
- Allocation of resources from funders or donors specifically tied to recruiting and managing volunteers and introduction of new approaches to promoting volunteering would make the biggest difference to organisations' capacity to involve volunteers.

Participation in decision making

- Being involved in decisions about changes in their work and the organisation's procedures and policies through informal opportunities to provide input and feedback is important to most volunteers.

Recognition

- There are differences in the method of recognition preferred by the majority of volunteers and the methods of recognition organisations reported using most commonly.

Organisational performance – management systems and processes

- Whilst the majority of volunteers are satisfied with the management systems of organisations, there is potential to strengthen specific processes and procedures.

Impact of out of pocket expenses and background checks on volunteering

- A greater proportion of organisations reported out of pocket expenses and background checks impact negatively on the ability to involve volunteers compared to the proportion of volunteers who reported these factors affect their ability or desire to volunteer.
- The proportion of volunteers reporting that out-of-pocket expenses *do not reduce their ability/desire to volunteer* increased significantly between 2009 and 2010 from 48% to 80%.

National Standards for Involving Volunteers in Not-For-Profit Organisations

- The rate of full or partial implementation of the National Standards has increased since 2009.
- The majority of volunteer-involving organisations that are aware of and use the National Standards would support the development an industry accreditation in relation to the standards, either as they stand, or if they were revised.

Corporate employee volunteering

- Corporate employee volunteering makes a positive contribution to volunteer-involving organisations, and appears to be underutilised.
- Corporate employee volunteering is valued by the majority of volunteer-involving organisations that have taken part in these programs.
- Almost half of volunteer-involving organisations had not been involved in corporate employee volunteering programs.
- Having access to more resources to be able to involve and support corporate volunteers is important for volunteer-involving organisations in order to gain the most from the contribution of corporate volunteers.
- Allowing employees to make a contribution to the community was the most important factor for almost half of companies' in deciding to have an employee volunteering program.
- Employees having the time to volunteer, finding meaningful and suitable volunteer opportunities and the financial costs of the program were the most common challenges to companies' employee volunteering programs.

Context

The volunteering sector is experiencing unprecedented opportunities and challenges to play a greater role in civil society. Internationally, there is debate about the definition and scope of volunteering. The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) first report on the State of the World's Volunteerism to be launched on International Volunteer Day – December 5th, 2011 is expected to present an alternative vision of what volunteerism is and why it is important, compared to the one widely prevailing today.

The Australian Government has a commitment to a social inclusion agenda and has placed volunteering at the centre of its policy agenda. The vision of a socially inclusive society is one in which all Australians feel valued and have the opportunity to participate fully in the life of our society. Achieving this vision means that all Australians will have the resources, opportunities and capability to:

- Learn, by participating in education and training
- Work, by participating in employment or voluntary work, including family and carer responsibilities
- Engage, by connecting with people, using local services and participating in local civic, cultural and recreational activities, and
- Have a voice, in influencing decisions that affect them[1].

The Australian Government has also committed to delivering a National Volunteering Strategy in 2011, to mark the 10th anniversary of the United Nations' Year of Volunteers celebrated in 2001.

Changes in Australia's demographic profile and the emergence of new generations and communities of volunteers provide fertile ground for the transformation of volunteering in Australia through new approaches to volunteering.

Other sectors of society are also becoming more involved in volunteerism in Australia e.g., governments, corporations and educational institutes.

At the same time, volunteer-involving organisations are facing increasing challenges, particularly:

- changing needs and expectations of volunteers and community members who benefit from their activities;
- building the capacity of volunteers, the organisation's own ability to engage, support and value volunteers, and the capacity of the communities the organisation serves; and
- attracting and keeping the resources required to support volunteers, including meeting the increasing regulations required for organisations to manage risk and to be accountable to governments and the public.

The overall environment in the not-for-profit sector is one where formal volunteering through not-for-profit and government organisations is becoming increasingly professionalized and volunteers are considered part of workforce capacity. At the same time, more volunteering is also taking place in informal and less structured contexts in communities.

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[1] http://www.socialinclusion.gov.au/SIAgenda/Pages/Overview.aspx

The National Survey of Volunteering Issues (the survey) presents recent experiences of volunteers, volunteer-involving organisations and companies that support employee volunteering programs.

The survey is conducted annually to identify issues and trends relating to volunteering in Australia. Alongside other consultation and research, the findings inform Volunteering Australia's work.

This year's survey builds on the findings of previous years by introducing new areas of inquiry, as well as investigating the findings identified in previous years from different angles and/or in greater depth. This provides an opportunity to inform the continued growth and sustainability of volunteering in Australia.

About the survey

1,834 people responded to the survey – 1320 fully completed all the questions relating to their target group/section.

The total number of survey respondents this year was significantly lower than in 2009, and similar to surveys conducted prior to 2009. The 2009 the survey was open for two months compared to one month in 2010. This may explain the difference in the total number of responses. The overall completion rate, i.e. the total number of respondents who answered all the questions in their respective sections was 72%. This result is very similar to the 2009 survey.

The National Survey of Volunteering Issues is conducted using a subscription-based online survey provider. The sample represents a broad cross-section of volunteers and organisations in all sectors, from all states and territories of Australia, in metropolitan, regional and remote areas.

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.

Figure 1 illustrates each group as a proportion of the total pool of respondents.
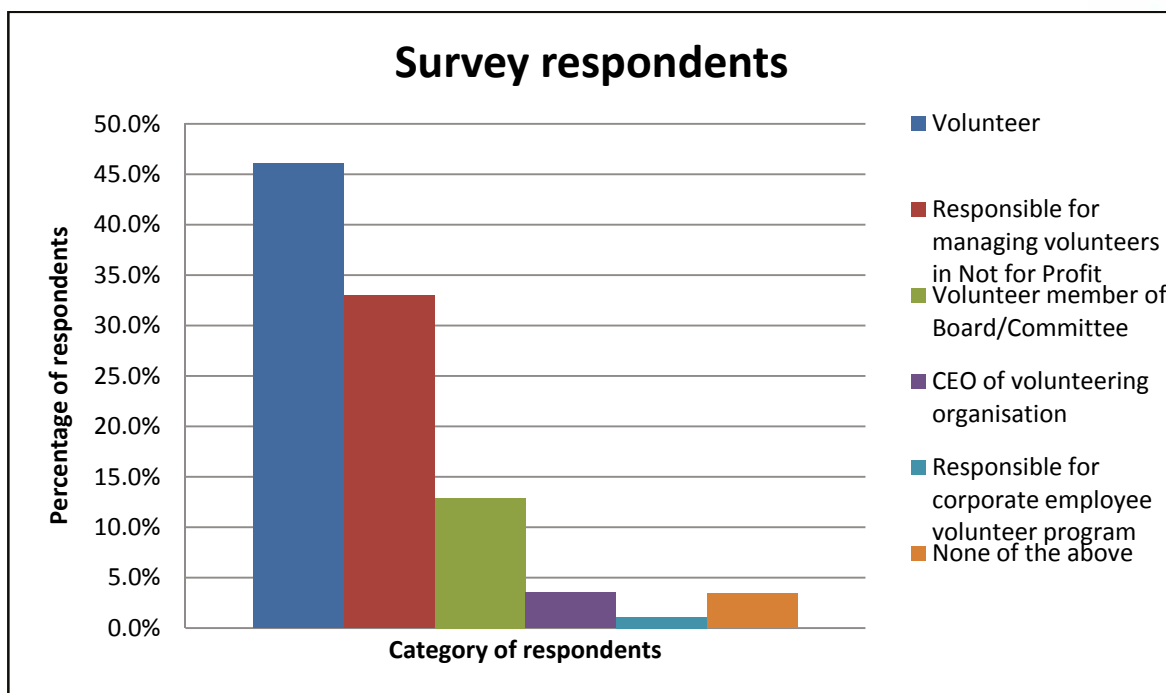
Figure 1

Open ended questions generated a rich source of qualitative data from volunteers and organisations about their experiences, needs, views, and inform this report of the findings. Further analysis, outside the scope of this report, will generate a series of supplementary reports on specific areas covered in the 2010 survey. The Methodology for the survey is discussed in greater depth at the end of this report.

Volunteer respondents' demographics

Women and men were fairly evenly represented in this year's survey sample (54% and 46% respectively). The survey sample was skewed toward midlife with the most common age group for respondents being 45-54 and 55-64 years of age. Those aged 18-24, under 18, and over 75 years represented the least common age groups.

The survey was predominantly completed by people who were born in Australia or other English speaking countries such as the UK and USA (89.1%). Only 6.7% of the survey respondents stated they speak a language other than English at home.

The majority of volunteers were employed full time or part time. Retirees represented 25.1% of volunteer respondents. The majority of volunteer respondents volunteer in Victoria or NSW. 38.1% said they volunteer in rural/regional or remote areas (Figure 2).

Where do you MAINLY volunteer?

Figure 2

The split between respondents volunteering with a government organisation or a not-for-profit organisation was approximately 25%/75%. The most common sectors in which respondents volunteer were emergency services, sport/physical recreation and community welfare. Almost 7 out of 10 people said the organisation where they volunteer has paid employees.

The majority of respondents have been volunteering with their main organisation for a number of years for approximately one day per week (Figure 3) with the most common commitment to volunteering being one day a week (Figure 4).

How long have you been volunteering with this organisation?

Figure 3

In relation to the MAIN organisation you volunteer with, on average, how often do you volunteer?

43.5% — Approximately 1 day per week
8.4% — Approximately 1 day per fortnight
6.3% — Approximately 1 day per month
12.2% — Approximately several times month
1.7% — One off event/short term project
27.8% — Other (please specify)
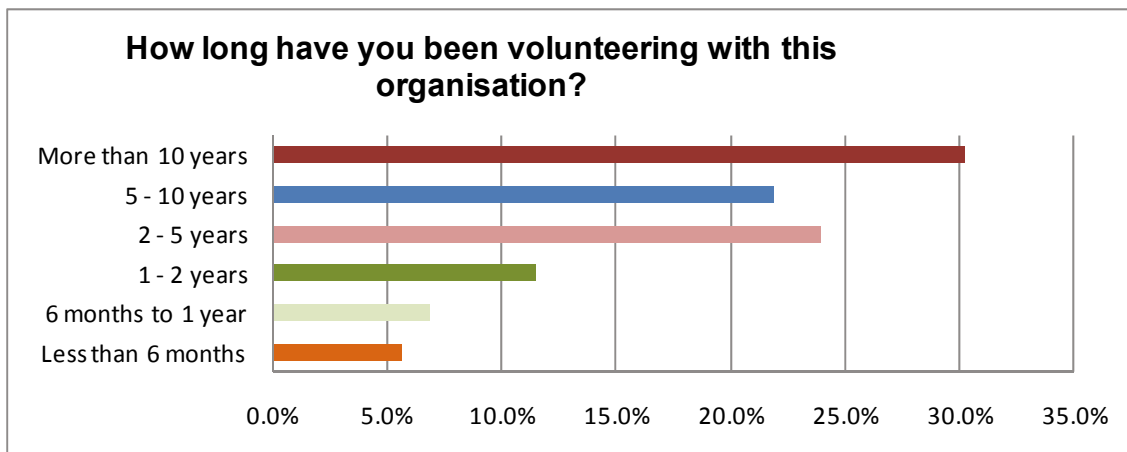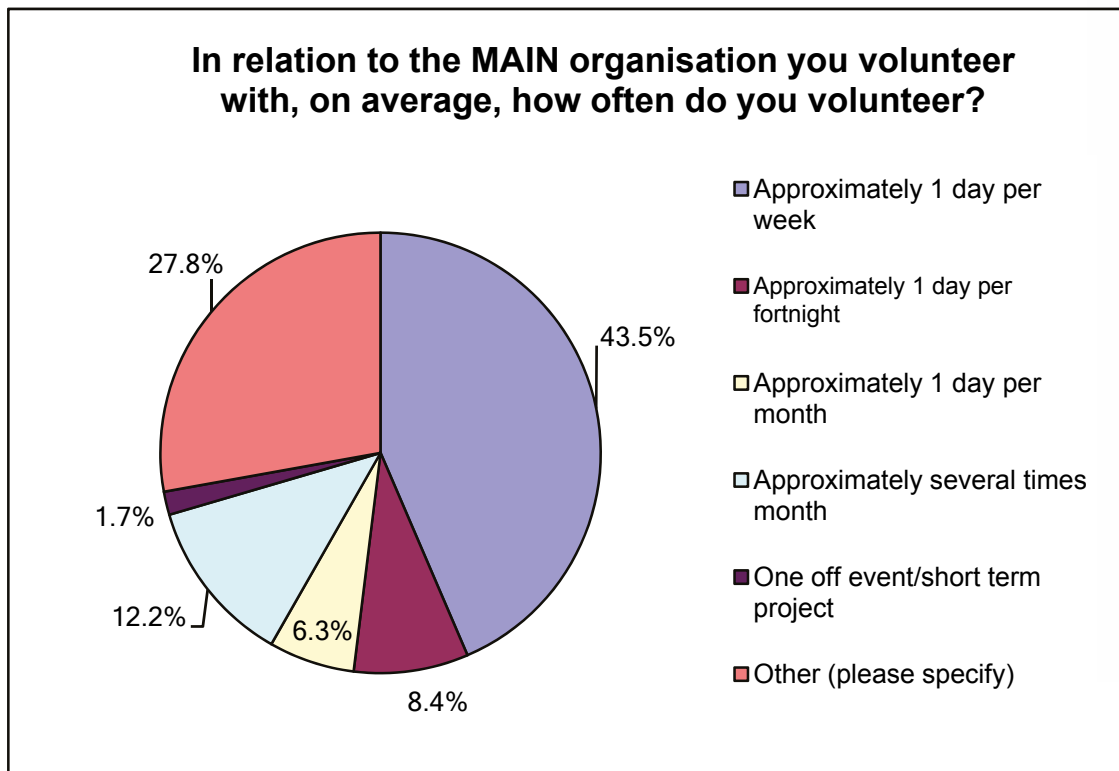
Figure 4

Compared with the previous year's survey, the 2010 survey found:

Differences

- The representation of genders was more balanced.
- The proportion of respondents holding a Bachelors degree or a post graduate qualification was almost 10% higher.
- The proportion of respondents in full or part time employment was almost 12% higher.
- The proportion of volunteers who volunteer mainly with an organisation that operates internationally was identified for the first time.
- The main organisation in which respondents volunteer that have paid employees was approximately 6% lower.
- A much higher proportion of respondents were involved in emergency response/safety and rescue work.
- Almost 8% fewer respondents had been volunteering with the main organisation for more than 10 years.
- A slightly higher proportion of respondents had been volunteering for less than 6 months.
- The proportion of people who volunteer with only one organisation decreased by 5.3%.

Similarities

- The structure of the age profile was similar with the proportion of people in the most common and least common age groups being slightly lower.
- The representation of respondents from rural and regional areas was very similar.
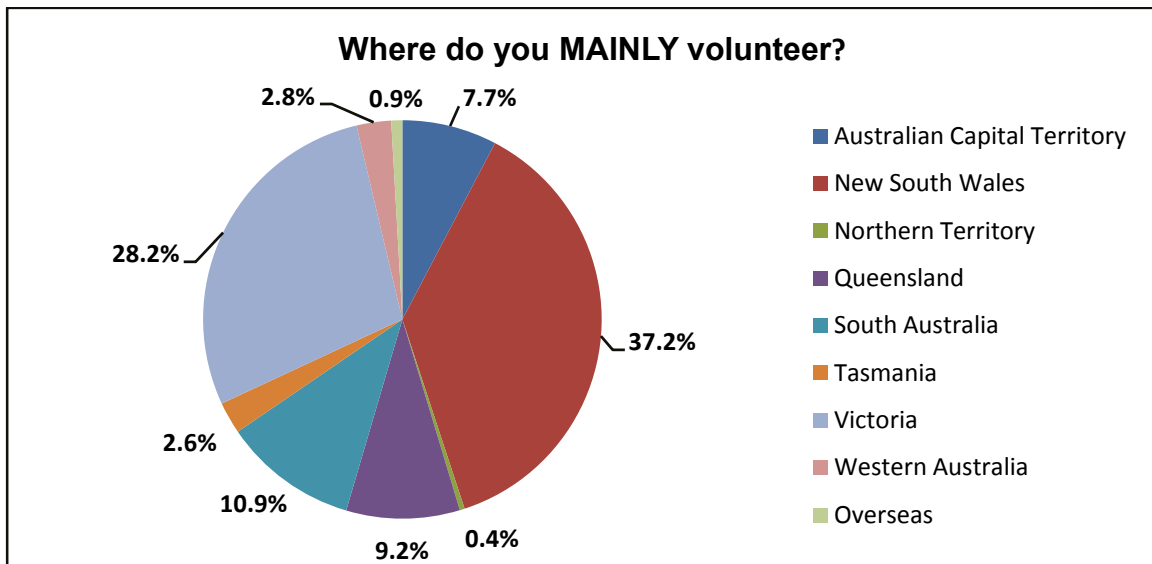
Organisational respondent demographics

The split between respondents from a government organisation and not-for-profit organisation was approximately 25%/75%. Almost 60% of organisational respondents operated from Victoria or NSW. Organisations operating in rural/regional or remote areas represented nearly 40% of the survey sample.

The most common sectors represented by organisational respondents were community welfare, health, emergency services and local government. Only 7.6% of organisations said they did not have any paid employees.

Organisations most commonly said they involve either less than 19 or more than 300 volunteers (Figure 5).

Number of ongoing volunteers in the organisation

Figure depicting percentage of respondents by number of ongoing volunteers: 1 to 19, 20-49, 50-99, 100-299, 300+.
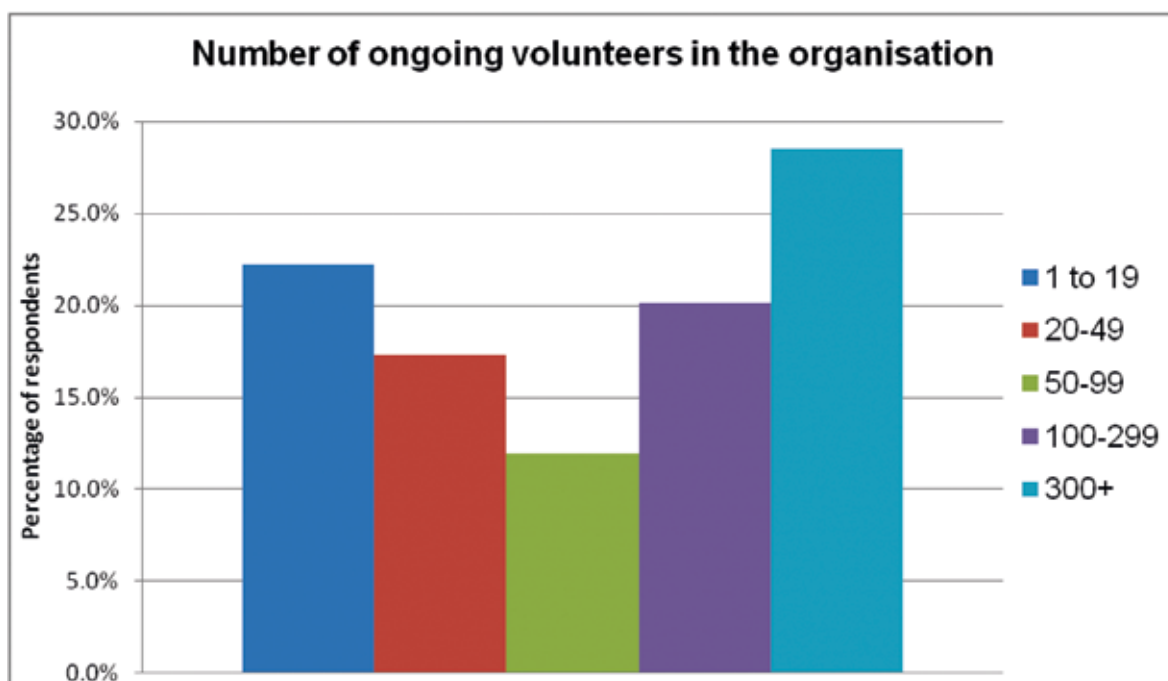
Figure 5

The distribution of volunteers organisational respondents said they involve, on an ongoing basis, is concentrated in the 45-54 and 55-64 year old age groups (Figure 6).

Almost 70% of organisational respondents said volunteers are involved in administrative/clerical work in their organisation. The next most frequently mentioned types of work undertaken by volunteers (mentioned by 30% or more organisations) were: committee/board member, funding raising/retail, visiting/social support/driving, education/tutoring/mentoring.

Organisational respondents were asked whether they involve volunteers from a range of specific groups. Whilst retired/older people were the most frequently mentioned group (85%), it is significant that more than half of the organisations who responded to this question said that they also involve young people, baby boomers, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and people with a disability as volunteers.
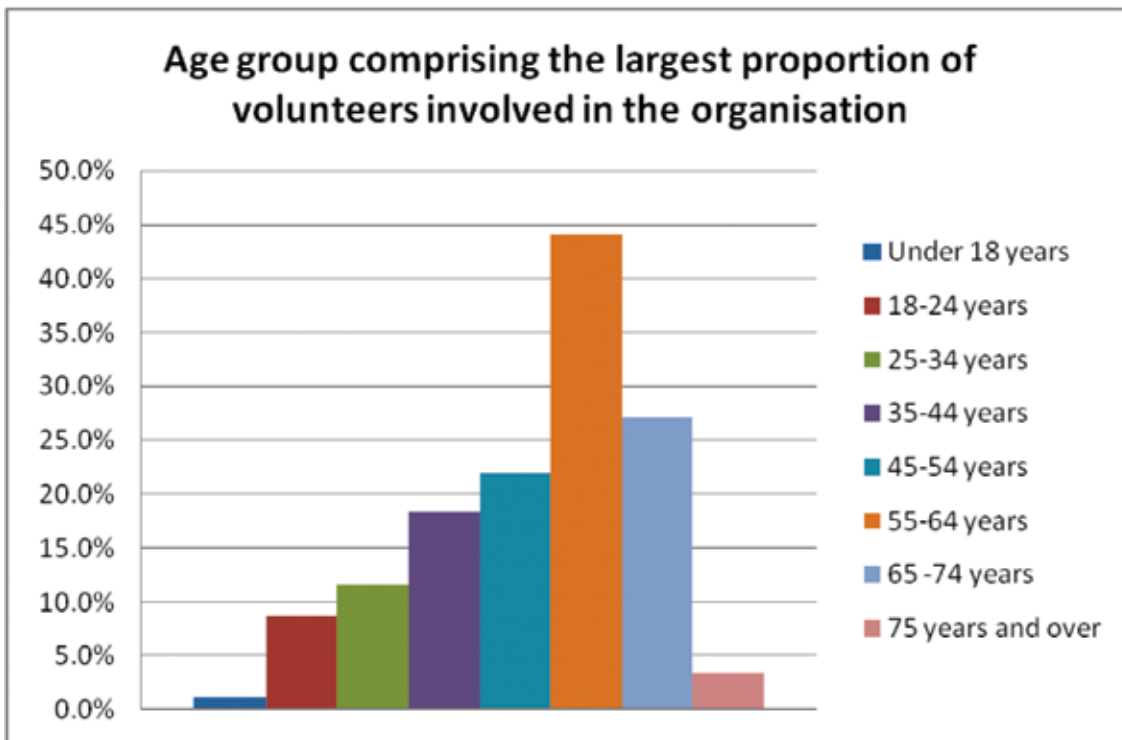
Figure 6

Compared with the previous year's survey, the 2010 survey found:

Differences

- A higher proportion of organisational respondents that operate in more than one state.
- Doubling of the proportion of respondents from Queensland and Tasmania (as a proportion of the total sample).
- A lower proportion of organisations from the community services sector.
- A higher proportion of organisations from the emergency services sector.

Similarities

- Consistency in the split between not-for-profit and government organisations that responded to the survey.
- A consistent trend in both the number of volunteers that organisations involve on an ongoing basis and the proportion of organisations reporting that the number of volunteers varies for seasonal or event purposes (episodic volunteering).
- Very similar profiles in the types of work organisations reported volunteers undertake in their organisation.
- A lower proportion of organisations reporting they involve volunteers who are young people, people from culturally diverse backgrounds and people with a disability and retired people.
- A higher proportion of organisations reporting they involve volunteers who are baby boomers.

Company respondents' profile

Twenty five companies in a range of industry sectors responded to the survey, the most common being in health and community services and finance and insurance. Over 60% of respondents stated they operate nationally, have 300 plus employees and have been in business for more than 20 years

Discussion of selected findings

Contribution to social inclusion in Australia

The survey indicates that volunteering provided:

- The majority of volunteer respondents with an increased sense of belonging to their community, opportunities to use their skills, to make a difference to the organisation's work and to learn and develop.
    - 83% of volunteers said their work as a volunteer has increased their sense of belonging to their community.

- Pathways or assistance to paid employment for a significant proportion of volunteers (one third of volunteer respondents).
    - 80% of volunteers said their volunteer role had provided them with opportunities to learn.
    - 26% of volunteers said the training they received as part of their voluntary work has helped them acquire an accreditation/qualification.
    - 18% said they have gained skills useful for current or future paid employment.

Compared to the previous year's survey, in 2010, a higher proportion of volunteer respondents had accessed opportunities for skills development that were made available by the organisation where they volunteer. Nearly 10% more volunteers reported they had taken part in formal training for volunteers.

Volunteerism contributes to inclusion in our society. It can help reduce feelings of personal isolation, offer people skills, social contacts, support a greater sense of self worth and challenge the stereotypes we have about different social groups.

When asked how their sense of belonging to their community was different as a direct result of volunteering, responses included:

> *'I feel that they accept me for who I am and what I am doing. They value my work, but above all accept me and what I can offer them. As a person with a disability this is rare'.*

'I relocated from Melbourne to a country town, knowing very few people. Volunteer work has helped me fit into the community, feel that I belonged, helped filled a void, make friends and know that I was doing a worthwhile job in helping the community'.

> *'I have met a wide cross section of people and I have come to understand why people are different and how communities can work together to make everyone's life better'.*

'I have the opportunity to interact, learn from and assist an older person in our community I would not have met otherwise'.

However, the survey findings also highlight that there are many motivations for and views about the purpose of volunteering:

'I volunteer because I see a need and am proud of what I do and achieve within the community…
Learning and growing in the volunteering role is not the point. It is not a career, it is just what you do'.

Finally, not all volunteering provided a positive experience and an increased sense of community belonging, health and well being.

'The stress of it all, especially when computers are unreliable and other people are away. These take their toll on my health and I often feel I can't keep volunteering – it's just too much'.

> *'But it has encroached on my time of retirement – would be better to cut back on the commitment needed to do the job'.*

'Permanently injured during voluntary work'.

Volunteering as an important part of a democratic society

Volunteering is an important part of democratic society where people have the opportunity to participate in how their community is shaped.

60% of volunteers said they 'always' feel their work makes a difference to the organisation they volunteer with and what it is trying to achieve. Another 37% felt this was 'sometimes' the case.

'Volunteering to help restore and conserve local bush land has shown that I care about my neighbourhood. I feel part of it and I am keen to work cooperatively with other concerned neighbours and my local council to make positive changes to our environment'.

> *'I feel I am more committed to my community and what happens'.*

'Have improved life for the town and made my life better as an overall consequence'.

Engagement of volunteers

The most common method of finding volunteer work continued to be 'through the recommendation of a friend or relative' (28.7%). However, childhood involvement in volunteering is emerging as an increasingly significant factor (Figure 7).

Compared to the previous year's survey, in 2010, the proportion of respondents who reported finding their current volunteer work 'as a result of my childhood involvement or membership' doubled.

It is also significant to note a 6% decrease in respondents who reported finding volunteer work through advertising by an organisation e.g. community noticeboard or newsletter.
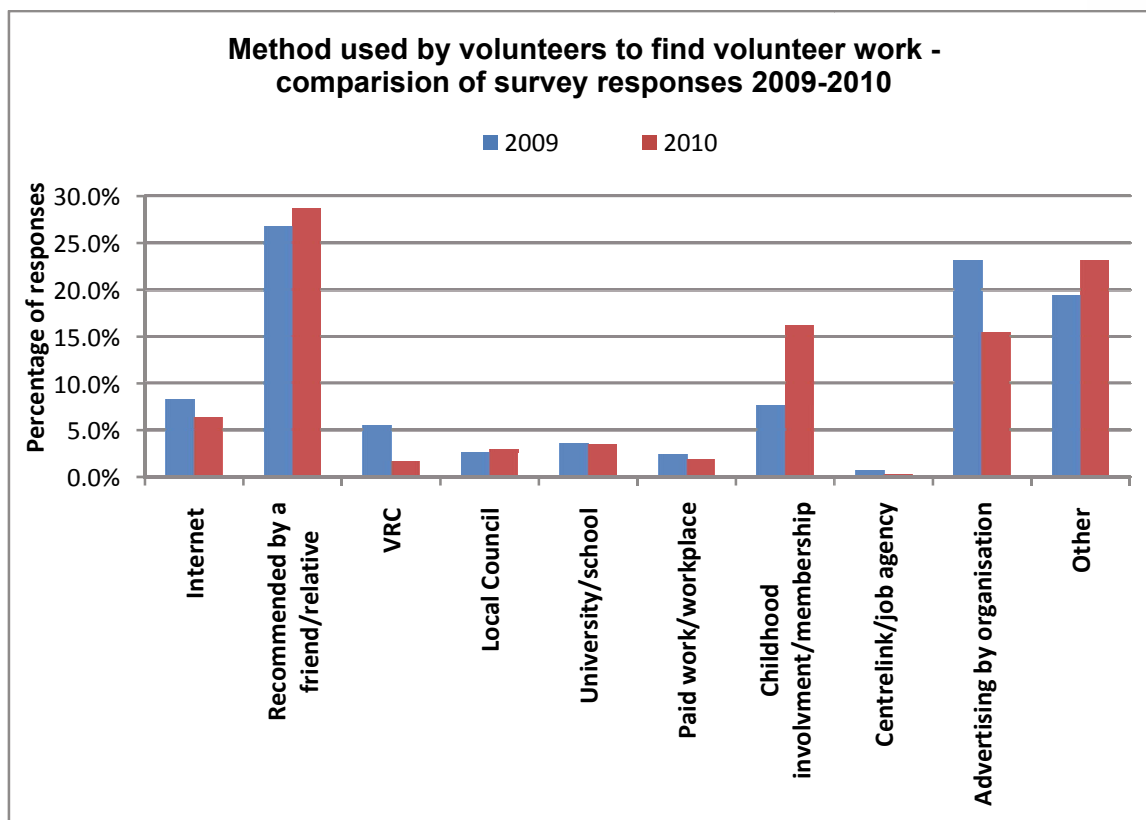
Figure 7

'Knowing that my contribution would make a difference' continues to be the most common reason that is most important to volunteers' decision to start volunteering (39.7%) followed by a 'personal belief for a particular cause' (22.5%).

These two most commonly given reasons remained the same when volunteers were asked what was most important to their volunteering *now* i.e. the decision to continue volunteering.

Volunteer participation in decision making

Decisions that affect volunteers and their work

Whilst the survey found that 8-15% of volunteers are not interested in participating in decisions that affect them or their work, or influencing the strategic directions of the organisation, the findings also indicate that:

- The majority of volunteers are interested in taking part in these aspects of the organisation they volunteer with, and some want greater opportunities to do so.
- Approximately 1 in 4 volunteers reported they either do not have any opportunity to participate in decision making and would like to, or have some opportunity but would like to have more (25.1%).

In the 2010 survey, volunteers were asked for the first time about the types of decisions in which they felt it important to participate and the best ways for their organisation to involve them in these decisions.

The most frequently mentioned decisions in which volunteers felt it important to participate were:

- 'Changes in the organisation's procedures and policies' (59.2% and 54.8% respectively), followed by 'changes to my role' (48%); and
- 'Decisions that affect my immediate working environment'.

The most frequently mentioned 'best' methods volunteers felt organisations could use to involve them in important decisions that affect their work were 'Informal opportunities to provide input and feedback' (55.6%) and 'Participation and or representation in formal consultation such as committees and surveys' (49.2%).

In 2010, organisations were asked for the first time *how* they involve volunteers in decision making and the benefits, and reasons for not involving volunteers in decision making.

The most frequently mentioned way organisational respondents provide opportunities for volunteers to participate in decisions that affect them and their work was 'informal opportunities to provide input and feedback' (85.2%).

The most common *benefit* organisations stated is achieved by providing volunteers with decision making about issues that affect them or their work was 'having a greater sense of ownership of and empowerment over their work' (91.2%).

The survey findings suggest there is potential to provide greater support to organisations in relation to involving volunteers in decisions that affect them and their work.

One in three organisations reported they do not provide opportunities for volunteers to participate in decision making reported either that they had not thought about it or had tried in the past and found it too difficult.

Influencing the big picture of the organisation

Whilst the majority of volunteers (47%) said they have enough opportunities to influence the strategic directions and actions of the organisation where they volunteer:

- Approximately 1 in 3 (35.5%) of volunteers either do not have any opportunity to influence the organisation's strategic directions and would like to, or have some opportunity but would like to have more.

A small proportion of volunteers are not interested in influencing the strategic directions of the organisation (14.5%). These findings are very similar to those of the 2009 survey.

In 2010, volunteers were asked for the first time about the 'best' ways that organisations where they volunteer can provide opportunities to influence the strategic directions of the organisation. The most frequently mentioned preferred ways were:

- 'Participation and or representation in formal consultation such as committees, surveys' (53.5%) and 'Informal opportunities to provide input and feedback (48.4%).

Preferred and actual ways of recognising volunteers

Being accepted as a valuable team member was the most frequently mentioned form of recognition that volunteers said was most important to them feeling valued (38%), while a personal thank you was the form of recognition most organisations reported giving volunteers most often (69%).

In the last three months, approximately 1 in 4 volunteers have received recognition in a way that is most important to them either 'once a month' or 'once' (29% and 25% respectively).

These findings do not imply there is a one-size fits all. Rather they affirm the importance of working toward finding the right match between how each volunteer needs to be recognised and the suite of methods the organisation uses in its day-to-day practice.

Barriers to involving volunteers

The available supply of suitable volunteers and limited organisational capacity were the most common barriers to involving volunteers reported by organisations (28.5% and 28.4%).

The responses of the five sectors that completed the greatest number of surveys were analysed to identify any differences in the barriers faced by sectors.

The supply of suitable volunteers represented the greatest barrier relative to all other barriers for the sport and recreation sector (Figure 8).

The survey indicates this barrier is most common for organisations in Queensland and the Northern Territory (Figure 8).

Limited organisational capacity was relevant to a significant proportion of organisations in each of the five sectors analysed. However, it was reported most frequently compared to other barriers by organisations in local government and health.

The survey found this barrier most common for organisations Western Australia, Northern Territory and NSW (Figure 9).

Most significant barrier to involving volunteers in your organisation by sector

Legend:
- Supply of suitable volunteers
- Turnover - difficulty keeping suitable/experienced volunteers
- Succession planning to replace volunteers
- Limited organisational capacity
- None of the above
- Other
- Unsure/DK

X-axis: Sector (Community welfare, Emergency services, Health, Sport/Rec, Local Gov't)

Y-axis: Percentage of responses
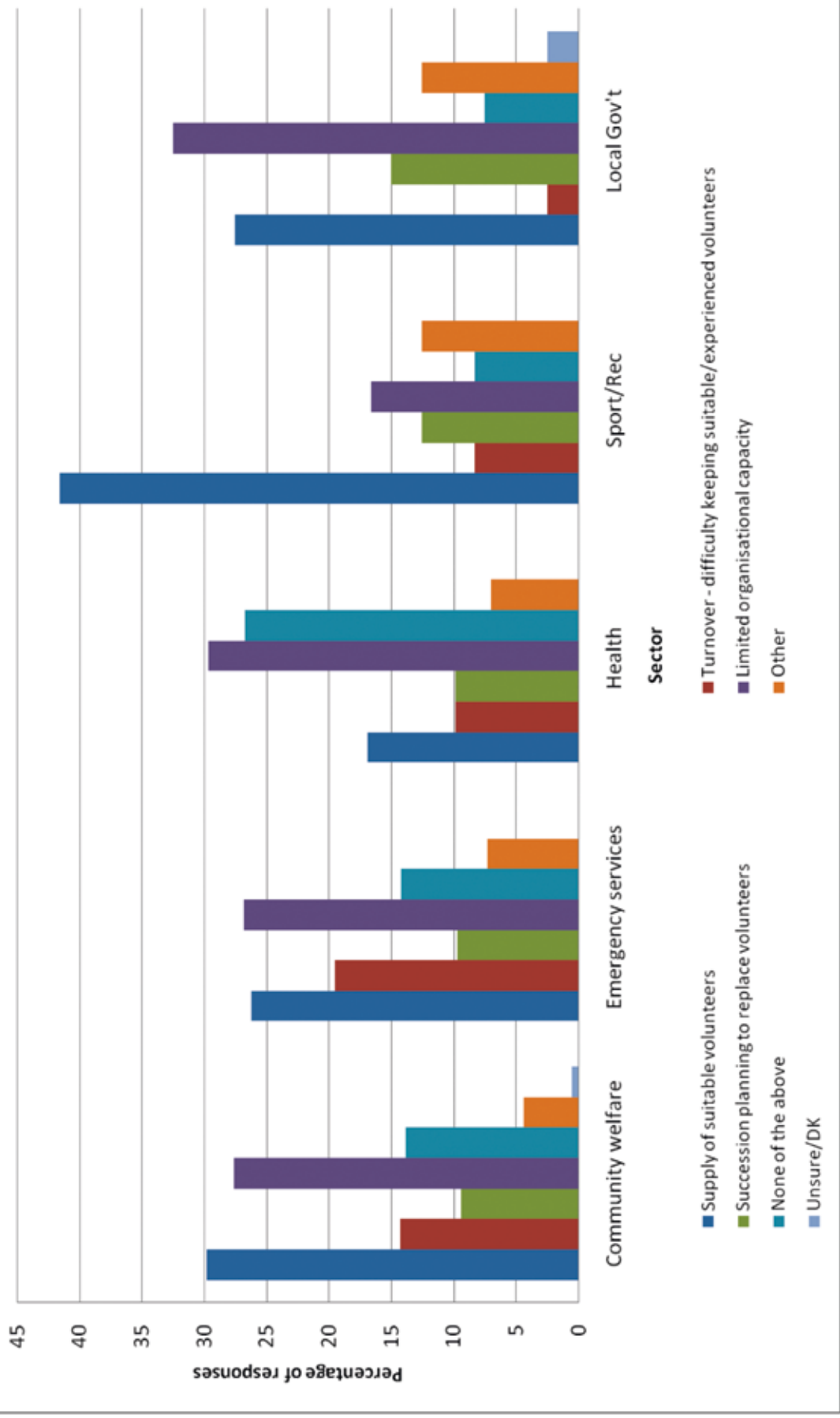
Figure 8

Most significant barrier to involving volunteers in the organisation by state
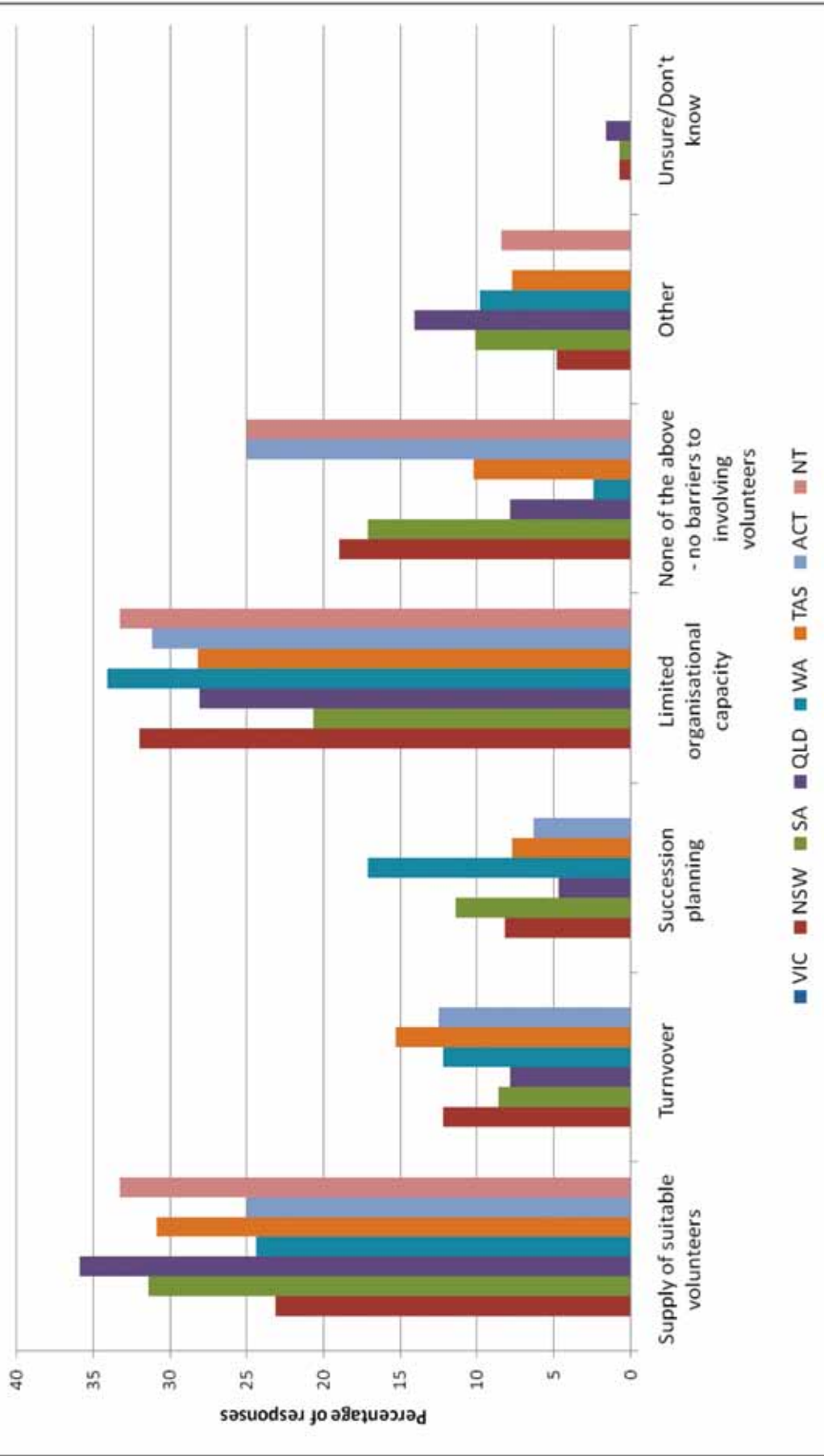
Figure 9

Strategies for enhancing volunteer engagement, involvement and retention

In the 2010 survey, organisations were asked for first time to nominate the strategy that would make the biggest difference to their capacity to involve and support volunteers.

The most frequently cited strategies by organisations were allocation of resources from funders or donors specifically tied to recruiting and managing volunteers and introducing new/different approaches to promoting volunteering in the community' (44.8% and 28.9% organisations respectively).

The responses of the five sectors that completed the greatest number of surveys were analysed to identify any differences in the strategies that would make the biggest difference.

Allocation of resources from funders or donors specifically tied to recruiting and managing volunteers was cited most frequently by organisations in health and community services (Figure 10).

New/different approaches to promoting volunteering in the community was cited as a strategy by organisations in local government and sport and recreation.
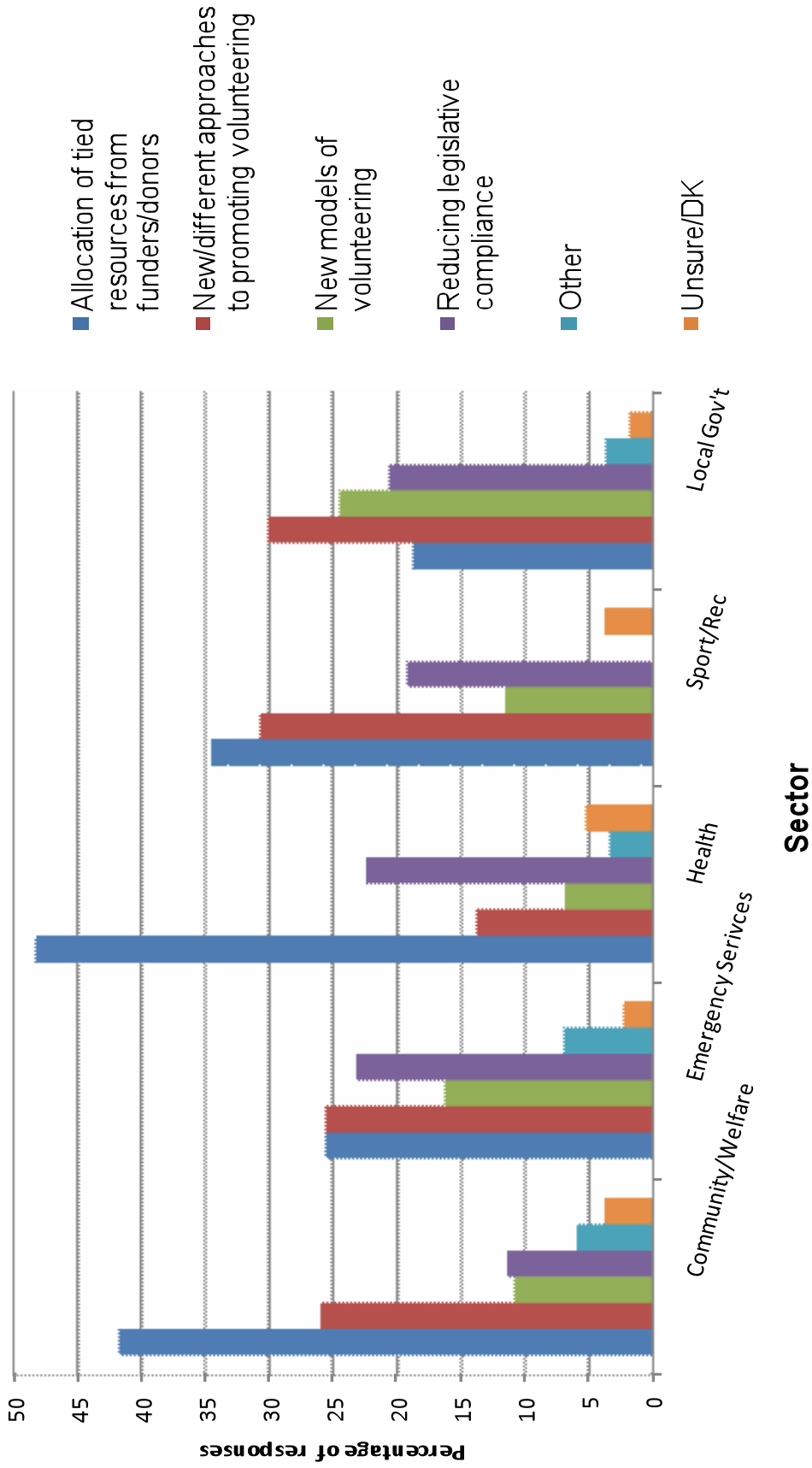
Figure 10

Organisational support of volunteers

The majority of volunteers reported being satisfied with most areas of volunteer management systems in their main organisation. Areas for improvement indicated by volunteer responses are discussed below.

Management processes

Satisfaction with specific management processes was lowest among volunteers for: volunteer appraisal/performance management processes, exit interview/feedback processes; return to work procedures for sick/injured volunteers.

Responses to the question about confusion/conflict between the roles of volunteers and paid staff indicates this area could be strengthened.

Role clarity and relationships with paid staff

Role clarity and relationships between volunteers and paid staff was a concern for a significant proportion of volunteers. 32.1% who work in organisations with paid employees reporting they had experienced or witnessed confusion or conflict between the roles of volunteers and paid employees.

The proportion of volunteers who had experienced or witnessed role confusion or conflict in 2010 was almost double that reported in 2009. The most frequently mentioned nature for this confusion or conflict was 'different priorities/goals of paid employees and volunteers' (61.4%).

Experiencing or witnessing confusion or conflict between the roles of volunteers and paid employees in the main organisation where the volunteer work is undertaken was most commonly reported by volunteers involved in emergency services (Table 1).

Table 1

Sector of the main organisation the volunteer works in	Have you experienced or witnessed any confusion or conflict between the roles of volunteers and paid employees in your organisation (volunteer responses)						Total
	Yes		No		Not applicable		
		%		%		%	
Arts/heritage	11	32.3	10	29.4	13	38.2	34
Business/professional/union	1	25	3	75	0	0	4
Community/welfare	45	26.7	101	60.1	22	13.1	168
Education/training/youth	29	32.2	50	55.5	11	12.2	90
Emergency services	121	**53**	95	41.6	12	5.3	228
Environment/animal welfare	8	17.7	24	53.4	13	28.9	45
Foreign/international	1	14.3	3	42.8	3	42.8	7
Health	6	20	20	66.6	4	13.4	30
Law/justice/political	3	15	17	85	0	0	20
Parenting/children/youth	8	30	18	66.6	1	3.7	27
Religious	5	23.8	13	61.9	3	14.2	21
Sport/physical	35	21.1	47	28.3	84	50.6	166
Other/recreation/interest	2	22.1	5	55.5	2	22.3	9
Volunteering infrastructure e.g. VRC	3	13.6	18	81.8	1	4.5	22
Local government	4	**36.5**	7	63.5	0	0	11
Other	18	34.6	25	48	9	17.3	52
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The 2010 survey, asked volunteers for their ideas about what their organisation could do that would make the greatest difference to strengthening the relationship between volunteers and paid employees. A range of suggestions were offered around the following themes:

- Attitudinal and cultural change
- Management skills and systems
- Economic and industrial change
- Governance.

Comments which illustrate each of these themes are provided.

Attitudinal and cultural change strategies

'Make them realise that without the vollies….the service would not exist. A few years at uni is no match for 30 years full on experience'.

'Recognise that we are volunteers and that we DON'T have to give our time to an organisation that doesn't know how to treat volunteers. We may not be paid workers but we sure as hell deserve to be treated with respect…'

'Recognise that we have jobs, family and interests outside of the service that also take up our time'. 'Often they forget that many vols work for living just like they do and that being expected to keep taking time off work to participate in events can cause conflict with the volunteer's employer'.

'All staff should be made to volunteer as a support member so they understanding EXACTLY what volunteers have to deal with and issues around the lack of support…'

'Volunteers accepting they are non-renumerated employees and being professional e.g. not nit picky and demanding'.

Management strategies

> *'More consultation and communication'.*

'Educate full time employees to the motivation, skill levels and capabilities of volunteers and conduct more combined activities. Develop a 'buddy' system during deployments which combines volunteers and paid staff in the field. Working alongside each other more often and not just in emergency situations'.

> *'Clear lines of responsibility, communication to ensure duties are clear and concise and do not get confused with volunteer work'.*

'Stop taking responsibility and authority away from qualified volunteers. Stop treating them as children'.

> *'Get rid of paid employees and have volunteers who know the requirements of the volunteers'.*

'Employ more paid staff to sort out the big picture problems'.

Industrial/economic strategies

> *'Remove the fear that paid staff have that the volunteers could/would replace them'.*

'Pay us. 'Pay everyone'.

Governance strategies

'Having a board of Trustees to keep the national Convenor in check'.

Occupational health and safety

Approximately 1 in 4 volunteers reported they had not been trained or briefed on occupational health and safety (OH&S) in their organisation (28.4%).

There has been an increase of almost 20% in the proportion of volunteers who said they had not been trained of briefed on OH&S in 2010 compared to the 2009 survey.

Analysis of the findings in the 2010 survey about briefing and training of volunteers in OH&S identified differences between some states and sectors (Tables 2 and 3).

New South Wales had the greatest number and proportion of its volunteers who reported not having been trained or briefed on OH&S (36.4%).

South Australia had the greatest proportion of its volunteers reporting that they are updated on OH&S regularly, with QLD having the greatest proportion of volunteers being trained or briefed on OHS during orientation.

Table 2

Where do you MAINLY volunteer?	Have you been trained or briefed on occupational health and safety in your organisation?								Total
	Yes - during orientation	%	Yes - updated on OH&S regularly	%	No	%	Unsure/ Don't know	%	
Australian Capital Territory	27	38.5	31	44.3	11	1	1	1.4	70
New South Wales	84	27.8	90	29.8	110	**36.4**	18	5.9	302
Northern Territory	1	25	1	25	1	25	1	25	4
Queensland	36	**45.5**	24	30.4	14	17.7	5	6.3	79
South Australia	30	31.2	54	**56.5**	11	11.5	1	1	96
Tasmania	9	34.5	12	46	5	19.2	0	0	26
Victoria	51	20	110	43	82	32	13	5	256
Western Australia	10	40	7	28	8	32	0	0	25
Overseas	2	28.4	1	14.2	4	**57.3**	0	0	7
									865

The sport and recreation and 'other' sectors had the greatest number and proportion of their volunteers who reported not having been trained or briefed on OH&S.

The emergency services and health sectors had the greatest proportion of their volunteers reporting that they are updated on OH&S regularly, with law/justice/political sector having the greatest proportion of volunteers being trained or briefed on OHS during orientation.

Table 3

In which of these sectors does the MAIN organisation you volunteer with fit?	Have you been trained or briefed on occupational health and safety in your organisation?								Total
	Yes - during orientation	%	Yes - updated on OH&S regularly	%	No	%	Unsure/ Don't know	%	
Arts/heritage	11	32.4	8	23.6	14	**41**	1	2.9	34
Business/professional	0	0	0	0	3	75	1	25	4
Community/welfare	57	35.2	39	24	57	35.2	9	5.5	162
Education/training/youth	31	37.8	24	29.2	24	29.4	3	3.6	82
Emergency services	44	19.9	167	**75.5**	9	4.1	1	0.4	221
Environment/animal welfare	15	35.7	11	26.2	12	28.6	4	9.5	42
Foreign/international	2	28.6	2	28.6	2	28.6	1	14.2	7
Health	8	30.7	11	**42.3**	7	26.9	0	0	26
Law/justice/political	13	**68.4**	3	15.8	2	10.5	1	5.3	19
Parenting/children/youth	12	50	6	25	4	16.6	2	8.3	24
Religious	4	25	8	50	4	25	0	0	16
Sport/physical recreation	23	16.5	27	19.3	77	**55**	13	9.2	140
Other recreation/interest	4	57.2	1	14.3	0	0	2	28.5	7
Volunteering infrastructure e.g. VRC	9	40.9	4	18.1	9	40.9	0	0	22
Local government	3	30	4	40	3	30	0	0	10
Other	14	28.6	15	30.7	19	**39**	1	2	49
									865

Access to relevant information about occupational health and safety is an issue for volunteers and organisations with approximately one third in each group saying they require more information about this issue or had not sought information about this issue.

The topic organisations most commonly said they need about workplace safety for volunteers that they were not able to access was 'Model OHS Law Review – what it means for volunteers in my organisation'.

The most common methods volunteers cited as the best ways for them to access information about workplace safety were:

- In writing through simple and clearly articulated policies rather than relying on verbal communication only.
- Being made visible to everyone where the volunteering takes place.
- Online via the internet.
- As part of mandatory orientation and formal training.
- Through a nominated volunteer OHS representative and face to face briefings with a designated contact person.

The following selected comments illustrate the diverse attitudes, experiences and ideas volunteers have about OH& S.

'I worked with the volunteer coordinator in an investigation on OH&S for volunteers. We consulted with volunteers and other interested parties and produced a document which outlined the risks and responsibilities for each category in our organisation. This was accepted by management and incorporated in their OH&S Manual. A summary of this was inserted in our volunteer newsletter for information to all volunteers'.

'In my international context, this information is not in place, I could access the information through the web, but it is not within the organisational context'.

'As a rescue organisation it is difficult to do a risk assessment when someone is dying... let's do a dynamic risk assessment at the time and a more specific one when we have time'.

'Not enough is done to streamline the acquisition of information. There are aspects of modern OH&S proceedures that generate huge amounts of work for volunteers for very little safety benefit'.

'As a 100% volunteer based group it can be difficult to access information or even know what information to access. Policy development around a range of issues is very difficult when you are unsure what policies you should have in place or where to find sample policies to open discussions at a local level'.

'OHS is important but cannot be a primary concern of many, say, sporting organisations - there needs to be help from Govt who need to realise the benefits of volunteers in various organisations & ensure that they are given resources to cope with OHS internally'.

'No one way is best. Needs a scatter gun approach. Emails, website, letters, oral confirmation during training sessions'.

Volunteer involvement in governance

Approximately 70% of organisations reported they provide voluntary members of Boards/Committees with induction/orientation. However, only about half provide training in areas relating to the roles and responsibilities of Boards/Committees.

The areas volunteers and organisations said that Boards/Committee members need to increase their knowledge and skills were different:

- Volunteers: 'legal compliance', 'risk management' and 'financial management/reporting'.
- CEOs/volunteer managers: 'succession planning for retiring/resigning Board/Committee members' and 'Fundraising and/or marketing'.

Impact of public policy on volunteering

Volunteer and organisational respondents were asked to rate each of six areas of public policy by the level of impact they had experienced in their volunteering role in the past 12 months e.g. 'positive impact', 'no impact', 'negative impact' or 'unsure'. For organisations, the impact was specifically in relation to their ability to attract, recruit, train or retain volunteers.

The areas of public policy listed were:

- Occupational health and safety (OH&S)
- Insurance
- Compensation for loss or injury as a volunteer
- Out of pocket expenses incurred through volunteering
- Understanding visa requirements around volunteering for volunteers from overseas
- Background checking such as working with children checks/police checks
- Equal Opportunity or anti-discrimination.

For each of these public policy areas, 49-63% of volunteer respondents reported that there had been 'no impact' on them in the past 12 months.

Within the relatively small proportion of volunteers who reported *negative impacts*, the:

- most frequently reported areas were out of pocket expenses (13.1%), occupational health and safety (12.5%) and insurance (11.2%).

When asked which area of public policy had the *most negative impact* on their volunteering, the:

- most frequently reported areas were out of pocket of expenses (9.6%), occupational health and safety (9.1%) and experiencing or witnessing discrimination and/or harassment while volunteering (8.3%).

The overall trends in the findings were very similar for the same questions that were asked in the 2009 survey.

For each of these public policy areas listed above, 35-55% of organisational respondents reported that there had been 'no impact' on them in the past 12 months.

The frequency of positive impact was higher than negative impacts reported against each of these areas.

Within the proportion of organisations that reported negative impacts, the most frequently reported areas were:

- out of pocket expenses (23.6%), background checking (18.7%) and occupational health and safety (14.9%).

When asked which area of public policy had the most negative impact on their organisation, the most frequently reported areas were:

- out of pocket of expenses (28.3%), and background checking (24.8%).

Out of pocket expenses

Volunteers and organisations were asked whether they are offered or provide reimbursement for out of pocket expenses and whether these expenses impact on their capacity to volunteer or to recruit volunteers.

A significantly lower proportion of volunteers are aware of the availability of reimbursement of out of pocket expenses compared to the proportion of organisations that say they offer such reimbursement.

Whilst approximately 80% of organisations reported they *reimburse* volunteers out of pocket *expenses*, *in full or in part,* one in three (33%) volunteers reported that their organisation does not offer to reimburse any out of pocket expenses, and one in ten (10%) of volunteers said they do not know whether their organisation reimburses out of pocket expenses or not.

There are a number of possible explanations for this result:

- gaps in organisations' communication with volunteers about the availability of reimbursement of out of pocket expenses;
- volunteers being given information about reimbursement of out of pocket expenses and not 'hearing'/receiving or retaining the information;
- issues with the methodology of the survey i.e. volunteers respondents not necessarily being involved with the same organisations that responded to the survey; or
- a combination of the above.

Secondly, the findings of the 2010 survey indicate the level of concern in the volunteering sector among organisations about the impact of out of pocket expenses on volunteering is greater than the proportion of volunteers for whom out of pocket expenses reduce the capacity to volunteer.

Out of pocket expenses was the area of public policy that organisations cited most frequently as having *the greatest negative impact* on their ability to involve and retain volunteers (approximately 25%).

There has been a significant increase between 2009 and 2010 in the proportion of volunteers reporting that out-of-pocket expenses *do not reduce their ability /desire to volunteer,* rising from 48% in 2009 to 80% in 2010.

This finding may in part reflect the methodology of the survey being limited to people who are already involved in and committed to volunteering. It does not engage people who do not currently volunteer, but have looked into volunteering in the past. The survey does not provide information about the proportion of people who decided not to proceed with volunteering because of having to incur and claim reimbursement of out of pocket expenses (and not wanting to) or because the organisations in which they were interested in volunteering did not provide reimbursement.

Background checks

The proportion of volunteers who were required to have both a police and working with children check increased by approximately 10%. Of those who were required to have a working with children check, those who were satisfied with the process in their state rose by approximately 7% from the previous year (72.8%) .

The degree of concern among organisations in the volunteer sector that background checks reduce or present a significant barrier to volunteer involvement indicated in the organisational responses is not supported by the volunteer responses to the questions about this issue in the 2010 survey.

Almost 25% of organisations nominated background checking as the area of public policy that had the greatest negative impact on their ability to attract and retain volunteers in the past 12 months. This negative impact was second to out-of-pocket expenses.

However, in 2010 there was an increase in the proportion of volunteers who said that the need to obtain a police or working with children check *does not* affect their ability or desire to volunteer compared to 2009 (93.6% and 88.8% respectively).

Implementation of the National Standards

In 2010, the rate of full or partial implementation of the National Standards for Involving Volunteers in Not-for-Profit organisations ('National Standards') amongst organisations was 70-80% for each of the standards.

This compares favourably to the 49.1% of organisations that reported full or partial implementation of the National Standards in the previous year.

Approximately 30% of volunteer respondents said they were aware of the National Standards.

The National Standards that were reported most frequently as not having been implemented by organisations are: 8. Continuous Improvement; 6. Service Delivery; 5. Training and Development.

Revision of the National Standards and Accreditation

There is a fairly even spit in the views of organisations about whether the National Standards need to be revised or changed (25.9% yes/28.8% no).

The *most important change* to the Standards mentioned most frequently is to 'ensure the Standards reflect the legislative frameworks relevant to the entire range of sectors that involve volunteers' (46.4%).

The majority of organisations that are aware of and use the National Standards indicated they would support the development of an industry accreditation in relation to the National Standards either as they stand, or if the existing National Standards were revised.

Changes in the level of volunteer contribution to organisations

67.6% of organisational respondents measure the contribution of volunteers. The most common measures of volunteer contribution used by organisations are the number of volunteers and number of hours volunteering (85.9% and 80% of organisations respectively).

Of those organisations that reported measuring the contribution of volunteering, 43.0% had experienced an increase in the average number of hours per week contributed by volunteers and 36.2% remained about the same (Figure 11).

Increases in the level of volunteer contribution to organisations was most frequently reported in the following sectors: religious, emergency services, parenting/children and youth and sport and recreation and health (Figure 12).

Volunteer contribution decreased in 10.3% of organisations.

Average number of hours per week contributed by volunteers in 2009/10 compared to the previous year

9.6%

43.9%

36.2%

10.3%

- Increased
- Decreased
- Remained about the same
- Not applicable
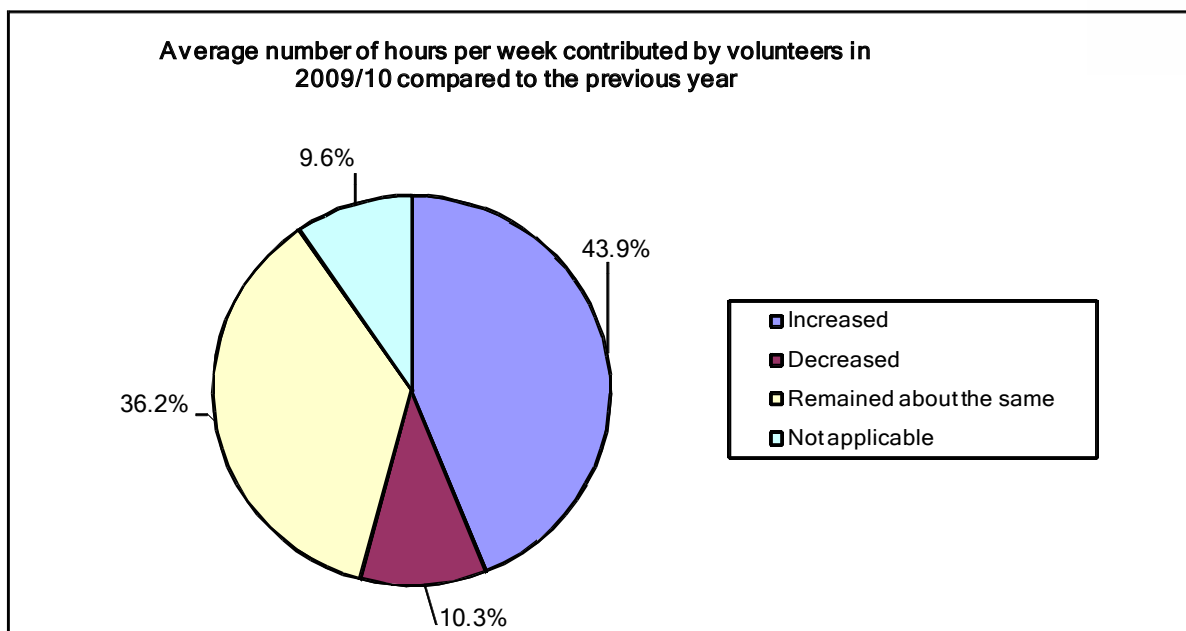
Figure 11

Average number of hours per week contributed by volunteers in 2009/10 compared to previous year

Legend:
- Increased volunteer contribution
- Decreased volunteer contribution
- About the same volunteer contribution
- Not applicable (vol. contribution not measured)

Sectors (x-axis):
- Local government - working across two or more sectors…
- Volunteering infrastructure organisation (eg. volunteer centre)…
- Sport/recreation…
- Religious…
- Parenting/children/youth…
- Law/justice/political…
- Health…
- Foreign/international…
- Environment…
- Emergency services…
- Education/training/youth development…
- Community/welfare…
- Business/professional/union…
- Arts/culture/heritage…

Y-axis: Percentage of responses (0 to 80)
X-axis: Sector

Corporate/employee volunteering

Volunteer-involving organisations' perspective

Of the 39% not for profit organisations that had been involved in corporate/employee volunteer programs, approximately half reported that it was extremely valuable to their organisation, mainly due to the practical assistance provided to the organisation to undertake its tasks.

The majority of not for profit organisations (51.3%) had not been involved in corporate/employee volunteer program in the last 12 months.

The two most common things organisations reported they needed for their experience of corporate/employee volunteering to be improved (Figure 13) were:

- More resources to be able to involve and support corporate volunteers (cited by 48.7% of organisations who have involved corporate volunteers).
- Increased number of days that corporate/employees volunteers are involved in their organisation (cited by 40.7% of organisations who have experience of corporate volunteers).
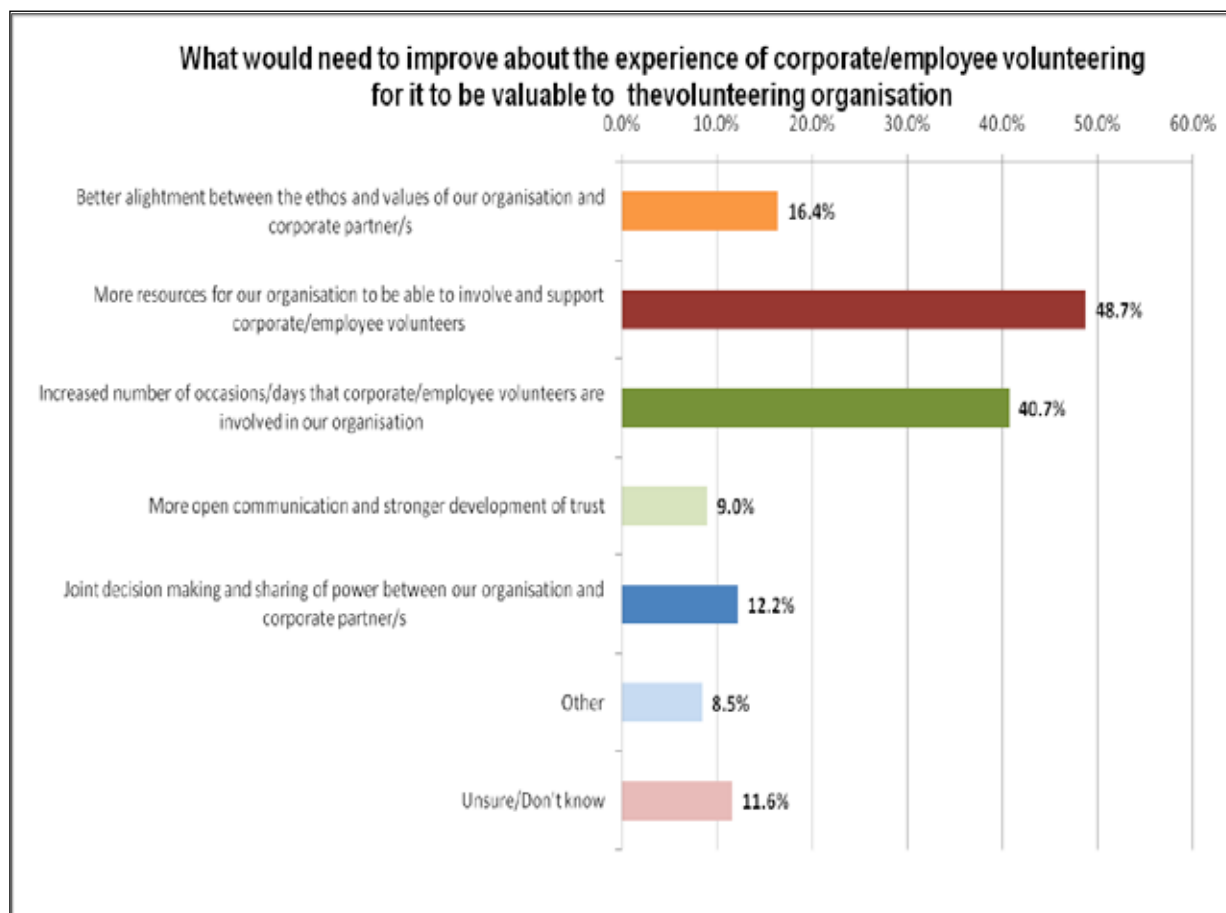
Figure 13

Business/company perspective

The 2010 survey was the second time that companies with an existing employee/corporate volunteering program or an interest in developing one were invited to report about their involvement in and experience of volunteering. 25 companies responded to the survey.

'Allowing employees to make a contribution to the community' was the most important factor in the decision to run an employee volunteering program most frequently mentioned by company respondents (45%), followed by the belief that 'it is part of our corporate social responsibility' (30%).

36% reported that their programs are fully implemented with staff actively involved; the same proportion reported that the program had been running for some time but is now being reviewed for the future; and 28% were in various stages of development or commencement. Of these, 52% reported that their programs have been in place for 3–10 years, and 16% reported longer than 11 years.

The majority of companies (68%) reported that the company had a formal program (as opposed to semi formal or informal) with documented procedures approved by management. Nearly half of the companies reported that they have a designated full-time role to manage the program (44%).

Sectors where employee volunteers from respondent companies were most likely to be involved were community/welfare, health, environmental/animal welfare education/training, and emergency services. Respondents reported a range of mechanisms for finding volunteer opportunities, with the most common being either company personnel, or not-for-profit partners identifying them.

Companies identified different support methods to enable employee volunteering, the most common being paid time off (76%). Insurance and provision of safety equipment by the company is offered by nearly half, which also benefits the organisations where employees volunteer. The most common leave granted for employees during work hours per year was up to one day of volunteering. 32% granted up to three days.

Employees having the time to volunteer, finding meaningful and suitable volunteer opportunities and the financial costs of the program were the main challenges to companies' employee volunteer programs.

The global economic situation was not an issue for the majority of respondents. For those that reported an impact, these were positive and negative:

- Less financial support available to not for profit organisations
- Increased business pressures allowing less time for the employee volunteering
- Less availability of staff to utilise volunteering opportunities
- Increased demand for involvement from corporate volunteers from not-for-profit partners
- Increased capacity of the company to provide volunteering opportunities to not-for-profit organisations.

Methodology

The National Survey of Volunteering Issues (the survey) is conducted annually to identify issues and trends relating to volunteering in Australia. Alongside other consultation and research, its outcomes inform Volunteering Australia's work.

Successive versions of the survey have established a core of knowledge relating to the practice, management and policy of volunteering in Australia. The outcomes of successive surveys represent a growing body of data that demonstrate consistent trends. These trends relate to:

- Factors impacting on the decision to volunteer and keep volunteering.
- Methods of finding volunteer work.
- Barriers to involving volunteers.
- The importance to volunteers of recognition of their involvement and contribution.
- The importance of clarity in the roles/responsibilities of paid staff and volunteers.
- Strengths and areas for improvement in organisational performance in relation to the recruitment, management and development of volunteers.
- The impacts of public policy on volunteering, in particular, out of pocket expenses, background checking, occupational health and safety and insurance.

As different aspects of the economy and community have changed, new areas have been included in the survey. For example, investigation into the experience and impact of corporate/employee volunteering has been included in the last two surveys.

This year's survey builds on the findings of previous years by introducing new areas of inquiry, as well as investigating the findings identified in previous years from different angles and/or in greater depth. The major changes in survey this year are:

- A shift from focussing on re-investigating well known/established issues to including questions that will help us to develop solutions to these issues that are meaningful to the sector.
- Identifying volunteers' role in the governance of organisations and the key strengths and challenges that arise in relation to this role.
- Deepening our understanding of meaningful and achievable ways to enable active participation of volunteers in organisational decision making and strategic directions.
- Identifying the extent to which methods of recognition preferred by volunteers are actually used by organisations.
- Identifying the ways in which volunteering has a positive impact on community belonging and health and well being.
- Strengthening organisational performance in areas that remain of concern to a significant proportion of volunteers and/or organisations.
- Identifying strategies that would make the greatest difference to organisations being able to engage with and involve a diverse range of volunteers in their work, including corporate/employee volunteers.
- Further developing knowledge about the experience and impact of corporate/employee volunteering.

The survey is structured around three subsidiary surveys for: volunteers, volunteer-involving organisations (including government), and for companies with or developing an employee/corporate volunteering program.

The survey is conducted using a subscription-based online survey provider. 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.

The survey 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. In 2010, the survey has moved toward greater exploration of solutions, rather than a focus on identifying issues.

Open-ended questions are included 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. This provides a wealth of qualitative data that enhances the reporting of quantitative data.

1,834 people responded to the survey with 1320 fully completed all the questions relating to their target group/section.

56.1% of volunteer respondents identified as volunteering for more than one organisation. To facilitate consistency in their experiences, they were asked to focus on the *main* organisation they volunteer with in answering many of the questions.

This means that there are many more volunteering experiences that are not being captured from each individual respondent, but may mean that the survey data represents a range of volunteering experiences.

This year's survey was conducted later in the year compared to previous surveys to coincide with International Volunteer Day on 5 December.

Survey promotion

The total number of surveys that were fully completed in 2010 was significantly lower than in 2009, and more consistent with that of earlier years. The higher number of completed surveys in 2009 may be accounted for by the fact that the survey was open for almost two months to 30 October 2009 compared to 4 weeks in 2010 (18 October – 12 November). The timeline for the 2010 survey was determined largely by the timing of the appointment of the Policy and Research Officer and the commitment to release preliminary findings of the survey by International Volunteer Day on 5 December 2010.

A number of methods to promote the survey in 2010 was used mainly via electronic channels using the Volunteering Australia website and through email marketing campaigns. We would also like to recognise and thank the support of many organisations that advertised and promoted the survey to their members and networks.

e-newsletter InVOLve

Volunteering Australia's e-newsletter InVOLve has over 14,000 subscriber's comprising not-for-profit organisations, individual volunteers, for profit companies and government department representatives. InVOLve is sent out monthly and featured information about the survey, followed by a reminder near the closing date.

Direct mail

A number of direct email campaigns to specific sectors were sent to:

- State and Territory Government Offices of Volunteers (where available)
- The Australian Association of Local Government (ALGA)
- Key organisations and networks, including peak bodies representing the arts, museums and libraries, sport and recreation, international/overseas aid, emergency services, and community services.

Emails requesting promotion of the survey were also sent to State and Territory Volunteer Centres and Volunteer Resource Centres, Pro Bono, and InfoXchange.

Targeted emails were sent to corporate partners and networks inviting them to participate and asking them to send to their colleagues.

Volunteering Australia website

Volunteering Australia's website had a permanent link prominently displayed on the homepage from the survey opening.

A dedicated URL was created www.volunteeringaustralia.org/survey that took respondents directly to information about the survey.

13th National Conference on Volunteering

The survey was heavily promoted at the 13th National Conference on Volunteering which was held during the survey period. Information about the survey was included in each delegate's conference bag with other communications. Volunteering Australia staff promoted completion of the survey by delegates through their informal networking activities at the conference.

Media

A media release announcing the opening of the survey was sent to all local media outlets. Volunteering Australia's Communications Manager participated in a number of interviews with regional and rural radio stations by invitation.

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Appendix 1 – Tables

1. Sector: volunteers and organisations

	Volunteers		Organisations	
	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
Arts/heritage	3.7%	38	5.2%	24
Business/professional/union	0.4%	4	0.0%	0
Community/welfare	17.2%	179	39.1%	181
Education/training	9.6%	100	5.2%	24
Emergency services	23.8%	248	8.9%	41
Environment/animal welfare	5.3%	55	3.9%	18
Foreign/international	0.7%	7	0.0%	0
Health	3.1%	32	15.3%	71
Law/justice/political	2.0%	21	0.9%	4
Parenting/children/youth	2.8%	29	2.8%	13
Religious	2.3%	24	1.5%	7
Sport/physical recreation	19.2%	200	5.2%	24
Other recreation/interest	0.9%	9	0.0%	0
Volunteering infrastructure organisation (e.g. volunteer centre)	2.2%	23	3.5%	16
Local government – working across two or more sectors	1.2%	12	8.6%	40
Other	5.8%	60	0.0%	0
Total		**1041**		**463**

2. State/Territory: volunteers and organisations

	Volunteers		Organisations	
	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
Australian Capital Territory	7.7%	82	2.6%	12
New South Wales	37.2%	397	30.2%	140
Northern Territory	0.4%	4	1.5%	7
Queensland	9.2%	98	8.9%	41
South Australia	10.9%	116	13.8%	64
Tasmania	2.6%	28	3.5%	16
Victoria	28.2%	301	31.7%	147
Western Australia	2.8%	30	8.4%	39
More than one state (organisations only)	0.0%	0	2.2%	10
All states – we operate nationally (organisations only)	0.0%	0	6.9%	32
Overseas (volunteers only)	0.9%	10	0.0%	0
Total		**1056**		**508**

3. National, state, local operation: volunteers and organisations

	Volunteers		Organisations	
	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
International	14.0%	147	9.5%	44
National	20.5%	215	0.0%	0
In more than one state	7.7%	81	16.2%	75
Statewide only	20.6%	217	22.5%	104
Local metropolitan only	19.7%	207	22.9%	106
Local regional only	16.4%	172	27.0%	125
Local remote only	1.1%	12	1.9%	9
Total		**1051**		**463**

4. Main location: volunteers and organisations

	Volunteers		Organisations	
	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
Metropolitan area	60.0%	636	61.6%	285
Rural/regional area	38.1%	404	36.7%	170
Remote area	1.9%	20	1.7%	8
Total		**1060**		**463**

5. Organisation types – not-for-profit/government: volunteers and organisations

	Volunteers		Organisation	
	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
Not for profit organisation that involves volunteers	75.1%	796	72.1%	334
Government organisation, department or agency involving volunteers	24.9%	264	22.2%	103
Volunteer Resource Centre (organisations only)	0.0%	0	3.2%	15
Other	0.0%	0	2.4%	11
Total		**1060**		**463**

6. Number of volunteers involved ongoing: organisations

	Response Percent	Response Count
1-19	22.2%	103
20-49	17.3%	80
50-99	11.9%	55
100-299	20.1%	93
300+	28.5%	132
Total		**463**

7. Duties undertaken by volunteers in organisations: volunteers (main involvement) and organisations

	Volunteers performing		Organisations with volunteers	
	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
Board of Governance. Committee of Management (member of)	35.1%	363	50.0%	230
Administration/clerical	37.1%	384	69.8%	321
Arts/crafts/performing	4.7%	49	24.8%	114
Campaigning/lobbying	9.8%	101	11.1%	51
Coaching/umpiring	12.9%	133	7.4%	34
Community/sporting events (asked of organisations only)	0.0%	0	27.2%	125
Counselling/mediation/advocacy	9.8%	101	15.7%	72
Disability support services	3.9%	40	20.0%	92
Education/tutoring/mentoring	22.4%	232	34.3%	158
Emergency response/safety/rescue	28.3%	293	16.7%	77
Food service	9.6%	99	26.3%	121
Fundraising/retail	24.7%	255	35.2%	162
Gardening/outdoor activities	11.6%	120	29.8%	137
Historical research &/or preservation	3.2%	33	10.9%	50
Hospital/allied health assistance	2.3%	24	9.8%	45
Information technology/library services	6.8%	70	17.2%	79
Marketing/public relations/media	13.9%	144	23.3%	107
Material relief	1.5%	16	5.7%	26
Professional/management	9.5%	98	8.7%	40
Providing information/visitor guiding	10.3%	106	18.5%	85
Technical/mechanical/maintenance	7.8%	81	11.5%	53
Virtual volunteering (through technology rather than physical presence)	2.6%	27	7.2%	33
Visit/social support/driving	6.8%	70	35.2%	162
Working with animals	1.8%	19	4.3%	20
Working with children/youth	24.9%	257	38.9%	179
Working with the aged	5.2%	54	36.6%	159
Writing/editing/research	10.3%	106	15.4%	71
Other (please specify)	9.3%	96	11.7%	54
Total		**3371**		**2857**

8. Number of organisations volunteered with: volunteers

	Response Percent	Response Count
One	43.9%	468
Two	29.3%	312
Three	17.5%	187
Four	4.8%	51
Five or more	4.5%	48
Total		**1066**

9. Duration of volunteering in current organisation: volunteers

	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 6 months	5.7%	60
6 months to 1 year	6.9%	72
1-2 years	11.5%	121
2-5 years	23.9%	251
5-10 years	21.9%	230
More than 10 years	30.2%	317
Total		**1051**

10. Age of respondents: volunteers

	Response Percent	Response Count
Under 18	0.5%	4
18-24	4.8%	40
25-34	10.3%	86
35-44	18.1%	151
45-54	25.4%	212
55-64	23.0%	192
65-74	15.8%	132
75 and over	2.0%	17
Total		**834**

11. Employment status of respondents: volunteers

	Response Percent	Response Count
Employed full time	42.7%	356
Employed part time	17.0%	142
Unemployed/seeking employment	3.1%	26
Student full time	4.7%	39
Student part time	0.8%	7
Not in labour force (retired)	25.1%	209
Not in labour force (other)	6.6%	55
Total		**834**

12. Locating current volunteer work: volunteers

	Response Percent	Response Count
Through the internet – Go Volunteer website	1.4%	14
Through the internet – other volunteering related website	4.9%	51
Recommended by a friend/relative	28.7%	298
Volunteer Resource Centre	1.6%	17
Local Council	2.9%	30
University or School	3.5%	36
Through the paid work or workplace	1.9%	20
As a result of my childhood involvement or membership	16.2%	168
Centrelink/Job Service Agency	0.3%	3
Advertising by organisation (e.g. community noticeboard, newsletter, article in local paper etc)	15.4%	160
Other (please specify)	23.1%	240
Total		**1037**

13. Factors influencing decision to volunteer: volunteers

	Response Percent	Response Count
Location	4.0%	37
Organisational values/principles	11.9%	110
Personal belief for a particular cause	22.5%	209
Time commitment required per week (e.g. number of hours)	1.2%	11
Total length of commitment (e.g. ongoing, short term, project)	0.1%	1
Flexible volunteer days (e.g. do required days suit me?)	1.5%	14
Associated costs (e.g. reimbursement of out of pocket expenses)	0.1%	1
Level of training/expertise required to perform volunteer role	1.2%	11
Knowing that my contribution would make a difference	39.7%	368
What I would get out of the role (e.g. skills, experience, social)	10.7%	99
Regulatory requirements/'red tape'	0.1%	1
None of the above	1.5%	14
Other	5.5%	51
Total		**927**

14. Knowing what is expected of volunteer role: volunteers

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes – all of the time	47.7%	459
Yes – most of the time	44.1%	424
Yes – some of the time	6.5%	63
No – it is not clear what is expected of me	1.7%	16
Total		**962**

15. Areas where knowledge or skill for Board/Committee member role need to be increased

	Volunteers		Organisations	
	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
Legal compliance	46.5%	20	25.9%	86
Ethical conduct	9.3%	4	14.5%	48
Sound governance policies and procedures	30.2%	13	34.6%	115
Strategic thinking and planning, i.e., forward thinking, articulating the vision of the organisation, setting the direction of the organisation to make the most of external opportunities	34.9%	15	41.9%	139
Risk management	41.9%	18	27.1%	90
Financial management and/or reporting	32.6%	14	15.4%	51
Fundraising and/or marketing	30.2%	13	46.4%	154
Succession planning for retiring/resigning Board members	39.5%	17	52.1%	173
None of the above	7.0%	3	27.1%	90
Unsure/don't know	7.0%	3	15.1%	50
Total		**120**		**946**

16. Volunteer participation in organisational decision making: volunteers

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes – I have enough opportunities to participate in decision-making	67.7%	626
Yes – I have opportunities to participate, but I would like more	14.3%	132
No – I do not have any opportunities to participate in decision-making, but I would like to	10.8%	100
I am not interested in participating in decision-making in the organisation	7.2%	67
Total		**925**

17. Type of decisions that are important to be involved in: volunteers

	Response Percent	Response Count
Changes to my role	48.3%	362
Health and safety in my workplace	35.5%	266
Decisions that affect my immediate working environment	42.3%	317
Changes in the organisation's policies	54.8%	411
Changes in the organisation's procedures	59.2%	444
Other	6.8%	51
Total		**1851**

18. Ways to be involved in decisions that affect volunteers and their work: volunteers

	Response Percent	Response Count
Informal opportunities to provide input and feedback	55.6%	417
Discussion during individual supervision and/or team meetings	37.5%	281
Participation and/or representation in formal consultation such as committees, surveys	49.2%	369
Other	6.1%	46
Total		**1067**

19. Benefits achieved by involving volunteers in decisions that affect them: organisations

	Response Percent	Response Count
Volunteers have a greater sense of ownership of and empowerment over their work	91.2%	457
The organisation's decision making process is improved (e.g. by having an increased pool of ideas)	69.9%	350
None – there are no apparent benefits.	1.4%	7
Other	2.8%	14
Total		**807**

20. Main reason volunteers are not involved in decisions: organisations

	Response Percent	Response Count
Do not believe it is appropriate or necessary	19.6%	11
Do not know how to provide these opportunities	10.7%	6
Have never thought about providing these opportunities	23.2%	13
Have tried in the past and have found it too difficult to involve volunteers	21.4%	12
Other	25.0%	14
Total		**42**

21. Volunteer influence on strategic directions and actions of organisations: volunteers

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes – I have enough opportunity	50.1%	456
Yes – I have some opportunity, but would like more	20.1%	183
No – I do not have any opportunity, but would like to	15.4%	140
I am not interested in influencing the strategic directions and actions of the organisation	14.5%	132
Total		**911**

22. Most important recognition methods: volunteers

	Response Percent	Response Count
Certificate/gift of appreciation	4.3%	39
Public acknowledgement by organisation (e.g. in newsletter, on website etc)	4.5%	41
Special gathering or celebration (e.g. end of year, National Volunteer Week, International Volunteer Day)	6.2%	56
Personal thank you	13.5%	122
Feedback about my contribution	12.0%	108
Being accepted as a valuable team member	38.8%	350
None of the above – I don't feel the need for recognition	17.9%	162
Other	2.8%	25
Total		**903**

23. Frequency of recognition through their preferred method: volunteers

	Response Percent	Response Count
Approximately once a week	11.1%	82
Approximately once a month	31.7%	234
Approximately several times a month	13.8%	102
Once	24.6%	182
Never	18.8%	139
Total		**739**

24. Most significant barrier to involving volunteer: organisations

	Response Percent	Response Count
Supply of suitable volunteers – difficulty attracting and recruiting suitable volunteers	28.5%	184
Turnover – difficulty keeping suitable and experienced volunteers	11.8%	76
Succession planning – needing to develop a plan for replacing volunteers who are retiring due to age	9.1%	59
Limited organisational capacity – not enough staff, time, or money to recruit, train and support the number of volunteers the organisation needs	28.4%	183
None of the above – our organisation has not experienced any barriers to involving volunteers	13.8%	89
Other	7.1%	46
Unsure/Don't know	1.2%	8
Total		**645**

25. Biggest impact on the ability to involve and retain volunteers: organisations

	Response Percent	Response Count
Allocation of resources from funders or donors specifically tied to recruiting and managing volunteers	44.8%	239
Introducing new/different approaches to promoting volunteering in the community	28.9%	154
Developing different models/approaches to volunteering	17.6%	94
Reducing legislative compliance ('red tape') associated with engaging and involving volunteers	18.4%	98
Other	6.6%	35
Unsure/Don't know	4.9%	26
Total		**646**

26. Implementation of the National Standards: organisations

	Fully implemented	Partially implemented	Not implemented	Unsure/ Don't know	Response Count
Standard 1: Policies and procedures	59%	32%	4%	5%	389
Standard 2: Management responsibility	59%	33%	3%	5%	386
Standard 3: Recruitment, Selection and Orientation	58%	33%	4%	5%	386
Standard 4: Work and the Workplace	46%	39%	5%	10%	381
Standard 5: Training and Development	47%	40%	7%	6%	387
Standard 6: Service Delivery	50%	35%	6%	9%	381
Standard 7: Documentation and Records	55%	35%	4%	6%	385
Standard 8: Continuous Improvement	39%	44%	8%	9%	386

27. Need for the National Standards to be revised and changed: organisations

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	25.9%	99
No	28.8%	110
Other	6.8%	26
Unsure/Don't know	38.5%	147
Total		**382**

28. Most important changes needed to the National Standards: organisations

	Response Percent	Response Count
Include other areas of good or best practice that are not currently covered in the National Standards	29.0%	65
Ensure the National Standards reflect legislative frameworks relevant to the entire range of sectors that involve volunteers	46.4%	104
Revise the language to ensure the National Standards are in plain English	32.6%	73
Benchmark the National Standards against other international standards	24.1%	54
Change the layout of National Standards	5.4%	12
Other	8.0%	18
Not applicable – no changes are needed	19.2%	43
Total		**369**

29. Support for accreditation: organisations

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes – based on the existing National Standards	35.5%	131
Yes – only if the existing National Standards were revised/changed	23.0%	85
No	9.2%	34
Unsure/Don't know	29.3%	108
Other	3.0%	11
Total		**369**

30. Managers of volunteers – paid, volunteer, none: organisations

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes – a paid position	72.6%	424
Yes – a volunteer position	13.9%	81
No	12.3%	72
Unsure/don't know	1.2%	7
Total		**584**

31. Managers of volunteers – full time/part time: organisations

	Response Percent	Response Count
Full time	45.9%	232
Part time	50.3%	254
Unsure/Don't know	1.4%	7
Not applicable	2.4%	12
Total		**505**

32. Volunteer management – adoption of management processes: organisations

	Yes	No	Don't know	Response Count
Transparent recruitment/screening processes	85.5%	11.1%	3.4%	566
Orientation process	91.9%	6.2%	1.9%	566
Training for volunteer roles and skill development	86.0%	12.4%	1.6%	566
Assigning a designated contact person	92.0%	6.4%	1.6%	566
Maintaining a grievance procedure	80.0%	13.1%	6.9%	566
Providing opportunities for volunteers to give feedback	89.9%	6.4%	3.9%	566
Providing volunteer appraisal/performance management processes	45.4%	47.2%	7.4%	566
Maintaining occupational health and safety for volunteers at the same standard as for paid employees	91.3%	6.4%	2.3%	566
Insurance coverage for volunteers	94.0%	2.7%	3.4%	566
Exit interview/feedback process for volunteers who have ceased volunteering	46.6%	45.6%	7.8%	566
"Return to work" procedures for sick or injured volunteers	41.3%	39.6%	19.1%	566

33. Volunteer management – adoption of volunteer management processes: volunteers

	Yes	No	Don't know	Response Count
Open recruitment/screening processes	74.6%	14.4%	11.0%	991
Orientation process	75.0%	18.4%	6.7%	991
Training for volunteer roles and skill development	76.6%	17.3%	6.2%	991
A designated contact person	86.8%	9.4%	3.8%	991
Grievance/complaint procedures	69.0%	14.2%	16.8%	991
Opportunities for volunteers to give feedback	82.6%	9.3%	8.1%	991
Volunteer appraisal/performance management processes	38.0%	41.0%	21.0%	991
Formal recognition process	66.1%	21.8%	12.1%	991
Reimbursement of out of pocket expenses	65.2%	22.8%	12.0%	991
Occupational health and safety measures at the same standard as for paid employees	67.8%	14.4%	17.8%	991
Insurance	80.1%	5.7%	14.2%	991
Exit interview/feedback process for volunteers who have ceased volunteering	24.9%	39.8%	35.3%	991
"Return to work" procedures for sick or injured volunteers	24.5%	32.5%	43.0%	991

34. Level of satisfaction with organisational performance: volunteers

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Not very satisfied	Dissatisfied	Not applicable	Response Count
Open recruitment/screening processes	30.9%	44.8%	9.8%	2.0%	12.6%	962
Orientation process	28.0%	46.9%	12.1%	3.5%	9.6%	962
Training for volunteer roles and skill development	32.5%	40.4%	13.8%	4.9%	8.3%	962
A designated contact person	40.2%	42.2%	9.5%	2.5%	5.6%	962
Grievance/complaint procedures	24.8%	39.9%	13.4%	6.2%	15.6%	962
Opportunities for volunteers to give feedback	29.9%	44.8%	12.1%	7.0%	6.2%	962
Volunteer appraisal/performance management processes	17.7%	33.8%	16.9%	8.3%	23.3%	962
Formal recognition process	28.8%	39.2%	13.6%	4.1%	14.3%	962
Reimbursement of out of pocket expenses	29.9%	36.3%	10.5%	6.8%	16.5%	962
Occupational health and safety measures at the same standard as for paid employees	32.4%	38.3%	9.1%	3.6%	16.5%	962
Insurance	38.5%	39.2%	5.2%	3.0%	14.1%	962
Exit interview/feedback process for volunteers who have ceased volunteering	9.9%	20.5%	17.7%	10.4%	41.6%	962
"Return to work" procedures for sick or injured volunteers	11.0%	22.8%	11.7%	6.9%	47.6%	962

35. Learning/training opportunities in organisations: volunteers

	Available	Available & Accessed	Not Available	Don't Know	Response Count
Training opportunities	14.5%	65.1%	14.3%	6.0%	944
Working in different areas of the organisation	30.1%	39.8%	21.9%	8.2%	944
Temporary or permanent changes in role	29.8%	38.3%	21.2%	10.7%	944
Participating in meetings or other processes with paid staff	13.7%	51.3%	26.0%	9.1%	944
Pathways and assistance to paid employment (e.g. obtaining a reference)	31.5%	13.8%	32.9%	21.8%	944
Chance to meet new people/develop networks	12.0%	79.1%	4.9%	4.0%	944
Learning about my community	11.9%	75.0%	6.7%	6.5%	944
Other (please specify)					

36. Training attended by volunteers/training provided by organisations

	Volunteers		Organisations	
	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
Not applicable as I have not attended any training	17.5%	165	3.7%	21
Formal training (accredited) or workshops (e.g. First Aid training; or a module that forms part of a formal qualification)	52.2%	492	41.3%	233
Online training i.e. delivered through the internet	9.2%	87	10.1%	57
Non-formal training (non accredited) or workshops (e.g. an information session on a role-related topic)	46.2%	436	70.0%	395
Informal training (e.g. demonstration of tasks to do my role)	44.5%	420	65.8%	371
Other (please specify)	4.2%	40	0	0
Total		**1640**		**1077**

37. Willingness to consider on-line training in future: volunteers

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	67.4%	634
No	17.0%	160
Unsure/Don't know	15.6%	147
Total		**941**

38. Value of the training undertaken: volunteers

	Response Percent	Response Count
Not applicable as I have not attended any training	17.9%	169
Gave me necessary skills for my role	62.6%	590
Was not useful for my role	4.6%	43
Gave me skills useful for current/future paid employment	18.3%	173
Gave me skills useful for personal development	41.9%	395
Helped me acquire an accreditation/qualification	26.7%	252
Other	3.9%	37
Total		**1659**

39. Relationships between paid workers and volunteers: volunteers

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	32.1%	300
No	48.8%	456
Not applicable – no paid employees	19.1%	178
Total		**934**

40. Nature of confusion or conflict between paid workers and volunteers: volunteers

	Response Percent	Response Count
Understanding the difference between paid and volunteer roles	42.6%	127
Recognition of volunteer contribution	52.3%	156
Respect for volunteers	55.0%	164
Understanding of volunteering	33.2%	99
Equal opportunity	21.5%	64
Different priorities/goals of paid employees and volunteers	61.4%	183
Consultation with volunteers in decision making	52.3%	156
Knowing who has authority/responsibility	50.7%	151
Procedures for volunteers	25.2%	75
Communication between paid employees and volunteers	53.4%	159
Differences of opinion	54.7%	163
Other (please specify)	10.1%	30
Total		**1527**

41. Decision to run an employee volunteering program: companies

	Response Percent	Response Count
We believe it is part of our corporate social responsibility	85.0%	17
It increases the work satisfaction of employees	80.0%	16
It gives employees social contact	40.0%	8
Employees can learn new skills	55.0%	11
Allows employees to make a contribution to the community	90.0%	18
Rewards employees by giving them a 'break' from working	20.0%	4
Provides a good reflection of the company from an external perspective	60.0%	12
Provides a good reflection of the company from an internal perspective	75.0%	15
It helps to attract and/or retain employees	55.0%	11
It fosters higher levels of team spirit and cohesion amongst employees	70.0%	14
Other (please specify)	10.0%	2
Total		**126**

42. Identification of volunteer opportunities: companies

	Response Percent	Response Count
Internally by identified company personnel responsible for the employee volunteering program	68.0%	17
Through identified not for profit partners	48.0%	12
Through brokers/consultants (e.g. volunteer centres)	4.0%	1
Through individual staff selection	28.0%	7
Through approaches to company from not for profit organisations	28.0%	7
Other (please specify)	12.0%	3
Total		**47**

43. Support provided to employees who volunteer: companies

	Response Percent	Response Count
Time-off (paid)	76.0%	19
Time-off (unpaid)	16.0%	4
Time in-lieu (e.g. when volunteer work is undertaken out of regular work hours)	12.0%	3
Reimbursement for costs associated with the activity (e.g. meal, travel)	16.0%	4
Insurance cover while volunteering	44.0%	11
Provision of safety equipment for employees (e.g. gloves, safety glasses)	40.0%	10
Other (please specify)	32.0%	8
Total		**59**

44. Challenges to company volunteering programs

	Response Percent	Response Count
Employees have limited time to devote to volunteering	80.0%	20
The time and financial costs of the program	20.0%	5
Issues with workplace relations	0.0%	0
The difficulty in justifying the program to management	8.0%	2
Keeping employees informed about the program	24.0%	6
Finding meaningful volunteer opportunities for employees	40.0%	10
Finding suitable volunteering opportunities for employees (e.g. during work hours)	32.0%	8
Other (please specify)	12.0%	3
Total		**54**

45. Employee volunteer involvement in volunteer-involving organisations: organisations

	Response Percent	Response Count
By providing professional or pro bono skills	46.3%	88
Through virtual volunteering (via technology rather than physical presence)	10.0%	19
In project/activity teams	66.3%	126
As part of your regular volunteer programs	52.6%	100
Other	5.8%	11
Total		**344**

46. Impacts of public policy issues on volunteering: volunteers

	Negative Impact	No Impact	Positive Impact	Unsure/ not aware	Response Count
Occupational health and safety	12.5	48.2	24.7	14.5	881
Insurance	11.2	53.2	15.2	20.3	881
Compensation for loss or injury as a volunteer	4.4	62.8	9	23.8	881
Out of pocket expenses incurred through volunteering	13.1	54.1	17.6	15.2	881
Understanding visa requirements around volunteering for volunteers from overseas	2.5	56.9	4.3	36.3	881
Background checking such as working with children checks/ police checks	8.4	51	29.5	11.1	881
Equal Opportunity or anti-discrimination	4.4	57.2	23.2	15.2	881

47. Impacts of public policy on volunteering: organisations

	Negative Impact	No Impact	Positive Impact	Unsure/ not aware	Response Count
Occupational health and safety	14.9	48.6	26.3	10.3	525
Insurance	11.4	44.4	34.1	10.1	525
Compensation for volunteer workplace injuries	6.5	52.4	19.2	21.9	525
Out of pocket expenses incurred through volunteering	23.6	37.7	26.3	12.4	525
Understanding visa requirements around volunteering for volunteers from overseas	7	51.2	5.3	36.4	525
Background checking such as working with children checks/ police checks	18.7	40.6	32	8.8	525
Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination	3.4	50.7	34.1	11.8	525

48. Out of pocket expenses incurred: volunteers

	Response Percent	Response Count
Fuel	68.9%	586
Public transport	17.3%	147
Uniforms	15.9%	135
Compulsory safety equipment	4.8%	41
Training	16.2%	138
Telephone call from mobile or home	63.5%	540
Postage	22.8%	194
Computer/internet	49.1%	417
Stationery – paper, printing	39.5%	336
Childcare	3.1%	26
Other (please specify)	18.0%	153
Total		**2560**

49. Reimbursement of out of pocket expenses: volunteers

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes – in full	27.0%	229
Yes – in part	32.9%	279
No	30.3%	257
Unsure/Don't know	9.9%	84
Total		**620**

50. Reimbursement of out of pocket expenses: organisations

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes – in full	44.8%	224
Yes – in part	32.6%	163
No – we can't afford it	14.0%	70
No – it's against our policy	3.2%	16
No – we haven't thought about it	2.2%	11
Unsure/Don't know	3.2%	16
Total		**500**

51. Impact of out of pocket expenses on volunteer motivation: volunteers

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes – expenses reduce my ability/desire to volunteer	16.3%	138
No – expenses do not reduce my ability/desire to volunteer	80.1%	680
Unsure/don't know	3.7%	31
Total		**849**

52. Requirements for volunteer background checking: volunteers

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes – working with children check only	18.4%	156
Yes – police check only	15.9%	135
Yes – both police check and working with children check	24.9%	211
No	39.7%	337
Unsure/Don't know	1.1%	9
Total		**848**

53. Impact of background checks on volunteer involvement: volunteers

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes – checks reduce my ability/desire to volunteer	4.8%	24
No – checks do not reduce my ability/desire to volunteer	93.6%	465
Unsure/Don't know	1.6%	8
Total		**489**

54. OHS training/information provided by organisations: volunteers

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes – during orientation	28.9%	250
Yes – volunteers are updated on OH&S regularly	38.2%	330
No	28.4%	246
Don't know	4.5%	39
Total		**865**

55. Availability of information about OH&S: volunteers and organisations

	Volunteers		Organisations	
	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes – have accessed the information I need	67.2%	581	59.6%	306
No – require more information about this issue	9.1%	79	17.7%	91
No – have not sought information about this issue	23.7%	205	17.5%	90
Unsure/Don't know			5.1%	26
Total		**865**		**513**

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