

Working Together

A Bright Future

ACT Partnership
Report
June 2007



Government of South Australia

Office for Volunteers

Foreword from the Minister

I am very pleased to report on the continuing development of South Australia's volunteer sector.

The Government of South Australia recognises the vital role the sector plays in achieving the many social and community building aspects of South Australia's Strategic Plan. There have been many achievements over the last twelve months and we now lead the nation with our volunteer participation rate estimated to be 51 percent.

This report not only acknowledges these achievements but also looks to the future. The completion of the Advancing the Community Together Partnership Review and the adoption of its recommendations has given us new energy, refocussed our strategies and increased our resolve. As a result, I expect to see steps taken that will support and develop the volunteer sector for the greater benefit of our communities.

Once again, I would like to thank the members of the Volunteer Ministerial Advisory Group, now chaired by my colleague Gay Thompson MP, and the members of the Volunteer Partnership Action Committee. Their combined efforts continue to take us forward in our commitment to South Australia's volunteers.

I commend this report.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer Rankine".

Hon Jennifer Rankine MP
MINISTER FOR VOLUNTEERS



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INTRODUCTION

Working Together – A Bright Future

This report catalogues the achievements made under the *Advancing the Community Together: A Partnership Between the Volunteer Sector and the South Australian Government* (ACT Partnership) since its launch in 2003. The ACT Partnership continues to evolve and mature with new structures in place to continue assisting in the development of the volunteer sector.

The introduction of recommendations from the Partnership's first biennial review, completed in the first half of 2006, is now driving this evolution. One major recommendation has seen the introduction of the Volunteer Task Force (VTF). The VTF is a small group with representatives from both the Volunteer Ministerial Advisory Group and the Volunteer Partnership Action Committee further consolidating the close working relationship between the Government and the community sector.

South Australia has the nation's highest volunteer participation rate with just over half our population being active volunteers. The volunteer sector has a vital role in contributing to the well-being and strength of our communities. This is recognised by its prominence in South Australia's Strategic Plan as a key indicator of Building Communities (Objective 5) which states:

Our priority is to develop South Australia as a place in which people care for each other and contribute to their communities. This will enhance our peace, pride and prosperity and build "social capital". It will also attract new migrants, visitors and investors who bring skills, resources and ideas. The focus will be on improving trust, increasing involvement in voluntary activities, building strong community networks, and increasing participation in democratic processes.

There have been great achievements in the first four years of the ACT Partnership and, as the partnership and its structures evolve and mature, the path has been set for the future.



The Advancing the Community Together (ACT) Partnership document signed in 2003 by Premier, Mike Rann and 29 people representing the volunteer sector formalised and declared a commitment to work together for the development of volunteerism within South Australia. The volunteer sector has a prominent role to play in South Australia's Strategic Plan, being a vital element of the Plan's Objective 5: Building Communities. The original target of reaching a 50 percent participation rate by 2010 has been achieved. Now the task is to not only maintain that level, but to increase the effectiveness of community organisations as they contribute to our society.

The Partnership has recognised the role of Government and how it can best assist the volunteer sector. A very important and practical element was the establishment of a mechanism that would be the volunteer sector's direct voice to Government. This was the Volunteer Ministerial Advisory Group (VMAG) whose members represented different parts of the volunteer community. The Partnership also recognised the reach and importance of the many Government Agencies that have impact on the volunteer sector, whether through their own volunteer programs or simply through their administrative roles. This brought about establishment of the Volunteer Partnership Action Committee (VPAC) made up of senior public servants from all government departments.

The ACT Partnership has been the foundation and driver of strong development of volunteering in South Australia. An obvious highlight has been reaching the target set by South Australia's Strategic Plan to have a volunteer participation rate of 50 percent by 2010. This was reached in 2006, four years ahead of schedule. The challenge now is to maintain that figure and continue to make qualitative gains. The Government's commitment to further develop and strengthen the sector has simply been encouraged and reinforced.

This section reviews some of the key achievements made up to this point in the history of the ACT Partnership. These achievements include contributions made by the Office for Volunteers, other SA Government Agencies and the range of stakeholders that make up the volunteer sector itself. The partners have achieved much since the signing of the agreement. Community organisations themselves have taken great strides. Their management has become more "professional". They are now better at recruiting and retaining volunteers, reaching their communities and gathering support and generally becoming more effective in achieving their goals.

The ACT Partnership document contains the following general principles and objectives:

- **Encourage people to volunteer** - through promotion and recognition of volunteering and its value to the community
- **Remove barriers to volunteering** - actively find and fix issues that impede volunteering
- **Establish lines of communication** - develop and improve communication between the volunteer sector and Public Sector Agencies
- **Develop appropriate policies and practices** - ensure future policy decisions take into account any potential impact on the volunteer sector.

From these general principles and objectives eight 'Commitments to Action' were made:

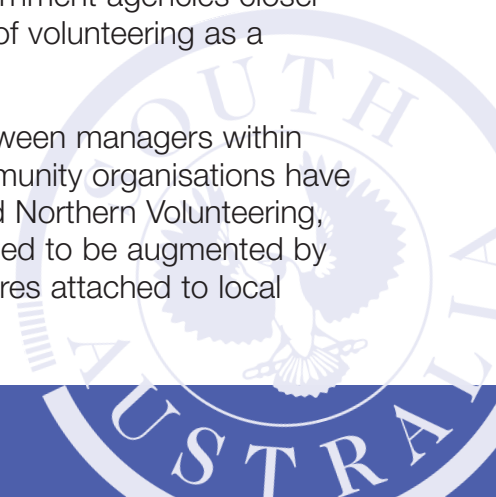
- Communication
- Equity and Inclusiveness
- Policy and Legislation Development
- Recruitment and Retention
- Resources
- Risk Management
- Training
- Accountability

These 'Commitments to Action' have guided and provided direction for VMAG and its Working Parties, VPAC and the Office for Volunteers.

Communication

VMAG and VPAC continue to act as significant, high level networks. VMAG has seen its members, representing the various sections of the volunteer sector, not only provide valuable feedback and advice to the State Government but also form very valuable links between members themselves. Likewise VPAC has brought government agencies closer together with serving senior executives having the advancement of volunteering as a common objective.

Other networks have been created that see regular meetings between managers within State and Local Government programs. Similar networks of community organisations have developed around our Volunteer Resource Centres: Southern and Northern Volunteering, at Clare, Naracoorte, Port Augusta and Gawler. These are expected to be augmented by further networks developing through new volunteer resource centres attached to local government councils.



The Office for Volunteers has developed a new, information rich website at www.ofv.gov.sa.au This site contains many resources that are of use to community organisations such as downloadable appreciation certificates to thank valuable volunteers and help to maintain their enthusiasm. This website, in combination with the electronic newsletters provides an important means of two-way communication enabling volunteers and their organisations to easily provide feedback.

The Office for Volunteers provides fortnightly electronic newsletters to a far reaching database of community organisations. This newsletter provides information on the availability of training, grants and other initiatives relevant to the volunteer sector.

Thanks to an arrangement with the University of South Australia's School of Communication, websites have been developed, at no cost, for almost three hundred community organisations under the Office for Volunteers' Community Webs program, The program has been extended to include event planning, development of promotional material such as brochures, overhauls of organisations' communication processes and databases.

Two annual public events staged by the Office for Volunteers continue to grow in importance: South Australian Volunteers Day function and the Volunteer Congress held each year on International Volunteer Day (5 December). The SA Volunteers Day concert now attracts "sell-out" crowds and the Volunteer Congresses, with quality speakers and excellent break-out sessions also continue to experience very high levels of interest and participation.

The Office for Volunteers has participated in and been supportive of many expos and exhibitions since the ACT Partnership came into being. Their displays and exhibits have promoted volunteering at police and emergency service expos, local council events and many other community-based festivals.

EQUITY AND INCLUSIVENESS

Volunteering is a very important means of enabling people to engage with the wider community, to be included in and able to benefit from being involved with other people. Just as importantly, all people, from whatever background and abilities have something to offer the community sector and are therefore encouraged to become involved in their community. Sound equity and inclusiveness policies simply equate to good recruitment and retention of volunteers.

The Office for Volunteers has made strong links with organisations that support Culturally and Linguistically Diverse groups. These organisations range from those that support particular ethnic groups such as the Italian Assistance Association and other government bodies such as Multicultural SA and Immigration SA. A program to provide new immigrants with opportunities to volunteer with the wider South Australian community as well as in their own communities is presently being co-developed by the Office for Volunteers, VMAG and VPAC.

Information on providing opportunities for people with disabilities has been provided through fact sheets that provide general information together with contacts for specialised advice.

POLICY AND LEGISLATION DEVELOPMENT

VMAG had advised that people were often reluctant to volunteer as office bearers with community organisations due to concerns about being personally liable for the organisation's financial and legal affairs. In response, the Government has amended the Associations Incorporation Act 1985, now providing the same level of protection to voluntary boards as that provided for company directors in the business sector. All voluntary board members automatically have personal liability protection provided they have acted in good faith and taken reasonable care. Reasonable care includes seeking and using advice from someone with expert knowledge.



RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Recruitment and retention of volunteers is an ongoing challenge for all community organisations. Consultation with the volunteer sector via VMAG resulted in the development of a number of strategies designed to address this fundamental issue continuously facing the volunteer sector. As noted previously, the target set for volunteering in South Australia's Strategic Plan was to reach a 50 percent volunteer participation rate by 2010 (from 38 percent in 2000). This has been achieved four years ahead of schedule: the amended target now, is to maintain this level whilst recognising that there are qualitative gaps. The Office for Volunteers has been able to contribute in several ways:

- Advertising campaigns with the message of volunteer recognition and appreciation
- Providing marketing collateral such as banners, posters and promotional material to community organisations and other government agencies
- Specific fact sheets on recruitment and retention
- Volunteer Congress sessions focussing on recruitment and promoting volunteerism
- Engagement of specialist speakers and trainers such as Dr Judy Esmond who is now a regular visitor to South Australia as part of her national seminar tours
- Development of the Volunteer Achievement Record, an approved means of cataloguing volunteers' history of volunteering as well as the training and skills they have acquired.

RESOURCES

Information on the availability of grants as well as the undue complexity associated with subsequent applications and acquittal was identified by VMAG as a concern. In response, the Government's grants programs have been made much easier to access with a dedicated section on Service SA's website. It has information on all grants available to South Australian community organisations. Application forms are now much simpler, as are acquittal procedures, especially for grants of less than \$5000.

The Office for Volunteers has developed a suite of resources that are made available to community organisations and other SA Government departments and agencies. These include a comprehensive selection of fact sheets made available as hard copies through Volunteer Resource Centres, Service SA outlets and Local Government council offices. They are also available as downloads from the Office for Volunteers' website.

Other resources that have been developed by the Office for Volunteers and made available to the volunteer sector include:

- Premier's Certificate of Appreciation – for exceptional contribution
- Certificate of Recognition – for dedication and commitment
- Information booklets
- Promotional material and marketing collateral.

Support is also provided to the States' volunteer sector peak organisations. Sport SA for example has adopted and adapted the Volunteer Achievement Record, referred to above, for use by sports volunteers.

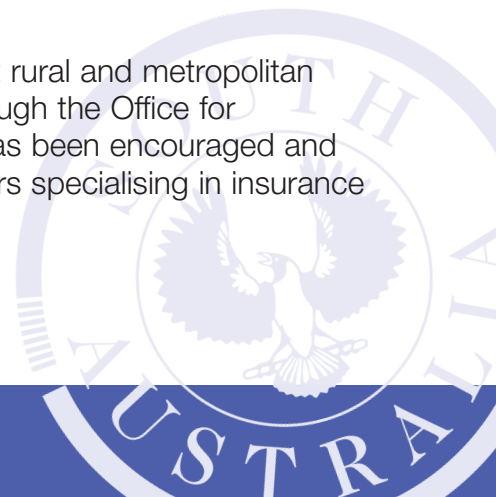
RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk management has become a major consideration for community organisations with many adopting policies and procedures that give risk management high priority.

It has been addressed in the Office for Volunteer's suite of Fact Sheets that are available as hardcopies through Volunteer Resource Centres, Service SA outlets, Local Government offices, the Office for Volunteers itself and as a download from www.ofv.sa.gov.au

Compulsory national police checks have become a standard requirement in many organisations. The Government, through the South Australia Police provides free Police Checks for organisations that work with vulnerable people (children, disabled and elderly). Removing this otherwise additional financial burden is greatly appreciated by the South Australian community organisations that fall into this category.

Risk management training workshops have been held throughout rural and metropolitan South Australia. This training continues to be made available through the Office for Recreation and Sport. Grouping insurance within council areas has been encouraged and become a viable strategy for community organisations and brokers specialising in insurance for community organisations operating in South Australia.



FREE TRAINING PROGRAMS

Providing training for volunteers and volunteer managers is seen as a key element of increasing the effectiveness of the volunteer sector as it makes its contribution to strengthening our communities. Since the establishing of the ACT Partnership, free training has been delivered by Volunteer Resource Centres in the metropolitan area by Southern and Northern Volunteering and Volunteering SA, as well as in regional South Australia in Port Augusta, Clare and Naracoorte. Training delivered by these organisations is now augmented by a series of training modules available on the OFV website.

The online training project was the result of a partnership between the Office for Volunteers and Volunteering SA who commissioned TAFE SA's Volunteer Management department to design the modules. The modules can count towards formal Volunteer Management qualifications if they are conducted and assessed by registered trainers. As such, they provide a valuable pathway to employment.

The module topics include:

- Be an Effective Volunteer
- Customer Service
- Engaging Generation Y
- Introduction to Mentoring
- Volunteering With the Frail Aged
- Working in Teams
- Developing Grant Applications
- Introduction to Effective Communication
- Introduction to Marketing
- Volunteers and Paid Staff
- Introduction to Governance
- Introduction to Risk Management

ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability between the partners is an important aspect of the ongoing success of the ACT Partnership. This has been largely provided by the close working relationships between the partners with regular formal and informal meetings, regular reporting and the seeking of feedback through open forums. For example, volunteers are invited to Community Cabinet sessions that are conducted regularly throughout metropolitan and regional South Australia.

THE OFFICE FOR VOLUNTEERS: Supporting the Volunteer Sector

The past year has been one of transition as recommendations from the ACT Partnership review have been implemented.

Projects have been undertaken throughout 2006/7 at the direction of the Minister for Volunteers, including a completion of works in progress, while others have been guided by South Australia's Strategic Plan and the objectives of the ACT Partnership.

THE VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY RECOVERY INFORMATION SYSTEM (VERIS)

Eyre Peninsula Bushfires of 2005 were a great tragedy and South Australians once again responded in their hundreds wanting to volunteer and help in whatever way they could. The logistical difficulties of managing the many people who spontaneously volunteered has led to the development of the on-line Volunteer Emergency Recovery Information System (VERIS).

VERIS was developed by the Office for Volunteers on behalf of the Department for Families and Communities (DFC). Winner of the National Australian Safer Communities Award, VERIS, now managed by DFC's Volunteers Unit was activated for the first time following the Renmark Storm in January 2007.

Relevant ACT Partnership commitments:

Communication

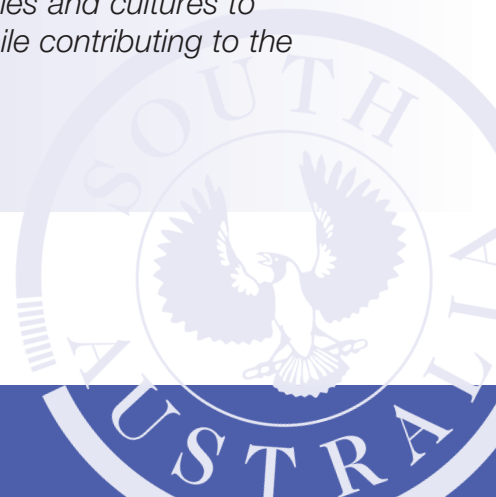
- *Manage, support and communicate through structures which enable volunteers to participate to their full potential.*

Equity and Inclusiveness

- *Provide opportunities for people of all ages, backgrounds, abilities and cultures to volunteer in an area that matches their abilities and interest, while contributing to the community.*

Recruitment and Retention

- *Provide opportunities for volunteering.*



THE OFFICE FOR VOLUNTEERS: Supporting the Volunteer Sector

NEW WEBSITE: www.ofv.sa.gov.au

The internet has now become a key means of providing information and the new Office for Volunteers website has been redesigned to take advantage of its capabilities. Containing a wealth of information and resources, it is helping to address the growing demand for information relating to the volunteer sector.

Relevant ACT Partnership commitments:

Communication

- *Manage, support and communicate through structures which enable volunteers to participate to their full potential*
- *Develop ways to better communicate understanding of priorities and the sharing of ideas and information.*

NEW RESEARCH PAPERS

Research papers commissioned by the Office for Volunteers now include 'Family Volunteering' and 'Older People and Volunteering' by Adelaide University's Zoe Gill. Families are seen as having potential as a source of volunteers while recognising that there are special requirements. Given elderly, retired people are a traditional source of volunteers, it is worthwhile to have a solid understanding of their particular requirements. Both research papers have sections that cover barriers and motivation for these groups, and give useful ideas for groups to use when recruiting new volunteers. They are available as downloads from the OFV website.

Relevant ACT Partnership commitments:

Communication

- *Manage, support and communicate through structures which enable volunteers to participate to their full potential*
- *Facilitate research and development strategies to enhance volunteering as well as sharing of information and ideas.*

NEW FACT SHEETS

The suite of Fact Sheets provided by the Office for Volunteers continues to grow. It now includes: Recognising Your Volunteers; Risk Management; Group Insurance for the Volunteer Community; Engaging People With Disabilities in Volunteering; Implementing a Disputes Resolution Policy and Solving Volunteer Workplace Disputes; Incorporation; Media Guide for Community Groups; Gaining Sponsorship for Community Groups; Volunteer Protection Act and Protection for Community Board Members.

Relevant ACT Partnership commitments:

Communication

- *Manage, support and communicate through structures which enable volunteers to participate to their full potential.*

Resources

- *Recognise the particular circumstances of small organisations as well as rural and small communities.*

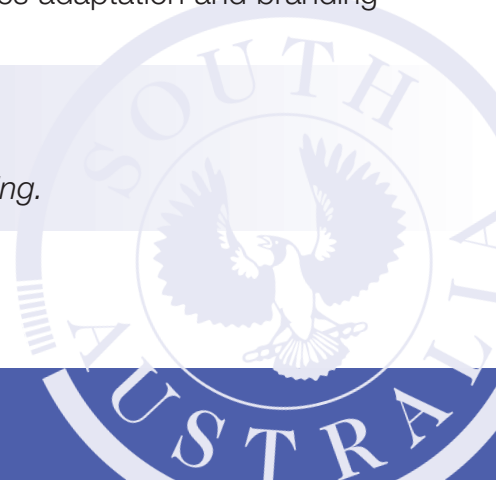
VOLUNTEER ACHIEVEMENT RECORD

Volunteers participate in a variety of activities in which they develop a whole range of skills and experience. Many of these activities also provide access to training and development opportunities. The Volunteer Achievement Record was an initiative of VMAG's Working Party Three and was developed to provide a formal resumé that is transferable and recognised within the volunteer sector and would have credibility with potential employers. It is available as a download from the website as a PDF or in a form that enables adaptation and branding by other organisations.

Relevant ACT Partnership commitments:

Recruitment and Retention

- *Promote and support young peoples' participation in volunteering.*



THE OFFICE FOR VOLUNTEERS: Supporting the Volunteer Sector

COMMUNITY WEBS PROGRAM EXTENDED

The Office for Volunteers alliance with The University of South Australia's School of Communication continues to provide benefits. Students themselves gain real-life experience as part of their education and South Australia's community organisations receive free website development and hosting.

The program has been extended to include event planning, development of promotional material such as brochures, overhauls of organisations' communication processes and databases. Over 300 organisations have joined the Community Webs program with RSPCA Thrift Shops being one of the most recent additions.

Relevant ACT Partnership commitments:

Communication

- *Manage, support and communicate through structures which enable volunteers to participate to their full potential.*

Resources

- *Promote joint ventures with the community sector, various levels of government, the corporate sector, educational institutions and the media.*

COMMUNITY VOICES

In another alliance with the tertiary sector, the Flinders University Screen Studies Department, has launched the Community Voices program. Ten community organisations were selected from 65 applicants and are having various styles of promotional video material produced by students. The organisations themselves have nominated the type of film to be produced. Some have chosen TV commercials or community service announcements while others have chosen training videos or mini documentaries.

Relevant ACT Partnership commitments:

Communication

- *Manage, support and communicate through structures which enable volunteers to participate to their full potential.*

Resources

- *Promote joint ventures with the community sector, various levels of government, the corporate sector, educational institutions and the media.*

THE OFFICE FOR VOLUNTEERS: Supporting the Volunteer Sector

PROTECTION FOR BOARD MEMBERS OF COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

Amendment to the Associations Incorporation Act 1985:

The same level of protection provided for company directors is now available to board members of community organisations following amendments to the Associations Incorporation Act. All voluntary board members automatically have personal liability protection provided they have acted in good faith and taken reasonable care. Reasonable care includes seeking and using advice from someone with expert knowledge.

Relevant ACT Partnership commitments:

Policy and Legislation Development

- *Identify and respond to issues that impede volunteering in general*
- *Consult with peak volunteering organisations when proposed legislation or policy has significant impact on volunteering.*

SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S VOLUNTEERS DAY

The Volunteer Day Celebration held annually in June on South Australia's Volunteers Day/Queen's Birthday Public Holiday is not simply a celebration of volunteering and a thank you event for South Australia's volunteers, but by also providing due recognition, it serves to inspire and recruit volunteers. The 2006 event at the Adelaide Festival Centre was a great success being oversubscribed by hundreds who were given priority for the 2007 event. The Office for Volunteers has developed a very beneficial alliance that in 2007 will once again see the event being a collaboration between the Government and the Centre's Cabaret Festival.

Relevant ACT Partnership commitments:

Recruitment and Retention

- *Promote and acknowledge the contribution of volunteers*
- *Recognise the contribution made by employers.*

Communication

- *Manage, support and communicate through structures which enable volunteers to participate to their full potential.*



NEW SUPER SA ALLIANCE

Super SA has agreed to include material promoting volunteerism in information packs provided to new retirees. Such strategic alliances that provide access to target groups are seen as an efficient means of reaching and motivating new volunteers.

Relevant ACT Partnership commitments:

Recruitment and Retention

- *Foster, encourage and promote volunteering throughout the community.*

Communication

- *Manage, support and communicate through structures which enable volunteers to participate to their full potential.*
- *Share information and ideas that will enhance our community, promote volunteering and recognise the contribution of volunteers.*

NEW TRAINING MODULES ON-LINE

Twelve standardised and nationally accredited training modules are now available on the Office for Volunteers website. The project was the result of a partnership between the Office for Volunteers and Volunteering SA who commissioned TAFE SA's Volunteer Management department to design the modules. The modules can count towards formal Volunteer Management qualifications if they are conducted and assessed by registered trainers.

Relevant ACT Partnership commitments:

Training

- *Recognise and facilitate training opportunities for volunteers to undertake their many and varied roles.*

THE OFFICE FOR VOLUNTEERS: Supporting the Volunteer Sector

2006 VOLUNTEER SUPPORT FUND

The 2006 Volunteer Support Fund grants scheme has seen eighty-four community organisations awarded grants totalling almost \$150,000. The successful organisations are from metropolitan Adelaide and thirty-one local government regions throughout South Australia showing that volunteering is very strong throughout the State.

Relevant ACT Partnership commitments:

Resources

- *Recognise the particular circumstances of small organisations as well as rural and small communities.*



State Government Achievements and Volunteer Programs

The raising of the profile and appreciation of volunteering within government departments and agencies has been a feature of the ongoing development of the volunteer sector since the signing of the ACT Partnership. This has been driven to a great extent by the Volunteer Partnership Action Committee (VPAC), made up of senior public servants from all Government Departments. VPAC continues to meet its major objective: to ensure a whole-of-government approach to volunteering and the community sector in general.

VPAC has achieved:

- Specialist units or officers responsible for volunteer programs within Government Agencies leading to best practice management of each Agency's volunteer-using programs
- Cooperation and mutual support of development of programs i.e. volunteer policies and procedures developed by the Department for Families and Communities' Volunteer Unit being adopted by the Department for Environment and Heritage
- Cooperative and coordinated across-agency responses to legislation and regulations that impact on the volunteer sector
- Recognition of the outstanding contributions made by Government's own volunteers.

An example of the benefits of across-agency cooperation has been demonstrated by the Office for Volunteers and the South Australia Police with the provision of free national police checks system to South Australian community organisations that support vulnerable people (children, elderly and disabled).

The growing prestige of the Joy Noble Medal for volunteers in Government programs illustrates the progress made in not only giving due recognition to outstanding individuals but also lifting the profile of the contribution made by volunteers throughout Government.

The development of the volunteer sector has played, and is continuing to play, a major role in achieving many targets from South Australia's Strategic Plan. The most obvious target falls under Objective 5: Building Communities by maintaining a volunteer participation rate of at least 50 percent. But these volunteers make real contributions to every part of the Strategic Plan:

- **Objective 1:** Growing Prosperity
- **Objective 2:** Improving Wellbeing
- **Objective 3:** Attaining Sustainability
- **Objective 4:** Fostering Creativity and Innovation
- **Objective 5:** Building Communities
- **Objective 6:** Expanding Opportunity

State Government Achievements and Volunteer Programs

This section of the Report provides an overview of some of the volunteer programs managed by Government Departments and their Agencies that are contributing to achieving targets from South Australia's Strategic Plan: the targets are provided in Appendix 2.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

The Department of Justice has a range of volunteer programs operating within its agencies and statutory authorities.

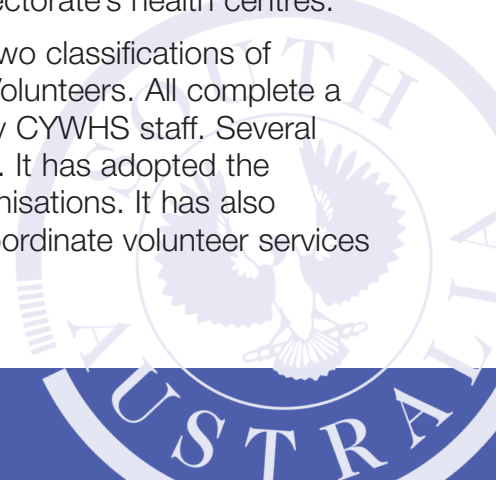
The Office for Volunteers (OFV) itself is now within the Department of Justice as part of the Attorney-General's Department's Social Justice Division. The Social Justice Division also includes the Equal Opportunity Commission; Multicultural SA; the Office for Women and Justice of the Peace Services. Emergency Services coming under the umbrella of the Department of Justice have arguably South Australia's highest profile volunteers. Their contribution is greatly valued and appreciated.

The synergy and extensive network provided by the Social Justice Division and other Department of Justice agencies such as the South Australia Police, emergency service organisations and their respective volunteer programs is expected to provide the OFV with many opportunities for cooperative programs.

DEPARTMENT FOR HEALTH

The Department for Health recognises the vital contribution made by volunteers to health services in South Australia. Volunteers are active across all the Department's divisions. Within the hospital system, they are members of hospital auxiliaries and 'Friends' groups providing a range of patient and staff support programs. Volunteers are also very active with specific roles in grass roots programs run by the Primary Health Care Directorate's health centres.

The Children, Youth and Women's Health Service (CYWHS) has two classifications of volunteers: the General Volunteer and Contact Centre Services' Volunteers. All complete a comprehensive training course and are supported in their roles by CYWHS staff. Several new initiatives have been undertaken over the last twelve months. It has adopted the National Standards for Involving Volunteers in Not For Profit Organisations. It has also established a Community Engagement Unit to more effectively coordinate volunteer services with client and community participation.



State Government Achievements and Volunteer Programs

The Office for Volunteers continues to manage a free bus ticket program for volunteers at Adelaide's major medical facilities. An example of inter-departmental cooperation fostered by the ACT Partnership, the bus ticket scheme is made possible by the Department for Transport, Energy and Infrastructure providing 2,500 single tickets and 300 multi-trip tickets each quarter.

DEPARTMENT FOR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

The Department for Families and Communities (DFC) has its own Volunteers Unit that has the role of ensuring a consistent approach to volunteering across the department and its agencies. The Unit also seeks to develop new volunteer initiatives to assist the Department and its clients.

DFC has its own Charter of Mutual Obligation, Volunteering Policy, Volunteer Operational Guidelines and conducts volunteer recognition awards on behalf of its major volunteer-using agencies: Disability SA; Families SA; and Housing SA.

DFC's State Recovery Office is now equipped with the Volunteer Emergency Recovery Information System (VERIS) developed by the Office for Volunteers. Another example of excellent inter-departmental cooperation in the spirit of the ACT Partnership, VERIS has since won the 2006 Post Disaster category of the Australian Safer Communities Award presented by Emergency Management Australia. It was used for the first time following the extreme storm that struck Renmark in January 2007.

DFC's has almost 1500 volunteers making contributions to programs run by Disability SA, Housing SA and Families SA.

State Government Achievements and Volunteer Programs

DEPARTMENT FOR ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE (DEH)

The Department for Environment and Heritage is continuing to implement Success Through Partnership: A Strategy for Volunteer Engagement to support and expand its 6000 strong volunteer base. This strategy document represents a concerted effort to continue to develop the already strong links between the department and the many community organisations involved in environmental and heritage conservation. As part of this initiative, DEH has established two new Senior Ranger - Volunteer Support positions in the Adelaide Region. The Senior Ranger positions provide the Department with a stronger focus for engaging volunteers as well as improved guidance and direction for volunteer groups. A considerable focus of these positions will be to work with Rangers to provide support in changing the way we think about and approach engagement with volunteer groups.

The Friends of Parks is the Department of Environment and Heritage's most well-known volunteer program. It is very successful and was recognised nationally in 2006 when the group was awarded the very prestigious Banksia Award for Community Programs. The Friends of Parks has over 7,000 active members in 132 groups throughout the state.

DEPARTMENT OF WATER, LAND AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION (DWLBC)

The Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation's Natural Resources Management (NRM) Council has established the specialist NRM Volunteer Committee which first met in November 2006. The NRM Volunteer Committee is now established as the peak body in South Australia focussing on all areas of natural resource management. This significant step, not only acknowledges the critical role played by South Australia's estimated 70,000 conservation volunteers, but also provides a platform and mechanism for continued development of this volunteer sector.

The committee has established two working parties that will address communications and volunteer recognition. Amongst other activities the volunteer committee is developing a State-wide recognition scheme. It will advise the NRM Council and provide programs for volunteer recruitment and retention.



State Government Achievements and Volunteer Programs

PRIMARY INDUSTRIES AND RESOURCES SOUTH AUSTRALIA (PIRSA)

PIRSA has developed strong links with the volunteer sector and is very supportive of community organisations throughout South Australia. Its role and functions are vital to the State's regional and rural development and therefore has close links to the range of stakeholders in primary industries and natural resources. This includes bodies such as regional development boards and producers associations as well as environmental and conservation groups.

PIRSA's Fishcare program continues to make an excellent contribution to managing the State's fish stocks. Last year its 80 members, based in metro Adelaide and regional centres across the State, volunteered more than 7,100 hours and spoke to over 21,000 fishers. The group was a co-winner of the South Australian Recreational Fishers Advisory Council's (SARFAC) gold award for excellence in education.

PIRSA's regional network is fully utilised and a Port Augusta based PIRSA staffer acts as the coordinator for the Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology's Outback Connect program. Outback Connect provides free technical support and computer training for community groups and individuals in regional South Australia.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

The Department of Education and Children's Services (DECS) has over 55,000 volunteers involved in various roles within the education system. These range from: participation in governing councils and management committees; out of school care; learning assistance programs; sports; volunteers in canteens; libraries and in classrooms; community mentoring and activities such as camps and excursions.

DECS has an objective to further increase community involvement and parent involvement in education as a means to improve learning outcomes for children and young people.

State Government Achievements and Volunteer Programs

DEPARTMENT OF FURTHER EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology (DFEEST) both utilises and supports volunteers within several of its agencies. Its officers have also provided both formal and informal consultative services in the development of training programs used by other Government agencies and community groups.

The Department continues to support the volunteer sector with a range of volunteer management programs delivered at the Onkaparinga Institute of TAFE at Mount Barker. The programs include the: Certificate IV in Community Services (Volunteer Management); Diploma of Community Services (Volunteer Management); and the Advanced Diploma of Community Services (Volunteer Management). All courses were offered in 2006 with reduced fees to encourage enrolment. Short-term workshops on event management and the like continue to be designed particularly for community organisations.

Volunteering as a pathway to employment is a feature of several programs operated by DFEEST's Office for Youth: Activ8; Duke of Edinburgh; and Volunteer Youth A-teams. Likewise the South Australia Works programs, *South Australia Works in Communities and South Australia Works for Mature Aged People*, are offered within the Department.



State Government Achievements and Volunteer Programs

DEPARTMENT OF THE PREMIER AND CABINET

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet has several departments and agencies that both use and develop volunteers through their activities and programs. These include: Arts SA and Country Arts; the Social Inclusion Unit; SA Museums; Art Gallery of South Australia; and the Office for Recreation and Sport. Support is provided for volunteer based community organisations maintaining vibrant grass roots arts' scenes. The Social Inclusion Unit coordinates several initiatives that encourage the development of volunteerism within South Australia as a means to encourage peoples' engagement with their communities and thereby achieve the end goal of being 'socially included'. But, along with emergency services, the SES and CFS, the sport and recreation sector is almost entirely dependent on volunteer participation, especially at the grass roots level. This simple fact means that the Office for Recreation and Sport (ORS) gives a high priority to the development and support of volunteers.

Over the past 12 months training and development courses covering all aspects of recreation and sport have been conducted: governance and management programs; coaching and officiating workshops; organisational development courses; specific programs for increasing involvement of specific population groups such as culturally and linguistically diverse; harassment and equal opportunity training and recruitment and retention of volunteers. ORS has an extensive network of Active Community Field Officers in regional areas that work closely with sports clubs and associations, providing support and training for volunteer administrators.

ORS has a significant volunteer recognition program. It once again enlisted support from the Office for Volunteers and the Department for Families and Communities in the major 'Be Active' volunteer recognition and 'thank you' program. This annual promotion provided gift packs and entry tickets to a wide range of entertainment choices over the SA Volunteers Day long weekend in metropolitan Adelaide and regional South Australia. ORS conducts annual 'Thanks Coach-Thanks Official' breakfasts and also includes a category recognising excellence in Volunteer Management within it industry awards program.

State Government Achievements and Volunteer Programs

SENIOR SECONDARY ASSESSMENT BOARD OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA (SSABSA)

Step Up - Community Learning

The Step Up program has been extended to not only recognise the value of formal Community Learning undertaken outside the classroom but now includes recognition of Personal Learning. Personal Learning includes experience, knowledge and skills that are acquired informally and without any curriculum. Personal Learning can therefore encompass: being the primary carer for an elderly or invalid person; taking a leadership role in a conservation group or similar; being involved in media production or event management and so on. Community and Personal Learning can contribute up to eight of the 22 units required for completion of the South Australian Certificate of Education. Seventeen organisations have now been recognised as providing training and qualifications that satisfy SSABSA's Community Learning requirements:

- Australian Air Force Cadets
- Australian and New Zealand Cultural Arts
- Australian Army Cadets
- Australian Guild of Music and Speech
- Australian Music Examinations Board
- Catholic Education SA
- Duke of Edinburgh's Award
- Guides Australia
- Operation Flinders Foundation
- Royal Life Saving Society
- SA Country Fire Service
- SA State Emergency Service
- SA Tallships Inc.
- Scouts Australia
- St Cecilia School of Music
- St John Ambulance Australia cadets
- Trinity College London (Music)



State Government Achievements and Volunteer Programs

DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Department of Trade and Economic Development has several links with the volunteer sector through the Regional Communities Consultative Council, its Regional Development Boards, and Immigration SA.

The Regional Communities Consultative Council is an independent advisory body consisting of 21 voluntary representatives that provides recommendations to the Minister for Small Business and Regional Development on ways in which the government and communities can together strengthen the capacity of communities to respond to local issues.

The thirteen Regional Development Boards play an important role in South Australia. Made up of 8-12 volunteers, they provide the link between the State Government and regional communities. The Boards also recognise and acknowledge the valuable contribution made by the volunteer sector within the regions and not only maintain strong links but also sponsor various training programs to benefit community groups.

Immigration SA currently has over 50 active Meet and Greet Volunteers. These people meet skilled migrant families on their arrival at Adelaide Airport, take them to their accommodation and then mentor them as they settle into life in Adelaide. It is a demanding role as arrivals can be either very early or late (6.00am to 11.30pm), and there is also the ongoing commitment to settling the immigrants into their new environment with the many physical, emotional, logistical and cultural considerations.

Moving On - Implementation of the ACT Partnership Review

Last year's review allowed us to assess our progress, to recognise the maturing of the relationship and the processes that drive it, to fine-tune and move on with vigour. A very pleasing aspect of the review was the overall recognition and appreciation of the ACT Partnership's importance and effectiveness in developing and supporting South Australia's volunteer sector. There was general consensus from the review that the ACT Partnership is largely responsible for the fact that South Australia is recognised as the national leader in volunteering.

The two major recommendations from the 2006 ACT Partnership review were for a new, more project-based operational model and the necessity to improve communication between the volunteer sector's stakeholders. Both of these have brought about some fundamental changes to the structure and governance of VMAG and VPAC.

Recommendation 1:

New Operational Model

The 'Working Party' model that had three groups with responsibility for their own 'Commitment to Action' elements will be superseded by a leaner, more specific and focussed project-based system.

Working Party One - Accountability, Resources and Risk Management

Working Party Two - Communication and Policy and Legislation

Working Party Three - Equity, Recruitment and Retention and Training

Whilst acknowledging the achievements made under the Working Party model, the Review Committee accepted that a project-based method of management would ensure that momentum is maintained. As a result, a group named the Volunteer Task Force (VTF) has been formed. The VTF is chaired by Gay Thompson MP and includes Office for Volunteers General Manager, Andrew Hamilton and up to three representatives each from VMAG and VPAC. By being a hybrid of VMAG and VPAC, this executive group will foster even closer links between Government and the volunteer sector. It will examine suggestions from VMAG and VPAC, assess them against agreed criteria and make recommendations back to VMAG, VPAC and the Minister for their consideration.

Moving On - Implementation of the ACT Partnership Review

Much has been achieved by VMAG since its inception in 2003. The generosity of time and energy shown by its members over this period is greatly appreciated by the Government of South Australia. VMAG members, many of whom have been involved for two, two-year terms have participated in regular VMAG meetings as well as annual joint VMAG/VPAC meetings and regular Working Party meetings. They have made excellent contributions by giving their particular section of the volunteer sector a voice. The Minister for Volunteers acknowledges and thanks the past and present members of VMAG for their commitment and the substantial contributions that have been made to this point in the history of the ACT Partnership. See Appendix 1 for the list of present and past members of VMAG.

Recommendation 2:

Improve Communications

Although subsequent improvements in communication between the volunteer sector's stakeholders has underpinned achievements under the ACT Partnership, the review did identify areas that needed attention.

This is being addressed in a range of ways including upgrading of the Office for Volunteers fortnightly electronic newsletter and extending the distribution database.

Communication networks have been extended by the submission of regular contributions for inclusion in newsletters produced by community organisations and the distribution of fact sheets now includes Local Government Councils. Volunteers and community organisations have better access to Government by being included as a part of the regular Community Cabinets.

Conclusion

Working Together - A Bright Future

Much has been achieved since the ACT Partnership became the blueprint for developing South Australia's volunteer sector. The sector has enormous impact on life in South Australia as reflected by the numerous targets set in South Australia's Strategic Plan that volunteers are helping to achieve.

The Government and the volunteer sector have worked together and as a result South Australia can claim the highest rate of volunteer participation in the nation with 51 percent of people 15 years and over being active volunteers.

Volunteering now has a high profile in South Australia with satisfying levels of recognition and appreciation.

Functions and awards for volunteers initiated by Government departments and their agencies, Local Government authorities and community organisations are increasingly the rule, rather than the exception.

Businesses and the corporate world are increasing their involvement with and support of the volunteer sector. State-wide and regional media outlets are regularly publicising the great work done by community organisations and their "local heroes". Of course, this is all good news.

The mutual respect between Government and the volunteer sector is a reflection of the maturing relationship as laid out by the ACT Partnership. Working together we have a solid platform for a bright future.



PAST AND PRESENT VMAG MEMBERS

Arts	Ms	Ruth	Smiles		Arts Industry Council
Arts	Ms	Tracey	Crisp		Arts Industry Council
Arts	Ms	Deb	Welch		Radio Adelaide
Business	Ms	Karen	Lablack		Business SA
Business	Ms	Deb	Palmer		Business SA
Charities	Ms	Gwen	Moore		Association of Major Community Organisations
Community Services	Ms	Janice	Kelly		Local Government Association
Community Services	Ms	Sandy	Semmens		Local Government Association
Community Services	Mrs	Carol	Bouwens		Local Government Association
Disability	Mr	Paul	Flynn		National Industry Association of Disability Services
Education	Mr	Lee	Morgan		SA Association of State School Organisations
Education	Ms	Susan	Walla		SA Association of State School Organisations
Education	Mr	Uwe	Ebert		SA Association of State School Organisations
Emergency Service	Mr	Derren	Halleday		Volunteers In Emergencies Coordinating Committee
Emergency Services	Mr	Cam	Stafford		Volunteers in Emergencies Coordinating Committee
Environment	Mr	Brian	DuBois		Friends of Parks Inc
Environment	Mr	David	Mitchell		Trees For Life Inc.
Government Volunteers	Ms	Robyn	Rouvray		Volunteer Managers in Government Network
Government Volunteers	Ms	Carol	Nixon		Volunteer Managers In Government Network
Health and Welfare	Mr	Cam	Pearce		Meals on Wheels SA
Heritage	Mr	David	Seymour-Smith		State Heritage Authority
Heritage	Mr	Alan	Graham		National Trust of SA
Heritage	Ms	Sue	Scheiffers		National Trust of SA
Indigenous	Ms	Debra	Axleby		ATSIC
International	Mr	Dale	Cleaver		Australian Red Cross - SA Division
International	Ms	Kerry	Symons		Australian Red Cross - SA Division
Justice	Mrs	Anne	Bachmann	OAM	Royal Association of Justices
Multicultural	Mr	Ron	Tan	OAM	Multicultural Communities of SA Inc
Older Volunteers	Ms	Karen	Richardson		Council on the Ageing
Older Volunteers	Ms	Michelle	Elding		Council on the Ageing
Older Volunteers	Ms	Debra	Petrys		COTA National Seniors
Recreation	Mr	Peter	Vandeppeer		Recreation SA
Recreation	Ms	Rosemary	Sage		Recreation SA

PAST AND PRESENT VMAG MEMBERS

Rural	Ms Tracy	Spencer		Rural Communities Consultative Council
Rural	Ms Jan	Cass		Rural Communities Consultative Council
Rural	Ms Monika	Klein		Regional Communities Consultative Council
Service Clubs	Mr Ken	Knights		Association of Community Service Organisations
Service Clubs	Mr David	Savage		Association of Community Service Organisations
Social Service	Mr Mark	Leahy		SACOSS
Sport	Mrs Kathy	Stanton	AM	Sport SA
Sport	Ms Jan	Sutherland		Sport SA
Unions	Ms Janet	Giles		United Trades and Labor Council
Veterans	Mr John	Bailey	OAM JP	Returned and Services League
Veterans	Mr Jock	Statton	OAM	Returned and Services League
Volunteer Community	Ms Joy	Noble	AM	Individual volunteer
Volunteer Community	Mr Che	Cockatoo-Collins		Individual volunteer
Volunteer Managers	Ms Donna	Amos		Australasian Association of Volunteer Administrators
Volunteer Managers	Mr Peter	Heyworth		Australasian Association of Volunteer Administrators
Volunteer Resource Centre	Mrs Kay	Hefferan		Fleurieu Volunteer Resource Centre
Volunteer Resource Centre	Ms Vivienne	Barker		Southern Volunteering
Volunteer Resource Centre	Ms Sue	Nightingale		Northern Volunteering
Volunteering Peak Body	Ms Lynn	Chamberlain		Volunteering SA
Volunteering Peak Body	Mr Di	Davies		Volunteering SA
Volunteering Peak Body	Ms Rosemary	Sage		Volunteering SA
Volunteering Peak Body	Ms Moira	Deslandes		Volunteering SA
Volunteering Peak Body	Ms Janet	Stone		Volunteering SA
Younger Volunteers	Ms Isabel	Fforde		Youth Affairs Council of SA
Younger Volunteers	Ms Rae	Plush		Youth Affairs Council of SA
Younger Volunteers	Ms Sarah	Spiker		Youth Affairs Council of SA
Younger Volunteers	Ms Jessie	Lees		Youth Affairs Council of SA
Younger Volunteers	Ms Jennifer	Duncan		Youth Affairs Council of SA



ACHIEVING SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S STRATEGIC PLAN TARGETS

Objective 5: Building Communities

Target 5.6

Volunteering: maintain the high level of volunteering in South Australia at 50% participation rate or higher.

Target 5.7

Aboriginal leadership: increase the number of Aboriginal South Australians participating in community leadership and in community leadership development programs.

Target 5.8

Multiculturalism: increase the percentage of South Australians who accept cultural diversity as a positive influence in the community.

Objective 1: Growing Prosperity

Target 1.1

Economic growth: exceed the national economic growth rate by 2014.

Target 1.10

Jobs: better the Australian average employment growth by 2014.

Target 1.11

Unemployment: maintain equal or lower than the Australian average through to 2014.

Target 1.14

Total exports: treble the value of South Australia's export income to \$25 billion by 2014.

Target 1.24

Overseas migration: increase net overseas migration gain to 8,500 per annum by 2014.

Objective 2: Improve Well-being

Target 2.2

Healthy weight: increase the proportion of South Australians 18 years and over with healthy weight by 10 percent (of 2004 figures) by 2014.

Target 2.3

Sport and Recreation: exceed the Australian average for participation in sport and physical activity.

Target 2.4

Healthy South Australians: increase the healthy life expectancy of males by 5 percent and 3 percent for females by 2014.

Target 2.5

Aboriginal healthy life expectancy: lower the morbidity and mortality rates of Aboriginal South Australians.

Target 2.6

Chronic disease: Increase, by 5 percent, the proportion of people living with chronic disease whose self-assessed health status is better.

ACHIEVING SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S STRATEGIC PLAN TARGETS

Target 2.7

Psychological well-being: equal or lower than the Australian average for psychological distress by 2014.

Target 2.8

State-wide crime rates: reduce victim reported crime by 12% by 2014

Target 2.9

Road safety: Reduce road fatalities to less than 90 persons per year by 2010

Target 2.120

Road safety: Reduce serious injuries to less than 1000 by 2010.

Target 2.12

Work-life balance: improve the quality of life of all South Australians.

Objective 3: Attaining Sustainability

Target 3.1

Lose no species: lose no species as a result of human impact.

Target 3.2

Land biodiversity: by 2010 have five well-established biodiversity corridors aimed at maximising ecological outcomes.

Target 3.4

Marine biodiversity: by 2010 create 19 marine parks aimed at maximising ecological outcomes.

Target 3.7

Ecological footprint: reduce South Australia's ecological footprint by 30 percent by 2050.

Target 3.9

Sustainable water supply: ensure South Australia's water resources are managed within sustainable limits by 2018.

Objective 4: Fostering Creativity and Innovation

Target 4.1

Creative Industries: increase the number of South Australians undertaking work in the creative industries by 20 percent by 2014.

Target 4.3 and 4.4

Cultural engagement: Increase the number of people attending cultural institutions by 20 percent and attendances at arts activities by 40 percent by 2014.



Objective 6: Expanding opportunity

Target 6.5

Economic Disadvantage: reduce the percentage of South Australians receiving government benefits (excluding age pensions) as their major income source to below the Australian average by 2014.

Target 6.6

Homelessness: halve the number of 'rough sleepers' in South Australia by 2010 and maintain thereafter.

Target 6.7

Affordable housing: increase affordable home purchase and rental opportunities by 5 percent by 2014.

Target 6.9

Aboriginal housing: reduce overcrowding in Aboriginal households by 2014.

Target 6.10

Housing for people with disabilities: double the number of people with disabilities appropriately housed and supported in community based housing by 2014.

Target 6.11

Participation by people with disabilities: increase by 400 the number of people with disability involved in day options programs by 2014.

Target 6.15

Learning or earning: by 2010 increase the number of 15-19 year olds engaged fulltime in school, work or further education/training (or combination thereof) to 90%.

Target 6.16

SACE or equivalent: increase the proportion, each year, of 15-19 year olds engaged in fulltime in school, work or further education/training (or combination) to 90%.

Target 6.19

Non-school qualifications: by 2014, equal or better the national average for the proportion of the labour force with non-school qualifications.

Target 6.21

Vocational Education and Training (VET) participation: exceed the national average for VET participation by 2010.



**Government
of South Australia**

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