SARC INQUIRY INTO THE CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES ACT 2006

15 August 2011

VCOSS – Supplementary information
ABOUT VCOSS

The Victorian Council of Social Service (VCOSS) is the peak body of the social and community sector in Victoria. VCOSS works to ensure that all Victorians have access to and a fair share of the community's resources and services, through advocating for the development of a sustainable, fair and equitable society. VCOSS members reflect a wide diversity, with members ranging from large charities, sub-sector peak organisations, small community services, advocacy groups and individuals involved in social policy debates.

VCOSS is committed to living out the principles of equity and justice, and acknowledges we live in a society where people are interdependent of one another. VCOSS respects the land we live in and recognises the Aboriginal custodians of the country. VCOSS is committed to reconciling all injustices with Aboriginal Australians. The VCOSS vision is one where social well being is a national priority, and:

- ensures everyone has access to and a fair share of the community’s resources and services;
- involves all people as equals, without discrimination; and
- values and encourages people’s participation in decision making about their own lives and their community.

Authorised by:
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SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

As requested by the Scrutiny of Acts and Regulation Committee, VCOSS provides the following information:

Breakdown of funding received by VCOSS from the Victorian Government

Below is a breakdown of funding received by VCOSS from the Victorian Government for Human Rights Education projects aimed at the community sector around the implementation of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act (the Victorian Charter).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007-08</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008-09</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>$125,000</td>
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Information regarding the One DHS Standards

Attached are two draft documents providing an overview of the One DHS Standards.

Further information is available at:


Information regarding the national and state not-for-profit regulatory reforms processes

As indicated to the Committee, VCOSS has been engaged in a significant range of work around reducing the regulatory burden for the not-for-profit sector. The not-for-profit sector has been subject to a range of regulatory requirements at both a State and Federal Level. VCOSS provides the following links may be of assistance to the Committee:

- Productivity Commission Research Report – Contribution of the Not-for-Profit Sector, and the submissions of VCOSS, ACOSS and PilchConnect;
- State Services Authority Not-for-Profit Regulatory Review and the VCOSS submission; and,
- Strengthening Community Organisations Action Plan and the VCOSS submission.

The following pieces of work that are also occurring in Victoria as part of the regulatory reform agenda need also be considered.

- The One DHS Standards project, which has streamlined multiple DHS standards into one; and
- The Office for the Community Sector’s work on implementing a Standard Chart of Accounts and the development of a Common Funding Agreement;


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Considerable reform is also being undertaken at a national level through the establishment of Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission. This will result in a single national regulator. More information can be found in the range of submissions that were made to the recent Treasury consultation, along with the findings of that consultation.

VCOSS would encourage any work that is recommended by VCEC to take this broader set of earlier work into account and complement it, rather than undermine or duplicate. Streamlining regulation at both a state and federal jurisdiction is paramount for many community sector organisations as it will result in improved organisational practice, and ultimately improved outcomes for service users.

3 non-negotiable recommendations to SARC around the Review of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities (as invited by the Committee)

The three non-negotiable recommendations that VCOSS would make to SARC around the Review of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act are:

1. Strengthen the Victorian Charter through ensuring protection of all human rights, including social, cultural and economic, and specific rights, such as Indigenous rights, women’s rights and children’s rights.
2. Maintain Victoria’s national leadership through continuing to incorporate human rights into new legislation, such as the new Mental Health Act.
3. Strengthen the implementation of the Victorian Charter through integrating its requirements with other policy and regulatory tools, mechanisms and processes, particularly those that apply to community sector organisations.