



Research into
Older People & Volunteering
For the 2001 Premier's Forum on Ageing

Research Report

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1.0 Background

1.1 Project Background

The Premier's Forum on Ageing is an annual event hosted by the NSW Government every October. While the Forum attracts a wide audience, including representatives of the government, not-for-profit and commercial sectors, a key purpose is to provide an official channel for older people to contribute their views on issues that affect them.

Each year the Forum explores a different theme. As the year 2001 is the International Year of Volunteers, the theme of this year's Forum will be older people and volunteering.

In order to provide a context for discussions at the Forum on the subject of older people and volunteering, the NSW Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care commissioned Heartbeat Trends to conduct qualitative research into the Forum theme.

Given that the Department had already conducted two major pieces of research on this topic in recent times¹, the emphasis of this research is on how the role of volunteering is changing for older people, and in particular, how volunteering will fit into the lives of Australia's latest 'older' generation: the Baby Boomers approaching retirement².

In addition to providing presentation material for the Premier's Forum, the research is to be used over the longer term to assist in policy development for sectors that rely on volunteers, as well as in the development of strategies to recruit and maintain older people as volunteers.

1.2 Key Research Issues

Previous research has identified that the role of volunteering in older people's lives is already changing, and that organisations relying on older volunteers will need to adjust in order to meet the changing needs and expectations of this group.³

For example, many older, married women, formerly the mainstay of numerous volunteer-dependent organisations, are now in the paid workforce. The abolition of compulsory retirement laws has meant that both men and women may choose to stay in the paid workforce for longer. This means that older Australians may simply have

¹ NSW Committee on Ageing. *A Two Way Street: Older People and Volunteering*, 1999; Encel, Sol and Nelson, Penelope, NSW Committee on Ageing. *Volunteering and Older People*, 1996.

² Bernard Salt, author of *The Big Shift: Welcome to the Third Culture* (a report on the impact of population trends on Australian culture; Hardie Grant Publishing, Melbourne 2001), defines the Baby Boomer generation as being born between 1946 and 1961.

³ Encel, 1996.

less time and energy to devote to volunteer work, and that they are often looking for a different volunteer experience and structure than has traditionally been available.

Statistically speaking, the arrival of the Baby Boom generation into traditional retirement age could have an enormous impact on a range of issues surrounding volunteerism. Much of the speculation about this impact has centred on the assumption that this generation of older Australians will be less interested in civic duty than previous generations, and more interested in pursuing their own personal interests.

Heartbeat's previous research studies on older Baby Boomers⁴ (Australians in their 50s) suggests the following in relation to volunteering:

- Older Baby Boomers have developed a sense of perspective about themselves and their own generation – a sense of where they have made mistakes or been too self-absorbed in the past, and what they would like to do to 'put things right'. Many Baby Boomers who took part in the studies indicated an interest in volunteering as a way of contributing back to the community.
- Many older Baby Boomers, particularly men, have experienced retrenchment in recent years, for the first time in their careers. This has had a major effect on their sense of self, and how they view retirement. In particular, they are keen to continue to be seen as 'productive' members of society. The right volunteer experience could fulfil this need.
- After years of sacrifice for the sake of their kids, older Baby Boomers (particularly women) feel it's now their turn to do what they want. Their priority is to keep growing, to keep experiencing new things, to pursue with zest all the passions and interests they haven't had the time or skills for in the past. This may mean they don't have time for volunteering, but it could also mean they are very interested in a volunteering experience that is much more about personal growth.

The key to understanding future patterns of older people volunteering, and how best to promote it, is to understand at a deep level the mind-set or mind-sets of older people, particularly the Baby Boomers approaching retirement.

⁴ Heartbeat Trends. *The Grey Boom: Dreams & Aspirations*, 2000; and Heartbeat Trends. *The Grey Boom: Wellbeing*, 2001. The NSW Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care has subscribed to both these reports.

Thus a key aim of this research was to uncover the needs, fears, expectations, and aspirations of older people in relation to retirement, and where volunteering currently or potentially fits within this context.

From this base of understanding, the research aimed to build a picture of the role volunteering may play in older people's lives in the future, and to identify strategies (including policy development) that organisations and government can use to promote volunteering to future generations of older Australians.

1.3 Research Objectives

Key Research Objectives

The focus of the research was older people⁵, with a particular emphasis on Baby Boomers approaching retirement. In this context, the key research objectives were as follow:

- To gain an in-depth understanding of older people's attitudes to retirement and volunteering, and how these are changing.
- To identify key policy implications and strategies to promote volunteering for future generations of older people.
- To provide material for presentation at the 2001 Premier's Forum on Ageing.

Specific Research Objectives

- To explore older people's attitudes to, and plans for, retirement: their expectations, fears, needs, and aspirations, and how these are changing on an individual level.
- To explore how Baby Boomers' attitudes to, and plans for, retirement differ (if at all) from those of people born before or during World War II, and what is driving generational change.

⁵ Unless otherwise specified, 'older people' refers to both older Baby Boomers, and people of the pre World War II generation.

- To understand broadly how Baby Boomers' attitudes to civic duty, particularly in retirement, differ (if at all) from those of people born before or during World War II, and what is driving generational change.
- To identify and define key market segments among older people in relation to attitudes to volunteering. Specifically, to explore their needs, expectations, aspirations, fears, motivations and triggers to volunteering, and what is driving these.
- To explore barriers to increased volunteering for each group, and how these could be overcome.
- To understand how well older people's current volunteering experience is meeting their needs and expectations, and how this can be improved.
- To explore how all of the above relates to their current and planned volunteer activity.
- To understand the impact of all of the above on future volunteering patterns among older people.

1.4 Methodology

The research methodology involved four components:

- Literature Review
- Focus Group Discussions ('mainstream' consumers)
- Affinity Mini Group Discussions (people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds)
- Focus Group Discussion (people from Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander background)

The purpose of the literature review was to gain a broad perspective on the issues surrounding older people and volunteering. The literature review was conducted prior to the group discussions and interviews, in order to allow for findings to be incorporated into the discussion guide and survey questionnaire.

The literature review focused on older people's attitudes towards retirement in general, and volunteering in particular.

As a significant body of written research on older people and volunteering already existed prior to this research and has been incorporated into previous reports conducted by the NSW Committee on Ageing⁶, the emphasis of this literature review was on information relating to Baby Boomers approaching retirement. The literature review included both Australian and overseas material.

Overall, however, there was a dearth of evidence-based research pertaining to the next generation of older people, particularly in Australia. Further, no literature pertaining specifically to Baby Boomers and their current or future attitudes to volunteering could be sourced. Thus, findings from the Literature Review will be incorporated into the body of this report, where appropriate, rather than as a separate reporting section.

Focus group discussions consisting of 5-7 participants formed the bulk of the sample. All groups of 'younger' older people (i.e. the Baby Boomers approaching retirement) were videoed, in order to provide the audience at the Premier's Forum an opportunity to see and hear people's views and opinions for themselves. The mainstream focus group discussions were held in Sydney, Penrith, the Central Coast and Dubbo.

The group discussions with 'mainstream' older people also incorporated a simple, small-scale questionnaire. Results of this survey are included where relevant in the following report. However, extreme caution must be used in extrapolating the findings of the survey beyond this report, as the sample size was very small.

In order to encourage people from diverse cultural backgrounds to participate in the research, a series of affinity (i.e. where respondents know at least one other person in the group) mini-group discussions were conducted with participants from the Italian, Greek, Lebanese and Chinese communities. Each group consisted of four respondents. The discussions were conducted via an interpreter.

For similar reasons, separate research was conducted amongst people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background. A total of 10 people were consulted, in a single focus group setting. This component of the research was conducted by an Indigenous consultant, in order to ensure both cultural relevance and to maximise participation.

⁶ NSW Committee on Ageing, 1999; Encel, 1996.

1.5 Sample

The sample was structured as follows:

'Mainstream' Groups

Group	Gender	Age	Retirement Status	Volunteer Status	Location
1	Male	50-58	Not retired	Volunteer	Sydney
2	Female	50-58	Not retired	Non-volunteer	Sydney
3	Male	50-58	Not retired	Volunteer	Dubbo
4	Female	50-58	Not retired	Non-volunteer	Dubbo
5	Male	50-58	Not retired	Non-volunteer	Penrith
6	Female	50-58	Not retired	Volunteer	Penrith
7	Male	59-75	Retired	Non-volunteer	Central Coast
8	Female	59-75	Retired	Volunteer	Sydney

The sample was weighted towards 'younger' older people in line with the need to focus on how older people's attitudes to volunteering are changing as the Baby Boomers reach retirement.

While the oldest of the Baby Boomers turned 55 in the year 2001, the sample was broadened to include people born during World War II, who self-identified more with the Baby Boom generation than with the pre-War generation.

The groups included respondents from a range of socio-economic backgrounds, and included people who were single (i.e. not married, separated, divorced or widowed), married, and in de facto relationships.

'Volunteer' was defined as per the Australian Bureau of Statistics criteria used in Voluntary Work Australia: 'someone who willingly gives unpaid help in the form of time, service or skills, through an organisation or group. An organisation or group is any body with a formal structure.'⁷ The 'non-volunteer' component of the sample included people who informally assist friends and family or others in the community, on a regular or irregular basis.

⁷ Australian Bureau of Statistics. *Voluntary Work Australia*, Canberra, 2000.

Affinity Mini-Group Discussions

(People of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds)

Group	Cultural / Language Group	Age	Location
1	Italian	50-58	Sydney
2	Chinese	50-58	Sydney
3	Greek	50-58	Sydney
4	Arabic	50-58	Sydney

Each group consisted of both men and women. Across the CALD sample, approximately half were retired, and half were not retired. A few were volunteers (as defined by the ABS), but most were not. However, many of those who were not formal volunteers did provide informal help to friends and family on a regular basis.

Of the 10 Aboriginal people who participated in the focus group discussion, eight were women and two were men⁸. They ranged in age from 47 to 78. All were providing informal help to friends, family and others in their communities on a regular basis.

⁸ All of the participants were of Aboriginal, rather than Torres Strait Islander background.

2.0 Research Findings

Older People's Attitudes to Retirement

In order to understand the context in which older people will be looking at volunteering in the future, it is important to first understand their attitudes to retirement; in particular, to understand how these are changing generationally.

Heartbeat began by asking research participants how they feel about retirement, what the word means for them, what are the best and worst things about it, and what their plans are for it. We also asked how their attitudes and plans were different from people of their parents' generation.

From this, we were able to understand where and how volunteering fits in for them (for people who are already retired) and how it may fit in for those who are yet to retire.

While such factors as age, marital status, level of independence of children, health and finance affect older people's views about retirement, some clear, broad patterns emerged.

For many people, retirement is seen as a reward; a sense of 'I have worked hard, and now I deserve to take things easier.' This attitude was particularly evident amongst those of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, who have worked extremely hard to establish themselves in Australia. Retirement is about having leisure time, the freedom to do what you want, when you want. It is about just being able to relax.

I want to retire. I've already checked it out. I'm looking forward to it. Just doing nothing and being able to get up and do whatever I want to do, and have somebody mow my lawn, clean my windows, do everything. All I got to do is eat, sleep and do whatever I want to do. I think it'll be a fantastic life. – Male Volunteer, Dubbo.

However, this attitude is by no means universal amongst older people. In fact, for many Baby Boomers, particularly men, in-depth discussions about retirement raise some difficult issues. While on a superficial level, the idea of retirement is attractive, a deeper exploration uncovers that many of this generation feel the reality of retirement may not live up to the image.

So at this stage in their lives, most Baby Boomers' plans for retirement are somewhat vague. This reflects their sense of internal conflict about whether they actually want to retire (in the traditional sense of the word), or can afford to.

Many of the older Baby Boomer men have experienced redundancy, or the threat of redundancy, in recent years for the first time ever. They are under enormous pressure to stay on top of their jobs, to not get replaced by a younger person with more recent, better qualifications. They know that if they lose their job now, they are not likely to be able to find another.

During that time, that I was off, I'd get on to the computer, I'd go through the job search, I'd go through The Herald, I'd go through every local paper that was put out looking for jobs and I really think that the attitudes of a lot of these companies [is] once you're over 50, they just don't want to know you. – Male Non-Volunteer, Penrith.

This experience, direct or indirect, has reinforced their sense of getting old, and has fed a growing feeling that retirement means being perceived as old and useless. This is a major issue for a generation of men whose sense of identity and self-worth has been largely wrapped up in 'what they do for a living'.

In the course of the research, it was often women who raised the issues that men were reluctant to discuss themselves. Many women feared that if their husbands retired fully from the workforce, it would be difficult to establish a new sense of purpose and identity, critical to their self-worth. This was a particular fear of women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, whose husbands have, throughout their careers, often worked multiple jobs and have not had time to develop interests.

A friend of mine, her mother has just started golf, she's never done it. But the husband doesn't know what to do with himself. He virtually goes down to the club, he has this ritual of going down to the club and going home and having a sleep, in the afternoon, going back to the club. To me, that's not really living, whereas she's going out, meeting new people. She's really living and I think it's true, I don't think a lot of men have got other resources. Their work has been their whole life. – Female Non-Volunteer, Sydney.

Many men are also fearful of losing contact with the younger generation if they leave the workforce altogether. Cross-generational contact is essential to their sense of feeling young themselves.

Finally, among both men and women of this new older generation, there is a lingering fear that the money may not last; at least, to maintain the level of lifestyle to which they have become accustomed. As a generation, they have not saved particularly well; they

have not experienced deprivation such as a Depression or World War to drive an ethic of thrift. At the same time, they expect to live longer than their parents. They may have no choice but to keep working.

We retired we thought, three years ago, sold everything up, bought our 24 foot caravan, and we went around Australia for two and a half years. Came back and we haven't got enough invested to live the lifestyle that we wanted to live. Couldn't get employment because we were too old ... so we ended up having to pull our money out and buy a motel to employ ourselves. – Female Non-volunteer, Dubbo.

Furthermore, while many report being wealthier than their parents as they approach retirement, (and indeed, this is supported in the available literature⁹), there is a strong sense that their lifestyle needs are also much greater. If retirement means giving up the good life for economic reasons, they are not prepared to do so.

With these issues in mind, and with the abolition of mandatory retirement laws, the new paradigm is not when I retire, but if.

I don't ever intend to retire. It's just not going to be on my agenda. And I've just done a mediation course with the Community Justice Centre and I just feel that that may be something, that you may never retire. You know, one day I'll just drop dead. I don't know I suppose they chuck you out eventually ... I've observed people who have retired and they don't seem to do anything and I don't want to be like that. – Male Volunteer, Dubbo.

This observation is borne out by the available literature on the subject. Bernard Salt, in his book on demographic change in Australia, *The Big Shift: Welcome to the Third Australian Culture*, observes:

The Baby Boomers will not retire – retirement is for old people. Boomers will never grow old – their parents grew old. Baby Boomers will downshift. They will 'step back' ... They will rethink their lives. They will invent a new, trendy term to describe this process.

⁹ The Australian Bureau of Statistics publication, *Australian Social Trends 1999: Population – Population Projections: Our Ageing Population* reports that due to favourable economic conditions and low unemployment during the 70s and 80s, and higher rates of employment for women, and more consistent contributions to superannuation, many Baby Boomers will be in a better position than the current older generation to provide for a financially secure retirement without relying on the age pension for most of their income.

So many plan to keep working, in some form, for as long as possible. It is more a matter of 'winding down' than 'winding out'. Their dream is to work fewer hours, on projects that they enjoy, and to have a greater sense of control over what they do and when they do it. Their ideal is to move from doing to advising. The dream is to maintain their sense of identity through work, yet to be able to do it on their own terms.

Whether or not the dream is possible, certainly the evidence suggests that the recent trend towards early retirement amongst men may be off-set by Baby Boomers extending their working lives.¹⁰ Furthermore, recent ABS data showed that while 84% of people who have retired from full-time work have retired completely, 29% of those intending to retire intend to work part-time after leaving their full-time job.¹¹

Women's vision of retirement is, on the whole, more positive than men's. While many women also plan to stay in the workforce, their identity and self-worth is not so wrapped up in what they do.

More often, working is about having the chance to do now what they weren't able to do when the kids were young. Many feel as if their careers are just beginning to take off.

Outside of work, older Baby Boomer women are experiencing a new sense of freedom and opportunity. Having largely been responsible for managing the house and raising kids, the fact that the kids are now well on their way to independence has had an enormous impact on their life outlook.

In particular, they have seen their daughters do things they never had the chance to do themselves, and there is a real sense of urgency to make up for lost time. So retirement for them is about having the chance to try new things, to experience it all while they are still healthy. There is no time to waste.

So how (and why) is Baby Boomers' vision of retirement different from that of their parents' generation?

In the first instance, it is clear that Baby Boomers expect to live longer. This means that they are aware of a need to not only plan how they will manage financially, but mentally and emotionally as well.

¹⁰ Australian Bureau of Statistics. Australian Social Trends, 1999: Population: Population Projectives: Our Ageing Population

¹¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics. Retirement and Retirement Intentions, November 1997.

Fortunately, one of the big changes older Baby Boomers report since their parents retired is that there is far more choice now in terms of activities and lifestyles.

I can remember Mum and Dad saying when he retired, what they were going to do. They were sort of just going to have their trip away and come back, and they were very limited in some of the choices that they had. Looking at my retirement, I would say that is one of multiple choices, of going away and travelling. It's part of retirement, but it's not all of retirement. ... It's just totally different. I think they felt retirement was when you grew old. And that happened at 65, where, to me, being retired at 65, hopefully, we'll be able to choose if you want to be retired at that age. Maybe you want to work till you're 68 or 70, part time or something. – Female Non-volunteer, Dubbo.

Travel plays a large part in their vision of 'winding down'. The idea of spending long periods of time away from home, exploring new places, is highly aspirational for this group. Thus if volunteerism is to feature on their future agenda, it will be necessary to create flexibility within the roles offered in order to entice them to become involved. Offering opportunities to volunteer away from home, for example, via interstate volunteer exchange programs, could also provide a means of enticing more older people to volunteer in the future.

Unlike their parents, travel is only one of a number of post-work options, not the only one. Baby Boomers see no reason not to embark on a new career now, or even into their 60s. They can keep working in the same job if they want to. They can develop a burning passion or interest into a money-earner. They can take courses to upgrade or gain new qualifications.

Above all, they do not feel constrained to act in a certain way simply because they are getting older. They simply refuse to believe that any choice open to a younger person is not equally open to them.

More choice means, however, that the next generation of older people, both men and women, may have less genuine 'free time' than their parents. Ken Dychtwald, in his book *Age Power: How the 21st Century will Be Ruled By the New Old*¹² supports the view that one of the characteristics of what he terms the 'emerging silver market' includes 'the continued absence of 'disposable time' due to complex lifestyles'.

¹² Dychtwald, Ken. *Age Power: How the 21st Century Will Be Ruled By the New Old*. Penguin Putnam Inc., 1999.

So for organisations that rely on volunteers, the challenge is to position volunteering opportunities as positive choices, as something they want to do for themselves, not just for the community.

For men in particular, the right volunteering opportunity can provide a renewed sense of purpose and structure in their 'winding down' years; a way to continue to feel useful, productive, and part of mainstream society. Women, on the other hand, may be looking for volunteer roles that provide them with the opportunity for new experiences, new challenges and stimulation.

Attitudes to Civic Duty

Broadly speaking, civic duty is interpreted by older people as giving to the community, or putting back into the community.

Many older people, including both Baby Boomers and the older generation, feel that the sense of community spirit they grew up with no longer exists. They express regret that it is possible to live in a society where neighbours don't know each other, where assistance is not automatically provided to someone in need because of fears about personal safety or being sued.

People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds who migrated to Australia expressed this feeling of regret over lost community spirit particularly strongly.

Thus there is a strong desire to see a resurgence of community spirit, to create an environment in which people feel safe and motivated to 'give' to the community.

As we will see later in this report, the Sydney Olympics went a long way towards recapturing that sense of community spirit, the spirit of neighbourliness and commonality. Older people were gratified to discover that community spirit is not dead - it just needs help to resurrect itself. They have seen what is possible when neighbours and communities get together, and they are keen to keep the spirit alive. So if ever there was a time to encourage giving back to the community, that time is now.

For the generation before Baby Boomers, giving (or putting back) to the community is more about a moral code or responsibility than a duty: it is just something they do, a part of who they are. They report having been drilled as children to think of giving to the community as a pleasure, rather than as an obligation.

It was something that they just did and it was part of their life...If old Mrs Smith down the road needed her lawns mowed they'd walk down and mow her lawn. – Male Volunteer, Sydney.

The strong sense of responsibility may be driven in part by their experience of Depression and World War, where the ultimate sacrifice for the sake of community was not only expected, but unquestioned.

Similarly, for people of culturally and linguistically diverse background, there is also a strong sense of reciprocity; that is, wanting to give back to the community what they received when they first came to Australia as migrants.

On the whole, Baby Boomer participants in our study agreed that the sense of giving to the community was stronger amongst their parents' generation. As a generation, Baby Boomers have had less experience of sacrifice, and the label the 'me' generation still seems to ring true. They also point to fragmented communities and more complex lifestyles as running counter to being able to give back to the community in the same way as their parents did.

It is not that the moral code to 'give back' doesn't exist amongst older Baby Boomers: it is just not as strong.

Furthermore, as they approach a new lifestage, there is a definite sense of re-evaluating and re-prioritising. For the majority of our sample, whose children were well on their way to independence, there is now more time for reflection. They have a new perspective born of making mistakes and learning from them. They have a strong desire to set things right, where they can.

For many this starts at a personal level; for example, men taking a much more active role in parenting their grand-children, to make up for the time they didn't spend with their own kids. But at this stage of their lives, they are also starting to think about ways in which they could be giving (or putting back) to the community.

With memories of the community spirit generated by the Olympics still fresh, and the sense of new perspective gained as they approach a new lifestage, now is the time to target older Baby Boomers with an appeal to help out in the community.

The biggest risk organisations can take is to wait until the Baby Boomers actually reach that next lifestage before targeting them to become volunteers. Older Baby Boomers have already started re-evaluating and re-prioritising,

and they are full of ideas about what they could do in the next stage of their lives. By the time they actually get there, there may be no room on the agenda for an activity they've never considered before.

Organisations need to target Baby Boomers now, before it's too late.

Informal Volunteering

The research uncovered that an enormous amount of 'informal volunteering' – that is, unpaid help provided to friends, family (not including one's own children still living at home) and neighbours, on an informal basis, and not through any organisation – is going on, untracked and unrecognised.

Of the 41 people who filled in our survey, 85% were doing at least 1 hour of informal volunteering per month. On average, each person was contributing over 6 hours per month. Those who were formal volunteers as well tended to contribute more (8 hours per month on average) on an informal basis than those who did not do any formal volunteering.

Much of this activity centres around doing things for elderly neighbours, such as handyman work, light housekeeping, driving them to shops or appointments, gardening, etc. It also includes minding grand-children.

For people of culturally and linguistically diverse or Aboriginal / Torres Strait Islander background, most of this informal volunteering happens within their own cultural community.

This sort of work is not thought of by those who do it as 'volunteering'; it is just helping out where they are needed. It is not something they think about – it is just something they do.

For most people, this form of volunteering has enormous emotional benefits:

- They can immediately see that they have made a difference to someone. The reward of a smile or a word of thanks or even a sigh of relief is sufficient motivation to keep doing it.
- There is a point of personal connection. Nearly always, this form of volunteering occurs because two people know each other already. Because of

this, the volunteer has some context for understanding the impact of their small gesture on the receiver's life.

- There is little thinking to be done, and no red tape to get around – most of this sort of help occurs on a spontaneous basis. The sense of satisfaction or gratification is immediate.

Clearly there is an opportunity and a need to celebrate the contributions that people make to their communities every day on an informal basis. Such work is a reflection of positive community spirit, and something older people would love to see more of. It is not about organisations losing kudos for what they do, but about people getting things done.

Public recognition of informal voluntary work is about giving pats on the back to those who do it – but more importantly, it is about encouraging others to give of themselves to enrich the community.

There are some other key lessons here for organisations that rely on volunteers:

- The single most powerful message organisations can transmit to potential volunteers is that they will make a difference. This message is even stronger if it involves a clear demonstration of how volunteers make a difference to individual people, and the sense of personal satisfaction they will gain from being able to make a difference.
- It is important to keep the formalities for becoming a volunteer at a minimum. The sense of immediate satisfaction is a powerful one, and likely to draw potential volunteers further in.
- Where possible, organisations should endeavour to provide volunteering opportunities as close to the volunteer's home as possible. This is not so much about convenience, but about capitalising on the emotional ties people have to their own local neighbourhood.

Indigenous Australians and Volunteering

The Aboriginal people who participated in this research reported that they were giving back to the community in many different ways, performing an enormous number of activities that might be recognised by the mainstream as 'unpaid work'. This work was being done, almost without exception, on an informal basis, rather than through an organisation, and within or on behalf of their own communities rather than outside of them. They reported that the vast majority of activity was untracked and unrecognised outside of their own communities.

In addition to the sorts of activities reported above (informal volunteering), giving back to the community by the Aboriginal people who participated in the research also included:

- Reconciliation events, meetings, public consultations
- Performing Acknowledgement and Welcome to Country at events¹³
- Family support, domestic violence issues
- Youth work
- Delivering groceries to community centres
- Getting programs and services up and running (eg. childcare centres, aged care)
- Mentoring
- Legal advice
- Helping people of the Stolen Generation find their families
- Providing a link between gaol inmates and their families

As in mainstream communities, one of the key sources of satisfaction in giving back to the community in this way is the sense of making a difference, for example:

'Seeing positive outcomes'

'Seeing people benefit from what I do'

'Empowering others'

However, the Aboriginal people consulted in the course of this research felt strongly that unlike mainstream communities, giving to the community is their way of life, not

¹³ Welcome to Country involves indigenous people welcoming non-indigenous people to the traditional lands they meet on. This has become a standard and respectful beginning to any public event.

an external activity that can be entered and exited from at will. Looking after one another is not necessarily something they do because they want to, but because they have no choice.

‘They [my community] won’t let me [stop]’

While giving to the community did result in some positive feelings as outlined above, there was a strong element of resentment that they were having to provide services themselves because the basic infrastructure that other Australians take for granted is absent or compromised in many communities.

Thus giving to the community means something very different for many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders than it does for other older Australians; it is about the protection, continuation, and ultimately the survival of the culture itself.

‘We care about our children and the survival of the next generation’

‘Our people suffer injustice and I want to help our people’

For the Aboriginal people who participated in this study, the word ‘volunteering’ had very negative connotations of exploitation. They felt strongly that they are doing for free what the government should be paying them to do – especially as they feel the services they provide are essential to the survival of the community. There was a perception that racism prevents many Aboriginal people from accessing existing formal services and the quality of life that other Australians take for granted, and that they are having to fix problems that the government caused in the first place.

They are particularly sensitive to being treated as unpaid consultants, taken for granted by the government:

‘If the work is for the government (which it usually is if it’s outside our own community), I feel I am being used. We are saving the government time and money by hiring consultants and doing it themselves. Others are gaining from our work. We are unpaid consultants!’

‘Intellectual property rights are abused. For example, others take our ideas, turn them into a government program and capitalise on them. We don’t get credit or acknowledgement..’

For many older Indigenous people, formal volunteering, that is, giving unpaid help to an organisation outside the community is simply not an option:

- As noted earlier, their first obligation is to look after their own community; to provide services essential to the survival of the community that are not being provided by government or other sources. This reflects an entirely different cultural perspective, in the sense the community is their extended family. It is an expectation, not a choice, that anybody with spare capacity or resources will dedicate these resources to the community. It also reflects the vastly different socio-economic circumstances that exist for many Indigenous communities compared to the mainstream.
- The rate of employment in many Aboriginal communities is very low, and further, many people in these communities have limited access to employment opportunities. There is a very real need to obtain paid work first, before giving unpaid help to an organisation becomes a realistic option. There is a perception among some Indigenous people that formal volunteering is a luxury for those who can afford it.

While volunteering is, for most mainstream Australians, a very positive concept, it must be acknowledged that cultural and socio-economic factors do play a large role in how volunteering is perceived. Thus, the concept of volunteering (and what this means in practical terms for encouraging and supporting people to give to the community), may need some adjustment to allow for different cultural perspectives.

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders who do provide unpaid services in the community, lack of recognition, both monetary and symbolic, is a key issue. A number of strategies to address this issue are recommended at the conclusion of this report.

Response to Formal Volunteering

Apart from those of Aboriginal background, response amongst older people to the idea of formal volunteering (i.e. volunteering via an organisation) was overwhelmingly positive.

This reflects an important change since research into the subject of older people and volunteering was conducted in NSW in 1999.¹⁴ That research indicated that

¹⁴ NSW Committee on Ageing. *A Two Way Street: Older People and Volunteering*, 1999.

volunteerism was associated more broadly with exploitation; that is, jobs being done for free that someone should be paid to do. There was also a feeling that some organisations were shirking their responsibilities to provide support to people who need it. Finally, there was a perception amongst some that volunteers are 'busy-bodies or middle class do-gooders, or alternatively that volunteering is something done by unemployed people who cannot get paid work.'

It appears that the Sydney Olympic Games has had an enormous, positive impact on the profile of volunteering:

The Olympics made a huge difference. Everybody has now got this big volunteer thing in their brain. Hopefully it won't die out ... It was amazing just how many people turned up. The work that they put in ... It was something you would have to be a part of to believe, it was just incredible. Everybody always had a laugh and a joke and a great time and they weren't all old people, they were a lot of young people who were unemployed, there were a lot of students, a lot of kids from overseas that were out here backpacking. They had actually come here so that they could volunteer for the Olympics ... hopefully people are going to keep doing it. – Male Volunteer, Sydney.

The Olympics were critical in highlighting the fact that thousands of ordinary people, from all walks of life, not only chose to become volunteers but fell in love with the experience. Their response to the experience was not just about being a part of the Olympics; it was about renewed faith in the inherent goodwill of a nation's citizens, and about the powerful emotions they experienced in giving of themselves. It is for these reasons that they have become volunteerism's strongest advocates.

Once again, this points strongly to the opportunity for community organisations to capitalise on the feelings that underpinned the Olympic 'buzz'.

Volunteerism's present status is reflected in research participants' image of the 'typical' volunteer:

- Friendly
- Caring
- Self-assured
- Big hearted
- Down to earth
- Sparkle and spring
- Busy

- Doers, not do-gooders

While the concept of 'volunteering' is largely positive at the moment, care must be taken to preserve this image by using appropriate spokespeople to encourage volunteerism.

An incident that took place just as the fieldwork for this research got underway serves to highlight the importance of choosing the right spokesperson to deliver the message.

In August, 2001, the Federal Treasurer, Peter Costello, delivered a speech in which he encouraged Australians to do voluntary work. Among the research participants, response to this speech was overwhelmingly negative.

At the time I think I felt very angry because I thought he was being sort of supercilious and patronising ... I felt he didn't have any right to say it. He was sort of saying basically I think, that everybody else should go out and be volunteers except him, it appeared. – Female Non-volunteer, Sydney.

Because Peter Costello does not have a public track record of volunteer work, and also because his role as Federal Treasurer necessarily involves controlling the government's expenditures, older Australians deeply questioned his motives in calling for volunteers. For them, the clear implication was that the government is trying to save money by getting volunteers to perform the tasks the government should be paying for.

Spokespeople must be chosen with extreme care, and must reflect the qualities that older Australians associate with the 'typical' volunteer. Ita Buttrose, Hazel Hawke, and Dick Smith were given as examples of people who could be credible spokespeople for the 'cause' of volunteering.

Consumers' cynical response to this speech also points to the need for government to act as a quiet facilitator in promoting volunteering, rather than in a directorial capacity.

You Have To Experience It To Understand It

A recurring theme throughout the research was people's passion for the voluntary work they do, either formally or informally. They expressed consistent difficulty in being able

to articulate to others who don't volunteer the deep emotions they feel when they know they have made a difference to someone:

'You have to experience it to understand it'

One man, a former crisis-line counsellor, brought to the group discussion a letter of appreciation that a regular caller had written to him. He said he was unable to read the letter aloud without crying, such was the effect of knowing how much positive impact he had had on the caller's life. He also said that the feeling was one that he just could not explain to those who hadn't experienced something similar.

For the vast majority of older people doing volunteer work, the experience is intensely satisfying.

I just joined as a volunteer with the Mercy Life Centre and they come to your home and interview you and they match you up with somebody in a nursing home who never has visitors. So you just go and see that one person and you become friends ... It is very rewarding. It's just, I mean her face when I used to walk in was just amazing. You know, like her eyes and she'd smile and I used to take hand cream and oils and things and I used to massage her hands for her and her arms and just even the thing of having somebody touch you for some of those people. They never have anybody to hold or to, you know to kiss her hello and goodbye, she was so excited. So yeah, it's very rewarding. – Female Ex-volunteer, Sydney.

With the coaching of the football team, especially if they win a game, just to see the joy on their faces, especially if they've achieved something. For example, I had a young guy I'd been coaching football for a couple of years now and a couple of weeks ago, he scored his first try and you know, it was as though you'd thrust a thousand dollars say in your hand, how happy you'd be if someone gave you a grand just for playing the game. And that in itself was just worth being there that day. Just to see this guy, talk about pleased. I felt like I'd achieved something. – Male Volunteer, Penrith.

Many find it frustrating and incomprehensible that more people don't volunteer. There is a real sense that non-volunteers just don't know what they're missing.

The power of personal experience must not be under-estimated. The key for organisations that rely on volunteers is to harness the feelings of their current volunteers to recruit more, by word of mouth.

How Do People Get Involved?

By far the most important trigger to getting involved in volunteering is a personal, emotionally powerful connection.

This can happen in a number of ways:

- Direct personal experience of needing help oneself in the past
- Knowing someone who develops a need for help
- Getting to know someone who needs help
- Knowing someone who needs and receives help (and seeing the difference having help makes to their lives), and knowing of others in a similar situation who don't

The middle two points are often triggers to informal voluntary work, as the existing relationship between volunteer and receiver enables the two parties to easily agree on what can be done and what needs to be done. The key driver here is a sense of both vulnerability and urgency; knowing the impact helping out could make, and the negative impact if you don't help.

The latter point is often a trigger to formal voluntary work. A common example amongst older people is the experience of having a parent in a nursing home. Many respondents expressed profound sadness at seeing other nursing home residents who rarely had any visitors, and the difference volunteer community visitors could make in that person's life. These people often expressed interest in becoming a community visitor themselves, or some other role in which they could alleviate sadness and loneliness.

For me in the future, I'll probably get involved in aged care because I've seen it, last year with my father ... So I think you've got to be probably be passionate about something that's actually touched you. – Female Non-volunteer, Sydney.

As hinted at above, one of the other very powerful triggers to volunteer involvement is being encouraged by someone else who already volunteers. One of the most important tools organisations have to promote volunteering opportunities, therefore, is word of mouth.

A volunteer's enthusiasm and obvious sense of fulfilment is powerful because it is perceived as unbiased. There is nothing to be gained by the volunteer from false enthusiasm. What exactly fulfilment means is discussed in greater depth below.

A number of other mechanisms, while not so emotionally powerful, were mentioned as triggers for volunteering. These included:

- Community paper
- Local language paper
- Booths in shopping malls staffed by genuine volunteers

While these triggers are not generally as emotionally powerful as a direct personal connection, they are nonetheless important because of the link they provide between a personal connection and an entry point for volunteering.

A good example of this is where a woman whose mother recently passed away in a nursing home sees an editorial in her local community paper about an organisation that needs community visitors, and decides to ring up the organisation to find out more. The personal connection is that she has seen people in nursing homes who have no visitors (compared to her mother, who had plenty), and the newspaper ad triggers her to do something about it.

It is important to note that the key mechanisms noted above are all local community sources. This supports the observation made earlier that older people are looking for opportunities to give back to their local community; once again, it is the personal connection that lures most strongly.

Furthermore, older people perceive that the community newspapers generally have more integrity than the major newspapers; the latter are thought to be primarily driven by big business interests, and therefore their motives are often questionable. It is a similar, if not quite so strong, issue as the Federal Treasurer encouraging volunteerism.

While direct mail was not mentioned by any of the respondents in this research, it is a mechanism that, properly used, could be an important trigger for volunteering because of the ability to personalise the message and target people in the specific local communities where volunteers are required.

Why Volunteer via an Organisation?

There are a number of important reasons why older people choose to volunteer via an organisation, rather than or in addition to volunteering informally:

Organisations can offer structure and guidelines. Because organisations deal with so many people, older people tend to credit them with having a broad perspective on what needs to be done. Generally speaking, there is a sense that the structures and guidelines they have established enable organisations to identify where the need is greatest, and the most effective ways to meet those needs.

Organisations offer a sense of safety and support. Because organisations know the clients, they are thought to provide a safer way for volunteers to be introduced to and work with clients. Volunteers know if they are uncertain or have a problem with a client or some other aspect of their work, there is generally somebody they can fall back on for assistance.

Some older people, particularly those who are already retired, find it easier to perform volunteer work if they have a fixed time slot each week, fortnight, or month. The routine enables them to fit other aspects of their lives around their volunteer commitment. For some, the routine itself is an important symbol that they are still making a useful and important contribution to society.

It is important to note here, however, that older people do not believe that routine and flexibility are mutually exclusive. The ideal formal volunteering opportunity will offer both.

One of community organisations' key strengths is that they offer an easy way for older people to connect a passion or interest with a volunteering role. As will be discussed later, one of the key barriers to volunteering is that people don't know where to find volunteering opportunities that will satisfy their fulfilment needs or match their interests. Organisations can make this vital link.

Finally, older people are attracted to organisations because of their reputation for doing good work. It is not only about potential volunteers knowing they will be doing

important work; it is also about gaining a level of public recognition for their own contribution simply by being associated with the organisation.

Key Drivers for Volunteering

At a basic level, the motivation to volunteer comes in part from a moral code that encourages giving, or giving back, to the community. As we have seen earlier, there is some evidence to suggest that this moral code is stronger amongst the generation before the Baby Boomers, but it does exist for Baby Boomers and can still be tapped.

The knowledge that one can make a real difference is what primarily motivates people to become involved in volunteering activities. In cases where there is a personal connection, this motivation triggers action when the person feels that if they don't do it, things will really fall apart, or not happen at all. The feeling of not making a difference is one of the key triggers for dropping out of volunteering. Volunteers and potential volunteers must be able to see the difference they are making for themselves, not just be told.

While the research did uncover a few volunteers who were purely motivated by a moral code and a sense of making a difference, the vast majority of volunteers and potential volunteers, especially Baby Boomers approaching retirement, required a third element in order to solidify their commitment: personal fulfilment.

Baby Boomers' expectations of the volunteer experience reflect their attitudes towards paid work, about which the following has been observed by the American social commentator, D. Quinn Mills:

Where previous generations have largely fitted themselves to the demands of work, the Baby Boomers insist that the job be adjusted to fit them.¹⁵

Personal fulfilment naturally means different things to different people, as will be explored in depth in the following section.

Interestingly, just a cursory look at advertising for volunteers in local newspapers, reveals that most organisations appeal only to the first two levels of motivation; that is, an appeal to the moral code, and the appeal for help to make a difference. While a brief

¹⁵ Mills, D. Quinn. *Not Like Our Parents: A New Look at How the Baby Boom Generation is Changing America*. William Morrom & Co., New York, 1987.

description of the volunteer job requirement usually follows, there is very rarely any mention of just how the experience will be personally fulfilling for the volunteer themselves.

As the older Baby Boomers approach their 'winding down' years, it will become increasingly critical for organisations that rely on volunteers to not only provide fulfilling volunteer opportunities, but to clearly communicate in their promotional material just how the experience will be fulfilling for the volunteer.

How Volunteering Can Meet Fulfilment Needs of Older People

The older Baby Boomers are not one homogenous group. They have different fulfilment needs, different motivations, different expectations, and different barriers to becoming volunteers. Organisations that rely on volunteers must be conscious of these differences, and tailor their promotional efforts as well as their systems and structures to ensure they meet the needs of current and future volunteers.

Older people fall into four broad categories in terms of the fulfilment needs they have from the volunteering experience: Nurturers, Adventurers, Socialisers and Workers. Characteristics (including their needs as volunteers and potential volunteers) of each of these segments are outlined below.

The Nurturers

The Nurturers have the following general characteristics.

- Nearly all are women. Most are mums who have had primary responsibility for raising kids.
- Many are from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. For some, the experience of having been vulnerable themselves and personally knowing the difference it makes when someone goes out of their way to help, is what motivates them to want to give back.
- For some, it is also about reciprocity; that is, the feeling that it's as well to give to the community now, while you can, because you never know when you will

need assistance yourself. This is particularly strong for people who work with or would like to work with people who are older and frail or have dementia.

- Their key motivation is emotional connection and self-worth. They want to give love, and the feeling of receiving love (or at least appreciation) feeds their self-worth. Their self-worth is also driven in part by a sense of stoicism and their own strength in being able to cope with emotionally difficult situations.
- Nurturers generally seek out experiences which involve working directly with people who are vulnerable: for example, being community visitors in nursing homes, working one-on-one with kids with physical or intellectual disabilities, providing respite care for older people in their own homes.
- They are keen to apply skills of which they are confident – their basic nurturing skills – to a new setting. The work is communication and tactile-based.
- They are perhaps more willing than other segments to undertake whatever tasks need to be done (eg. cleaning up, washing, etc.), because their focus is on doing whatever it takes to make the individual happy and comfortable. Nonetheless, they have limits as to what they are willing to do as volunteers.
- They are confident of their basic nurturing skills and their emotional capacity, but they are less confident in other areas.

The following quote typifies the Nurturer attitude to volunteering:

I would love to work with children that you could hold them and cuddle them and carry them and do the things that years ago you were able to do with children because the laws I know are there to protect them but they're also causing huge difficulties in that children, homeless children or children who don't have responsible parenting or abused children I'm talking about that absolutely need love and affection, aren't getting it ... I'm quite sure it adds to the trauma of their life because they had someone who touched and abused them, now nobody will touch them. So for me, my fantasy volunteering is being able to give these children the love and attention and affection they need. - Female Non-volunteer, Penrith.

Nurturers' key needs from the community organisation are emotional support – that is, knowing that there is an 'expert' on call to help them if a tricky situation arises, or to debrief – and positive reinforcement that they are doing a good and important job, even

if the individual receiving the service themselves is not overtly appreciative. Their sense of self-worth will be increased if the positive feedback recognises that they are doing a particularly difficult job well, a job that requires great emotional strength.

The Adventurers

As we noted at the outset, as kids leave home, many older Baby Boomers, particularly women, want to do everything, try everything they didn't have the chance to when the kids came along or even before, when women did not have the career opportunities they have today. These are the women who are filling the ranks of mature age students in university, TAFE and community college courses.

They are constantly on the look-out for new challenges and stimulations. Nothing is off limits. These are the Adventurers, among whom the following attitude towards the next phase of life is typical:

I don't envisage myself as completely retiring. I would need to keep busy. I'd go nuts being in total retirement ... I'm into doing lots of courses cos I just love learning alternate therapies and all sorts of stuff ... For me, it's [learning massage therapy] given me alternatives for the next ten years for instance. Where I want to change from doing office work and the kinds of things I've been doing for the last 20 years. – Female Ex-Volunteer, Dubbo.

While they may not be doing volunteer work now, their need for personal growth does potentially fit in with volunteering opportunities that organisations could offer.

Further, unlike many of the generation that preceded them, many of the Baby Boomer Adventurer women will have been in the workforce for some time, and as volunteers, may bring a new range of skills to organisations that may not have been available before.

The Adventurers are characterised by the following:

- More Adventurers are women than are men.
- They are to be found in many different roles in many different organisations. Wherever they are they want to be stretching themselves, doing things they haven't done before.

- Their key motivation for becoming volunteers is personal growth. It is all about gaining new skills, having new experiences, being challenged and stimulated. They are often willing to take a bit of a risk (i.e. risk failure) in order to increase their level of stimulation.
- They are interested in developing their interests and passions into skills. Younger older people in particular may be using volunteer work as an avenue to gain the skills to turn their passion or interest into a long-term money-earner.
- This group will be quickly demotivated if asked to undertake menial (to them) or 'dirty' work. They may prove to be somewhat fickle (i.e. move to a new organisation) if the volunteering experience does not continue to provide a challenge for them.

Their key needs from organisations are constant challenge, and a level of practical support to back them up when they take on a new challenge.

The Adventurer mind-set is one that does not appear to have been particularly well tapped to date by organisations that rely on volunteers. Careful structuring and positioning of volunteer opportunities could entice a whole new generation of older people, particularly women, to become involved. The challenge is to get the idea of volunteering on to their 'winding down' agenda now, before it is too late.

The Socialisers

The Socialisers have the following general characteristics:

- They may be either men or women. This segment was particularly evident among older men involved in surf lifesaving, SES or bushfire brigade work. It was also evident among some men and women doing club committee work.
- Their underlying motivation for volunteering is a sense of belonging. This desire for belonging in a group may not be stated or even conscious, but ultimately it is what keeps many Socialiser volunteers involved. Similarly, loneliness may be what stimulates some older people to get involved, but this is rarely admitted.

I think I also get as much out of it and I might even get more out of it than actually what I give. I don't know, I haven't actually weighed it up ... When I

first came to Dubbo, like I didn't know anybody in Dubbo and they had a notice in the paper looking for people to do a training course you see and I thought oh that'd be interesting, I love the zoo, and I didn't know anybody, and I thought I'd meet some like minded people. So I've got to meet some like minded people and I've got involved in it and I really enjoy it. – Male Volunteer, Dubbo.

- For Socialisers, volunteering is all about social interaction and the group experience. Maintaining contact with the younger generation is a key element of the social interaction for many; it is something they fear will be lost if they retire, and as we discussed earlier, maintaining contact with younger people is critical to their sense of being young themselves. Mateship, team-work, and an inter-generational circle of care are critical.

I don't take it really seriously. I do take the fires really seriously but there's fun and games after it and all that sort of stuff you know. We quite enjoyed sticking it up the other crews that come out, you hose them down and what not, and have fun, yeah. I suppose it's just an outing or a release or something. – Male Volunteer, Dubbo.

At a conscious level, volunteering for Socialisers is about fun and enjoyment. If it's not fun, they are unlikely to continue.

For some men, a key element of the volunteer work is the adrenalin rush of emergency services. However, it's not just about the adrenalin rush itself, but the fact that it is an experience that can be (and is) shared and re-lived with their team-mates after it's all over.

The key for organisations wishing to recruit Socialisers is to ensure an enjoyable group experience.

Workers

The following characteristics are typical of Workers:

- Most of the Workers are men. They are found in a variety of roles and organisations, using their existing practical skills in a new setting.
- Their key motivations for becoming a volunteer are to gain or maintain self-worth by being useful and productive. The right volunteer experience can provide a new role and a sense of purpose that may be threatened if and when they leave the workforce.

I think I'm the kind of person that, I'm going to have to find something to keep me occupied. Cos I found particularly during the retrenchment stage, okay you spend so much time looking for jobs and that, that's fine but it's easy to get into the veg stage too of not getting up, not doing this, I'll do it later, next thing you know, it's tea time and you've done nothing and that frightens me. That part of it really frightens me ... I want a job where I can get satisfaction out of it, where I feel as though I'm really achieving something, not going in there and filling in eight hours. Something that's going to exercise my brain. That to me's important. – Male Volunteer, Penrith.

The status that comes of doing tasks that nobody else has the skills to do is an unspoken yet important element. One of their key needs is for recognition of their skills.

The volunteer experience is also about regaining some control. As we saw earlier, for many older Baby Boomer men, the last few years have seen them losing control, particularly in the workplace. While some may have succeeded in shaping their current paid job to their liking, for others it is yet a dream. The opportunity to have control at least over their volunteering experience, is important. Thus organisations that can give them some control will earn Workers' loyalty.

Overall Barriers to Volunteering

There are four levels of overall barriers to volunteering:

- Personal Barriers
- Contextual Barriers
- Systemic Barriers
- Organisational Barriers

Personal Barriers

As older people lead increasingly busy and complex lives, it is self-evident that they may genuinely have less time to devote to volunteering. People who continue to work, develop caring responsibilities or are in poor health are going to be hard to reach, regardless of how motivating the message.

Contextual Barriers

The familiar refrain 'I don't have time' is a barrier, but it is not, however, necessarily an insurmountable one. The challenge is to position volunteering as a positive choice offering opportunities for fulfilment, not just a means of giving back to the community.

Another contextual issue, is at this stage, only a potential barrier: the 'top down', morality-based message encouraging volunteerism. The overwhelmingly negative consumer response to the Treasurer's speech, alluded to earlier, serves as a potent example of how important it is that messages encouraging volunteerism take into account the current context of consumer cynicism about politicians and government. The risk is that the positive effects of the Olympic volunteer movement could be overturned.

Finally, for people who have not volunteered before, apathy is an issue. Again we come back to the observation that you don't know how good it can feel until you try it. The challenge here is to use existing volunteers to spread the word, and to provide opportunities for people to have a go at volunteering without long-term commitment.

Systemic Barriers

For some non-volunteers, the only issue is that have not yet found something that 'grabs' them. They have the motivation, but it is the connection between their interest or passion and a volunteering role that is missing. They are vaguely aware that somewhere there is probably a volunteering role that would match their interests and passion, but they don't know where to go to find it.

Okay, assuming that we all retired tomorrow. What do you look at to find this information? There's nothing concise ... There's no lists of places that want volunteers. I mean there's nothing easy to find. What do you do, think Salvation Army, flip through the Yellow Pages to find their phone number? - Male Non-volunteer, Penrith.

There was no spontaneous mention whatsoever of the twenty-five Volunteer Referral Centres around NSW, nor of the website govolunteer.com.au. It is clear that some work needs to be done to raise public awareness about the role of these organisations.

Organisational Barriers

The major organisational barriers to volunteer work are as follow:

- Feeling that they are not making a difference. For reasons outlined earlier in the report, this is one of the most potent barriers to getting involved, and a key trigger to quitting volunteer work. A good example of this is a woman who was a member of a local crime prevention committee. The committee members undertook an enormous amount of work over a period of more than two years, but ultimately they were not able to effect any permanent change, either in local council or in the community. When someone approached her a couple of years later to become involved again, she refused.
- Feeling that they are being taken for granted. Being taken for granted is the second most important barrier to becoming or staying involved. More often than not, it is being taken for granted by the organisation that rankles, rather than being taken for granted by an individual receiving the service. Some clear examples of being taken for granted are:
 - They are just using me to save costs (usually an accusation made about larger organisations)

- I am doing tasks that the paid worker doesn't want to do
 - They just expect that I'll be able to work longer hours if they need me
 - The paid staff don't respect me
 - The paid staff don't thank me for what I do OR they say thank you it's like they don't really mean it (i.e. because the thank you is belied by their actions in which it is clear they are taking the volunteer for granted)
 - When a paid position came up, I was passed over
- Expectations weren't made clear. Potential volunteers need to know in advance exactly what sort of commitment is required of them, especially in terms of time. For some people who have volunteered in the past, the experience of constantly being asked to do more (and finding it difficult to say 'no') makes them reluctant to get involved again.
 - Too much red tape. As noted earlier, the perception that the process of getting involved is too complicated is a barrier for some older people. A small number of volunteers, in particular, Nurturers, reported that while they understood the need for quality control and standards to protect employees, they felt somewhat constrained in the work they were able to do because of over-regulation. An example of this is the man who was a crisis line counsellor, who was not permitted to see the regular caller in person, even though he thought he could be of greater assistance to her that way.
 - Internal politics. A small number of research participants reported being frustrated by the organisation's internal politics, which resulted in unclear direction for volunteers and friction between paid and unpaid staff.
 - Being out of pocket. Not being reimbursed for expenses necessary to performing a volunteer task, such as parking and fuel, is a niggling issue. Many volunteers feel that reimbursement of petty expenses for their contribution is mere common courtesy, and that organisations that rely on volunteers, regardless of how small they are, should be able to ensure that volunteers are never out of pocket.

You're just not going to be able to volunteer if you're hard pressed yourself. If it means that you're going to have to put out dollars yourself and you're not in the position to be able to do that, then obviously you're not going to put your hand up are you? – Female Ex-volunteer, Dubbo.

- Lack of flexibility. Many potential volunteers perceive that their desire to travel or take breaks will not be possible if they become involved in volunteer work that involves a regular commitment. This did not appear to be a significant issue for most volunteers; their general experience is that the organisations they work for are usually able to accommodate their needs for flexibility.
- Fear of being sued. In the present culture of litigation, a very small number of potential volunteers were fearful of being sued if things went wrong. They need to feel secure knowing that if something does go wrong, they will not be held liable.

Other Barriers

In addition to the overall barriers outlined above, some barriers exist that are particular to each segment (i.e. Nurturers, Adventurers, Socialisers and Workers).

Nurturer Barriers

While Nurturers are confident of their basic nurturing skills, they do fear their ability to handle situations outside of their area of confidence: for example, not knowing how being a visitor (and listener) for an elderly person with dementia may be different from being a visitor for any other elderly person.

They particularly worry about their ability to deal with unexpected emotions and situations; for example, if someone they have been visiting dies, or suddenly doesn't recognise them, or acts angrily or aggressively towards them.

Thus, for Nurturers, knowing that 'expert' support is available on-call should they need it, is critical.

Adventurer Barriers

The most significant barrier for Adventurers is being asked to do tasks that don't challenge them. They need to know that the volunteer experience will be stimulating and continually expose them to new experiences. This means they are particularly sensitive to being used (i.e. to perform mundane tasks that nobody else wants to do).

While they are more likely to take a bit of a risk than Nurturers, they are still somewhat wary of their ability to do the job, especially if it's something they haven't done before.

Organisations wishing to target Adventurers must provide reassurance that the volunteer is perfectly capable of doing the task that is asked of them, and must endeavour to provide a clear vision of the next challenge.

Socialiser Barriers

For Socialisers who are already volunteers, one of the key triggers for dropping out is that their friends have dropped out, or that the group has lost cohesion.

If the volunteer activity itself is no longer enjoyable, or becomes too emotionally draining, Socialisers are also likely to drop out.

Finally, as the essence of Socialiser involvement is about a group of people, they may drop out of volunteer activity if they perceive that it should be someone else's turn to do the hard work. This is particularly the case with activities such as committee work.

For non-volunteers who fit into the Socialiser segment, the biggest barrier is simply not being able to see the potential for developing a new group of friends.

Some may also lack the personal confidence to get involved in a team oriented volunteer activity.

Socialisers need constant reinforcement of why they have become volunteers; for them, it is not so much about the volunteer activity itself as it is about being part of a fun team with a common purpose.

So for organisations wishing to target Socialisers, providing visible opportunities for team bonding, on a social level, as well as on a functional level, is key.

Worker Barriers

For Workers who are already volunteers, a major barrier is lack of respect for their skills and contribution. They need to know that they are valued because their skills are in short supply. Being asked to do things that anyone could do is a big turn-off. For similar reasons, they are also very sensitive to being used or patronised; for them, this is a clear sign that they are not respected.

A feeling of losing control over what they do and how they do it is also a trigger for dropping out. For example, one man we spoke to had set up an informal neighbourhood committee to address garbage and pollution issues in his local river. When the committee sought to become a part of a formal local organisation, this man felt that rules, structures and time-lines were being imposed that did not suit his personal vision or needs, and he lost enthusiasm for the project.

For many non-volunteer Workers, a major barrier is simply that it has not occurred to them that a volunteer role may exist in which their skills could be useful.

Some also have apprehensions that putting their skills to use for a voluntary organisation might involve having to jump to someone else's command. Having lost much control already in the workforce, as they are gradually replaced by younger people, they have no desire to replicate the experience in a voluntary capacity.

Organisations wishing to target Workers must develop recognition strategies (both formal and informal) that accord status to the valuable skills that Workers bring to the organisation. Where possible, organisations should also try to give Workers as much control as possible over their volunteer experience.

How Does All of This Relate to the Current Volunteering Experience?

The vast majority (81%) of study participants who were volunteering, either formally or informally, reported being either satisfied or very satisfied with their current volunteering experience.

Formal volunteers reported an even higher level of satisfaction with the volunteering experience than those who only did informal work: 95% of formal volunteers were either satisfied or very satisfied. 58% were very satisfied, and 37% were satisfied.

There were no appreciable differences between those who were retired and those who were not, nor between men and women.

Very few expressed any dissatisfaction with the current volunteering experience (although upon probing in the group discussion, some issues did emerge that were not initially reported in the survey).

The most common stated reason for dissatisfaction was a feeling of being taken for granted, either by the individual receiving assistance, or the by organisation. Still, this was only an issue for 14% of those who were currently volunteering. Having to commit too much time (11%), feeling they were making no difference, lack of practical support, unreasonable expectations, and poor physical working conditions were also mentioned.

There was a very strong feeling amongst volunteers that if their needs were not being met, and if the experience was not satisfying, they would not be doing it. Therefore, it should not be a great surprise that the positives reported by far outweighed the negatives.

However, as the preceding report has outlined, there is still plenty of room for improvement, in particular, to increase the attractiveness of volunteering for new recruits, and for ex-volunteers.

Plans for Future Volunteering

Among the older people who were already volunteering (formally), most (92%) planned to keep volunteering. Barring sickness or family commitments, 21% of these indicated they planned to do more volunteer work in the future, and 71% said they planned to do about the same amount.

Most of these planned to stay on with the same organisation, or to do the same kind of volunteering work in the future. They enjoy the experience, (mostly) know and enjoy the other volunteers, know the clients, feel comfortable with the environment and understand what is expected of them.

Most people who were not currently volunteering (71%) expressed some interest in becoming more involved at some stage in the future, if the right opportunity came along. Most of those who said they planned to do more volunteering work in the future (80%) are currently non-volunteers.

Significantly, women were much more likely than men to express interest in doing more volunteer work in the future: 93% of those planning to do more in the future were women. 61% of women interviewed planned to do more volunteer work in the future, compared to 6% of men.

3.0 Summary and Strategic Recommendations

What is the Likely Impact of All of the Findings on Future Volunteering Patterns?

The key effects are as follow:

- Fewer older people will be volunteering purely for reasons of civic duty. However, the older Baby Boomers are reaching a life-stage where they are re-evaluating and re-prioritising, and they are thinking about how they can give back to the community. In an era of hugely increased 'winding down years' choices, particularly for women, it is critical for organisations to get volunteering on their agenda now, before it is too late. An active marketing effort will be required.
- The next generation of older people will expect the volunteer experience to provide fulfilment at a number of levels, as outlined in the main findings. Organisations' recruitment efforts, systems and structures must focus on meeting volunteers' fulfilment needs if they are to succeed in maintaining or increasing the current level of volunteering among older people.
- The older Baby Boomers are not one homogenous group. They have different fulfilment needs, different motivations, different expectations, and different barriers to becoming volunteers. Organisations that rely on volunteers must be conscious of these differences, and tailor their promotional efforts as well as their systems and structures to ensure they meet the needs of different segments of volunteers.
- A key growth segment, under-utilised at present as they are not particularly well targeted, is the Adventurers: mostly women (but some men) who are looking for new experiences, challenges and stimulation. As many will have been in the workforce for some time, as older volunteers, they may bring anew range of skills to organisations.
- As most promotional material for volunteering opportunities currently focuses on appealing to people's sense of civic duty or desire to make a difference, rather than on how the volunteering experience can be personally fulfilling, it is anticipated that growth could be achieved through all four key segments.

Strategic Recommendations

As we have outlined in the main body of this report, the most powerful volunteer recruitment and maintenance tactics stem from personal experiences; that is, knowing someone who needs help, or knowing someone who already volunteers, or experiencing the feeling of making a difference.

At the other end of the spectrum, the overwhelmingly negative response to a government 'directive' aimed at encouraging volunteerism is a clear indication of the least powerful mechanisms.

It is clear, therefore, that the key to success is to focus recruitment efforts on ground-up strategies, rather than top-down approaches. Government needs to act as a facilitator to ground-up efforts, rather than as a moral messenger.

Strategies for Community Organisations and Volunteer Referral Services

The strategies recommended here focus on three key areas:

- Recruitment
- Systems and Structures
- Recognition

Recruitment Strategies

Overall:

- Use volunteers as advocates for volunteering. Develop opportunities for volunteers to 'bring a friend' to experience the feeling.
- Ensure promotional material (and the experience itself) communicates that volunteers will make a real difference. If possible, give examples of how this has happened for volunteers.
- Provide opportunities for people to 'try-before-you-buy' the volunteering experience.
- Where possible, focus your recruitment efforts on making a difference in your local neighbourhood.

- Use local newspapers (including community papers, RSL paper, hospital newsletters), local community language papers, and community notice boards as key channels to promote your cause.
- List your volunteering opportunities with govolunteer.com.au.
- Use role models who match the 'typical volunteer' profile (i.e. friendly, caring, self-assured, big hearted, sparkle and spring, down to earth, busy) to spread the word about volunteering in your organisation.
- Ensure expectations (in terms of time, tasks) are clear to the potential volunteer at the outset.
- Communicate that volunteer roles are flexible enough to allow for breaks (eg. for travel, ill health or to care for someone). Ensure a back-up plan (i.e. for what happens if volunteers call in sick or need to take a break) and that potential volunteers know what it is, to obviate fear of being called on 'as an emergency.'
- Communicate that you will provide the necessary orientation to build their confidence. Position orientation sessions as obligation-free to encourage those who are not yet certain whether they want to become volunteers.
- Ensure a volunteer's first point of contact with the organisation is positive and encouraging.

Targeting the Key Segments

- Critically evaluate the volunteer opportunities your organisation can offer: will they suit Nurturers, Adventurers, Socialisers or Workers?
- Then, ensure your promotional material communicates the benefits of volunteering for the volunteer:
 - Choose which group(s) you wish to target.
 - Be specific: focus on key motivations for the groups you wish to target.
 - Use positive cues rather than negative (eg. for Socialisers, focus on being part of a group, rather than 'are you lonely?'; for Workers, focus

on making a positive contribution, rather than 'want to stay productive and useful?').

Recruiting Nurturers

- Focus on the emotional connections they will make with people (i.e. giving and receiving love).
- Communicate a sense of confidence in their ability to transfer nurturing skills into a new setting.
- Make it clear that they will have the support of 'experts', if the organisation is able to provide this.
- Use your existing volunteers to recruit new volunteers, for example, by offering opportunities to 'bring a friend on the rounds'.
- Target Nurturers via hospitals, nursing homes, schools, community centres.

Recruiting Adventurers

- Focus promotional material on opportunities for personal growth, new experiences, challenge, and stimulation.
- Use images of older people doing new and unexpected things in a volunteer capacity.
- Make it clear that they will have the practical support of 'experts'.
- Target Adventurers via community centres and programs, and community colleges.

Recruiting Socialisers

- Focus on the group experience, enjoyment and fun.
- Use images of volunteers having a good time together.

- Use your existing volunteers to recruit new volunteers (eg. bring a friend to a social function, such as Beer & BBQ).

Recruiting Workers

- Focus on how they can use their valuable, unique skills.
- Be specific about the skills you require. List what skills you need in your promotional material, and let them judge for themselves if they meet the criteria.
- Consider advertising for volunteers in places they visit when they are using their unique skills: eg. hardware shops, computer shops, trade magazines

Systems and Structures

- Keep entry formalities to a minimum.
- Ensure volunteers' specific roles and responsibilities (and the boundaries of their responsibilities) are clearly defined and communicated to volunteers upon induction, and to all paid staff who may come into contact with them.
- Consider developing a charter outlining how the organisation treats its volunteers. This could include basic guidelines for paid staff, such as respect, dignity, support.
- Ensure any guidelines for quality control and employee protection are explained to volunteers, along with the rationale behind them. Provide examples of where the guidelines may conflict with what volunteers intuitively feel is the 'right thing to do', and why the guidelines are still important.
- Provide initial orientation to potential volunteers, in order to increase their confidence in their ability to do the job. Ensure there are opportunities for ongoing training or refreshers.
- Ensure full reimbursement of volunteers' expenses.

- Ensure your organisation has the necessary insurance to cover volunteers against liability.
- Structure your volunteer programs to allow older volunteers the flexibility to take time off to travel, if they fall ill, or have to care for someone.
- Develop a list of volunteers who are willing to be on-call or available for short-term volunteer requirements.
- Endeavour to match potential volunteers with people or issues in their neighbourhood.
- Create links with local newspapers to promote volunteering opportunities within your organisation.
- Catalogue all the volunteering opportunities you have within your organisation, and use these as a basis for your recruitment efforts.
- Ensure there is an alternative avenue for volunteers to raise concerns about their role, the organisation, or paid / unpaid staff (i.e. not just the volunteer co-ordinator). Institute systems to deal with complaints, including feedback to the volunteer as to how their issue is being addressed.
- Ensure volunteers are aware of vacant paid positions within the organisation and have the opportunity to apply. If they are not suitable or if there is a better candidate, ensure that the appropriate staff member takes time to explain to the volunteer candidate why they did not get the position.
- Actively participate in Volunteers Week, with activities centred around:
 - A recruitment drive (using strategies outlined above, Recruitment)
 - Formal recognition of volunteers
 - Publicity (eg. editorial in local newspapers and local language papers, testimonials by volunteers, credible spokespeople)

Targeting the Key Segments

Nurturers

- Ensure there is an 'expert' on-call to provide support (emotional and practical) and positive reinforcement.
- Consider offering debriefing sessions to volunteers in similar roles, to allow them to share experiences.

Adventurers

- Ensure there is an 'expert' on-call to provide support (emotional and practical) and positive reinforcement.
- Consider developing mini- 'career paths' for volunteers who seek ongoing challenge and stimulation.
- Monitor levels of interest / engagement in the volunteer job to avoid sudden departure.
- Consider developing a list of short-term volunteering opportunities, and target Adventurers.
- Consider developing a volunteer exchange program with an interstate counterpart.

Socialisers

- Consider developing a program of social activities to bring volunteers together.

Workers

- As far as possible, provide opportunities for volunteers to structure their own volunteering experience IF THEY CHOOSE. Consider providing initial orientation to the organisation, then encouraging them to put forward a proposal of how they could use their skills to help out.

Recognition Strategies

- Consider setting aside a small budget to pay for spontaneous expressions of appreciation for volunteers' efforts. Encourage all paid staff to provide positive feedback and reinforcement to volunteers on a spontaneous, informal, and ongoing basis.
- Develop and implement a formal volunteer recognition program (eg. certificates, awards, Christmas gift, annual dinner). Ensure it receives high publicity both internally and externally.
- For larger organisations, consider developing a team volunteer award.

Strategies Specifically for Volunteering Referral Services

- Develop a PR campaign to increase profile of the Service.
 - Focus on Volunteer Referral Services' role in matching people's passions and interests to volunteering opportunities in local communities
- Consider contributing a regular column for the local paper as an ongoing recruitment strategy.
 - Use testimonials focusing on outcomes for both the person volunteering and the people benefiting from their contribution.

Strategies for Local Government

Local government has the opportunity to act as a conduit between community organisations and local citizens, as follows:

- Encouraging links between community organisations and local media to promote volunteering.
- Promoting local Volunteer Referral Services, where applicable.
- Provide resources and encouragement for any volunteer activities going on in the local area. Consider appointing a dedicated worker to act as Council Contact for existing volunteer groups or those trying to set up.

- Urge local businesses to become involved in local volunteering efforts.
- Use Council publications to promote local volunteering efforts.
- Consider developing local council awards for volunteer service (both informal and formal).

Strategies for NSW Government

- Adopt a facilitator role rather than an overt or directorial role in encouraging volunteerism.
- Consider funding the development of a NSW Volunteers' Yellow Pages, and launching this as part of Volunteers Week. Consider approaching business for sponsorship of the Yellow Pages. The Yellow Pages could include:
 - What organisations are in the community that need volunteers
 - What opportunities exist within these organisations
 - What skills are required
 - What time commitment is required
 - Practical examples of people doing the work,
- And most importantly:
 - What will the volunteer get out of it? Use testimonials to provide first-hand 'evidence'.
- Liase with Volunteering NSW and Volunteering Australia to ensure work on the Yellow Pages does not unnecessarily duplicate work that these organisations have already undertaken in setting up govolyunteer.com.au.
- Consider funding the development of a media kit for community organisations to use to promote volunteering opportunities in the local media. The media kit would need to focus on how to communicate the benefits of volunteering for the volunteer.
- Consider providing extra funding for Volunteer Referral Services to promote volunteering more broadly in the community, and for Volunteering NSW to promote govolyunteer.com.au.

- Earmark a proportion of funding to community organisations for reimbursement of volunteers' petty expenses, and ensure systems are in place within organisations to use the funding for this purpose.

- Consider re-framing the definition of volunteering to allow for different values and perspectives of diverse cultures and communities; in particular, to consider the vastly different socio-economic circumstances that affect people's willingness and capacity to volunteer, and whether special measures need to be taken to allow for some monetary compensation in particular circumstances (eg. the 'informal' work currently undertaken by many Aboriginal people to provide essential services to their own communities).

- Consider setting a minimum standard for payment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people involved in government-sponsored community consultations.

- Consider funding a program (administered via local government committees) to:
 - Track informal volunteering contributions by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

 - Reimburse (at the minimum) their out-of-pocket expenses.

 - Institute a program of recognition for their contributions.

4.0 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Discussion Guide (Mainstream and CALD groups)

The following was used as a guide to focus group discussions. Other lines of questioning were introduced to draw out emerging themes and gain deeper insights.

Introduction

- Introduction to the research
- Researcher to distribute and explain questionnaire: respondents to complete (MAINSTREAM GROUPS ONLY)
- Respondents to introduce themselves: name, occupation, household, other kids not living at home

Current Activities

- What activities are you currently involved in? Work, 'leisure', other?
- Which do you enjoy most / least / why?
- Which are you doing more / less of / why? How do you feel about this?

Retirement

- Each respondent to bring out object that represents 'retirement' for them
- What does the word 'retirement' mean to you? What words, thoughts, feelings come to mind?
- NON RETIRED: Are you planning to retire? If so, what are your plans for retirement? How have your attitudes & plans changed? How are your attitudes to and plans for retirement different from your parents'? Why is this?
- How do you feel about retirement? Best things / worst things?

Civic Duty

USE THIS SECTION TO EXPLORE INFORMAL VOLUNTEERING

- What does 'giving back to the community' mean? Examples? What kinds of things do you do to 'give back' to the community?
- PROJECTIVE: Some people have said that the current generation of older people have a greater sense of 'giving back to the community' than the Baby Boomer generation, others have said the opposite is true. What do you think?

Volunteering

- What does 'volunteering' mean to you? What words, thoughts, feelings come to mind? Positives & negatives?

TALKING NOW ABOUT VOLUNTEERING PEOPLE DO THROUGH AN ORGANISATION...

- How much volunteering do you do, if any?

- What type of volunteering do you do?
- Why did you get involved in the first place? Why are you involved now?
- How did you find out about the need for volunteers in this area? [EXPLORE SOURCES OF INFORMATION, eg. community newspapers, community bulletin board, word of mouth]
- Best things / worst things about volunteering?
- Has anything ever happened to you when you've been volunteering that really put you off? What was it? What happened? How did you feel? What could have made it better?
- What are the biggest barriers to doing more volunteering?

- PROJECTIVE: Thinking about other people of your age that you know, why do you think they don't volunteer? [RESEARCHER NOTE: We need to go beyond 'I don't have time' to more emotional issues]

- Think about a time that you heard about a need for volunteers that you didn't respond to. Why not? How could they have reframed the request so that you were more motivated to become a volunteer?
- Do you think you will do more, less or about the same in the future (i.e., when retired)? Why?
- Are your views about volunteering the same or different to your parents'? What has changed? Why?
- Did anyone hear Peter Costello's comments about volunteers. What did you think? How did it make you feel? Do you think it's likely to encourage or discourage people from volunteering?

- PROJECTIVE: (Individually) Imagine the ideal volunteering experience for you. What would you be doing? How often / how much? Which organisation, if any? Why that one? What systems and structures would be in place? How would you feel?

- GUIDED FANTASY: We are now going to do a little exercise. Please sit back, relax and close your eyes... Imagine that you are walking down a long corridor. There is a door on your right, with a sign on it that says 'The World of Volunteers'. Go through that door. What do you see? Who is there? Men or women? How old are they? How are they dressed? What are they doing? What are they like as people? What else is going on? What sounds can you hear? How do you feel in this room? When you have a clear picture, raise a finger in the air. Open your eyes and write down everything you can remember. DISCUSS.

Summary Exercise

- Imagine you are the management committee of NSW Volunteer Association. All of your volunteers at have resigned. Your job is to write an ad to attract new volunteers OF YOUR AGE GROUP to become volunteers. The ad should cover:
 - What is the key message you want to get across?
 - What will they get out of it?
 - How will they be treated
 - What does your organisation promise to do to make sure volunteering is a good experience?
 - Where will you put the advertisement?

- DISCUSS RESPONSES

Appendix 2 – Discussion Guide (Aboriginal Group)

- What does 'giving back to the community' mean to you?
- Do Aboriginal people have a different view of 'giving back to the community' than other Australians?
- How many hours have you spent doing volunteer work in the past month, if any?
- What type of volunteer work have you been involved in this year?
- Why did you get involved in this kind of volunteer work?
- What is the best thing about the volunteer work you do?
- What is the worst thing about the volunteer work you do?
- What might stop you from doing more volunteer work in the future?

YOUR FIRST NAME: _____

QUESTIONNAIRE

Q1.

How many hours have you spent in formal voluntary work in the past month?

_____ hours.

'Formal voluntary work' means unpaid help you've given, in the form of time, service or skills, through an organisation or group. This includes organisations such as welfare or education organisations, community service groups (eg. Rotary), sport and recreation bodies, and churches.

Q2.

How many hours have you spent in informal voluntary work in the past month?

_____ hours.

'Informal voluntary work' means unpaid help in the form of time, service or skills, but not through an organisation or group.

Q3.

What type of volunteer work have you been involved in this year? That is, for whom do you do volunteer work, and what is the nature of the activities you do? Please write your answer in the space below.

Q4.

Overall, how satisfied are you with the volunteer work you have been involved in over the past 6 months? Please circle the answer which most closely matches how you feel.

Very satisfied

Satisfied

Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied

Not satisfied

Very unsatisfied

Q5.

Are there any particular aspects of your volunteer work that you have been dissatisfied with? If so, what are they? Please write your answer in the space below.

Q6.

Do you intend to volunteer more, less, or about the same as you do now, in five years' time? Please circle the answer which most closely matches how you feel.

More

Less

About the Same

Q7.

What type of volunteer work do you intend to do in the future, if any? Please write your answer in the space provided.

Please tick the box below if you don't intend to do any volunteer work in the future.

Q8.

What is / are the main reasons (in order of priority) you intend to volunteer in the future? (IF RELEVANT) Please write your answer in the space below.

Q9.

What is / are the main reasons (in order of importance) you might not volunteer in the future? Please write your answer in the space below.

Q10.

In what year did you turn 50? 19_____ .

THANK YOU