

Volunteering Victoria

Annual Report 2011-12

*Leading, representing, connecting and
supporting Victorian volunteering*

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Volunteering Victoria is endorsed as a
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www.volunteeringvictoria.org.au

About Volunteering Victoria

On 18 July 1984, Volunteer Centre of Victoria Inc and Volunteer Action Centre Inc were amalgamated to form Volunteering Victoria Inc.

For nearly 30 years, Volunteering Victoria has grown from being a totally volunteer run organisation, to one employing six part time staff (in the new financial year the organisation sees its first full time staff position – with the appointment of a full time CEO).

Volunteering Victoria plays a dual role in the volunteering sector.

As Victoria's **peak body** representing the interests of volunteering in our State, we collaborate with our members and stakeholders who represent the broad cross section of not for profit organisations in our community. We work with Federal and State governments on policy area and legislative change that affects volunteers and volunteering.

Volunteering Victoria promotes volunteering, connects organisations and people and supports the development of volunteering through training and professional development, education and information.

We also act as a **resource centre** for the inner urban area of Melbourne area, providing direct advice and support to individual volunteers, volunteer managers and coordinators, and volunteer organisations about how to locate and manage volunteer opportunities.

President & CEO Report

The 2011/12 financial year has wrought a series of changes for our State's peak body for volunteering. The Federal National Volunteering Strategy brought with it significant changes to the way volunteering organisations – including ourselves – are funded. As an organisation currently funded primarily through State and Federal grants, this meant the first few months of 2012 were uncertain times for us, and many in our sector.

The new Federal funding priorities have necessarily shaped our own. This funding agreement, along with our State agreement (with DPCD) were secured as the financial year drew to a close, enabling us to turn our full attention to how we can deploy our resources to best lead, represent, connect and support volunteering in Victoria.

In this financial year, we have also seen a significant change in our National body, Volunteering Australia. At the time of writing, staffing was still unclear, and the office had moved from Melbourne to a new location in Canberra. We have continued to work closely with our interstate counterparts and Volunteering Australia, to ensure services and resources previously managed nationally can be maintained where feasible.

This year also saw the departure after nine years of service of CEO Dianne Embry. Dianne served with Volunteering Victoria as a volunteer, a board member and then a single paid (part time) staff member. She revitalised the organisation to a small but dedicated team of six part time professionals, and the Board thanks Dianne for her years of commitment and service.

This is also an opportunity to thank the Volunteering Victoria staff, who have weathered the ups and downs of the year with dedication and professionalism, and to note the contribution of Katherine Koesasi, our Peak Services Manager who embraced the role of Acting CEO as the recruitment process was underway. That process resulted in the appointment of Sue Noble at the end of the financial year – a candidate with a strong personal commitment to volunteering and a proven vibrant and dynamic leadership style. Sue comes to us after three years as CEO of Softball Australia and a background in business development and marketing at senior levels in peak professional services membership bodies.

We look forward with confidence to our future and embracing the opportunities presented in a recalibrated volunteering landscape.



Robyn Rose, President



Sue Noble, CEO

Treasurer's Report

Volunteering Victoria has reported a net profit of \$32,519 the financial year ending 30 June 2012.

Total Income: \$493,819

Total Expenses: \$461,300

Cash Reserves: \$191,561

For the detail on the financial statements, please see the separate attachment to this Annual Report.



*Andrew Mattinson
Treasurer
Volunteering Victoria Board of Management*

1. Helping Victorians to volunteer

Connecting

Part of Volunteering Victoria's purpose is to provide a **Volunteer Information Service** which assists individuals to find opportunities, and organisation who rely on volunteers to attract, retain and manage their volunteer workforce. In this area of our work, we received more than 600 phone or email inquiries in the 2011-12 financial year, and have now engaged volunteers to help run the service and answer inquiries. We have also revised the content available on our new, relaunched website.

In many cases, we refer individuals to **Viktor Online** which is part of a national online network which operates as a volunteer 'job board' to individuals searching for volunteering opportunities. It also provides a mechanism for not for profits to post and promote vacancies or call for volunteers.



Find a volunteer role

In the past financial year, Volunteering Victoria has managed increasing demand on Viktor online; it has serviced more than 110 organisations who have posted volunteer roles with us.

More than 2000 volunteers applied for **over 300** roles, an increase of 35 percent since the last financial year. Our challenge is to ensure that Viktor remains visible as a hub to connect volunteers and opportunities in an increasingly busy (and noisy) market for information.

Advising

We facilitate **Employee Volunteering Programs** by advising and consulting with both corporates who want to identify and build a relationship with a not for profit through an EVP, and NFP's who want to foster the support of business.

We consulted to **more than 70 businesses** to match their employee volunteering program to community organisations or programs, or to advise them on how to identify not for profit and community organisations that will align with their employee volunteering program strategy. This included event-based support where hundreds of volunteers were required (such as *Dementia Awareness Week* for Alzheimers Australia and the *Hanover Ride for Home* fundraiser), as well as ongoing support relationships.

Over the past 12 months, we have increased the education and information available to equip not for profit's to maximise the benefits of corporate volunteer programs and provide consulting services to organisations requiring assistance.

Communication

Publicly, Volunteering Victoria continues to engage in the community and proactively communicate and educate about volunteering. We take on regular public speaking opportunities and have presented at more than 20 events including conferences, panels,

workshops and expo's, and participated in International Volunteer Day (December 2011) and National Volunteering Week (May 2012).

We have presented to diverse range of community groups and not for profit's across Victoria to speak about the role and benefits of volunteering, and the changing nature of volunteering in our community. The audience at these events (totalling around 1350 individuals) has ranged from volunteer managers to volunteers and potential volunteers.

Invitations came from a range of settings and sectors including local governments, environment, professional membership bodies, and health and community services, plus emergency support services, education and charities.

We have engaged with mainstream and specialist media on issues such as the changing nature of volunteering, the benefits of volunteering and facts and figures about who volunteers are (and where) and communicate regularly through our bi-monthly e-bulletins to stakeholders and members (Volunteering Matters and M Bulletin).

Social media

In the past financial year a significant achievement has been the deployment of social media – facebook (565 fans) and Twitter (1181 followers), and an overhaul of our website. This allows far greater engagement with the volunteering sector and our peers across borders, and a much more responsive approach to disseminating information 'as it happens' where appropriate.

New website

In May 2012 the Volunteering Victoria website was significantly overhauled and relaunched. The new website has more intuitive navigation and accessible information relevant to volunteers and organisations. Our website averages between 7000 and 8000 visitors each month.

The website showcases volunteering stories from our members which demonstrates the wide range of ways volunteering works in our community, and highlights the emerging issues of importance for volunteers and volunteer organisations – for example, discussion about changes to work health and safety laws, the Equal Opportunity Act and the Associations Incorporates Act. However the website also features announcements about grants, awards and newly published information of use to the sector.

A high traffic area of our website (apart from the 'Find a volunteer role' button on the home page) is the 'What's On' events calendar section. This area publishes conferences, information sessions, training and professional development activities of Volunteering Victoria and all not for profits across Victoria – including Network meetings.



2. Volunteering on the agenda

The past financial year saw changes to legislation that has a direct impact on volunteers and volunteering organisations. As the change process unfolded we worked with key organisations responsible for, or impacted by the change. This meant we regularly engaged with our interstate counterparts and Volunteering Australia on policy, advocacy and research matters. We also contributed regularly to calls from Government to provide feedback and submissions.

Our work with VCOSS has included participation in an Advocacy Day at Parliament House on 18 April, in which we collaborated with community sector organisations and peak bodies from across Victoria to articulate the shared priorities and concerns of the Victorian community sector to parliamentarians. In addition, we worked with VCOSS to establish the Peak Skilled Volunteer Brokers Collaborators Network which involved the development and publication of skilled volunteer brokers' directory.

We regularly engage with PilchConnect, VCOSS Peaks and Statewide Networks Forum and various Office of Community Sector Reference Groups (including the NFP Reference Group, Workforce Reference Group, Regulatory Reform Reference Group, Governance Capability Framework Reference Group and NFPs and Business Partnerships Reference Group), and supported the Department of Planning and Community Development in planning their series of VolunteerFests.

Research Framework

A new Research Framework was designed to reinvigorate and support volunteering research in Victoria. It was finalised following a Research Roundtable on 8 May 2012 which brought together researchers and practitioners.

The Framework aims to define the research priorities and create a pathway for collaboration on innovative and useful research and data gathering. It commits us to:

- Advocating for increased investment in volunteering research,
- Developing collaborative research focussed relationships with volunteer-involving organisations – their staff and volunteers, universities – researchers and students, government – local, state and federal, and philanthropic organisations, and
- Developing strategic research priorities and a research framework in collaboration with key stakeholder.

Submissions 2012

- *Response to the Draft National Sport Volunteer Strategy* with Volunteering Australia and Volunteering Tasmania September 2011
- *Submission to the Inquiry into the opportunities for participation of Victorian seniors* September 2011
- State Government Budget Submission for 2012-13 December 2011
- *Submission to the Inquiry on Growing the Suburbs Infrastructure and Business Development in Outer Suburban Melbourne* December 2011
- Contributed to Volunteering Australia's *submissions regarding the Establishment of the ACNC* January 2012
- *Response to the Consolidation of the Commonwealth Anti-Discrimination Laws Discussion Paper* January 2012
- Contributed to Volunteering Australia's *submission to ABS in response to Investing in the Information that Counts the most* June 2012

3. Doing better together

Unite

Volunteering Victoria has 261 members. A significant portion of our membership is drawn from the health and community services sector, and in the coming 12 months, our membership strategy will focus on attracting a fuller representation of members from a range of areas, but sporting, local government and emergency services in particular.

Connect

Volunteer Victoria provides a Secretariat to ensure contact with all networks annually to ensure communication and support is provided, connect people and resources and provide briefings on relevant changes affecting the sector. This connection also keeps us in touch with sector needs.

Thirty-six Volunteer Program Coordinator & Manager Networks are registered with Volunteering Victoria, and we visited 24 this financial year. The networks provide opportunity for peer to peer & professional development support within regions.

Resource development & training

Volunteering Victoria this year further developed existing relationships – and created new ones – with organisations and businesses in order to deliver resources and training. Without these partnerships, these projects and supports would not have been possible.

Professional development

We worked with the Victorian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission on the changes to the *Equal Opportunity Act* which meant that volunteers would be covered by sexual harassment provisions, and have the same rights and responsibilities as paid employees. That collaboration resulted in jointly run train the trainer sessions about the change in a volunteering context, and information and updates.

A partnership with National Australia Bank has been multi-faceted and strengthening into a highly productive two way relationship. In this financial year, we have worked with NAB to deliver professional development – with the generous support of NAB expertise and venue – during National Volunteer Week. This one off event was well over-subscribed and focussed on diversity and change management, and best practice application in managing volunteer workforces.

In August 2011 we worked again with the Office of Community Sector and ran a Professional Development session for our members on the Office's Workforce Capability Framework. Later in 2011, we also provided a professional development opportunity in partnership with WorkCover and Hudson. The Hudson opportunity involved the sharing of knowledge gathered during Masters' research by Guy Drerup on volunteer motivation. Workcover presented critical information as the health and safety harmonisation process

was underway nationally in a session called *What employers and volunteers need to know about health and safety legislation*.

Entry level training

Volunteering Victoria offers five training modules aimed at new or recent entry volunteer program managers from members and other VIOs. These popular training sessions have been offered twice as workshop series and are also regularly delivered to member organisations and other VIOs at their locations. The five modules include:

- Managing volunteers
- Establishing a volunteer program
- Standards and Best Practice Frameworks
- Recruitment and Retention of Volunteers
- Induction and orientation of Volunteers

All sessions were fully subscribed, with 202 participants across the five modules, indicating core and intermediate training in the volunteering sector is in demand.

Resources

In the previous financial year (2010-11) there was a focus on developing a range of resources. This financial year focus was on consolidating and disseminating these materials, and a modest program of developing resources in partnership with others.

A key resource development focus this year was part of a broader education and information campaign about the changes to the Equal Opportunity Act 2010, which came into effect in August 2011 and meant that volunteers and unpaid workers were covered under the sexual harassment provisions. We worked with the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission to develop resources and training for distribution to the volunteering sector.

We worked with the Victorian Office of the Community Sector (OCS) on the development of two soon to be released resources. One with a focus on governance and board capability and the other on assisting regional communities to foster relationships between not for profits and regional businesses. (Due for launch in the new financial year and available by our Annual General Meeting).

A partnership with Exxon Mobil has resulted in the revision of a suite of publications – including three guides and 15 fact sheets, which will be available in print and on-line in the new financial year. This sponsorship will mean the resources will be widely promoted and freely available to the volunteering community.

The Team

Board of Management

Members of Volunteering Victoria's Board of Management serve in a voluntary capacity.

Robyn Rose, President

Manager – Catholic Care Access Program in Melbourne

Leanna La Combre, Vice President

Manager – Governance, Strategic Projects and Risk, Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine

Elizabeth Hamshary, Secretary

Senior Associate & Pro Bono Coordinator, Clayton UTZ, Melbourne

Andrew Mattinson, Treasurer and Finance Sub-Committee Chair

Manager – Grant Thornton, Recovery and Reorganisation Division

Tara Cantwell

Consultant trainer to the volunteer and disability sectors

John Cashmore

Head of Commercial Banking Laverton Geelong – Westpac Banking Corporation

Dianne Embry, Ex-Officio

CEO of Volunteering Victoria

Barry Furness, Training Sub-committee Chair

Manager for Volunteer Services – YMCA Victoria

Dr Leonie Lockstone-Binney

Senior Lecturer – School of International Business, Victoria University

Terry Macdonald

Chairman – Committee of Management for Eastern Volunteers

Helen Ridgeway

Coordinator – Volunteering Mornington Peninsula and Positive Ageing Officer of the Mornington Peninsula Shire Council

Boyce Wong, Development Sub-committee Member

Marketing Analyst – Cement Concrete and Aggregates Australia

Staff

Dianne Embry (*until June 2012*) & **Sue Noble**
Chief Executive Officer

Katherine Koesasi
Senior Manager – Policy and Advocacy

Marisa Nowak
Community and Business Partnerships Manager

Caroline Whiteside
Membership Manager

Jane Burrows (*until May 2012*) & **Alicia Patterson**
Communications Manager

Kathleen Mather
Administration and Executive Support Officer

Elouise Holmes (*until September 2011*)
Senior Manager – Operations and Programs

Kerrie Green
Finance

Volunteers

Volunteering Victoria thanks the following people for contributing as volunteers to our organisation over the 2011/12 financial year.

David Hannon
Volunteer Information Officer

Preethi Mahesh
Volunteer Information Officer

Mark Robinson
Volunteer Information Officer

Roger Blachut
Volunteer Marketing Consultant

Ann Bolch
Volunteer Writer

Bill Snaddon
Volunteer Writer