



PRESENTATION

Work for the Dole: Issues for Consideration

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OVERVIEW OPTION ONE



Definition of Volunteering

Work for the Dole - Action to Date

Issues to Consider

Definition of Volunteering

- Activity through a NFP organisation
- Benefit to the community & the volunteer
- By own free will & without coercion
- No financial gain
- Not in a designated paid position
- Underpinned by the principles of volunteering
 - *Involving Volunteers: the Principles* (fact sheet)
- WFTD problematic under current definition



Definition of Volunteering

- National review launched in NVW 2014
- Review is being led by VT for VA
- VV & VVSN represent Victoria
- Will consider a range of issues, including:
 - Mutual obligation e.g. WFTD
 - Mutual exchange e.g. time-banking
 - Corporate volunteering
 - Changing demographics, lifestyle etc
- Issues paper for the National Review by Dec 14
- Revised definition by mid-2015



ACTIONS BY VOLUNTEERING PEAK BODIES



- Jan 14: Pro Bono News article re plans for a compulsory WFTD scheme
- Feb 14: DSS representative invited to peaks meeting to discuss the proposed scheme
- Mar 14: VA wrote to Minister Andrews re issues of concern to consider, including:
 - adequate resourcing
 - reporting requirements
 - duration of placements (then 3 months)
- Mar 14: VA met Asst. Minister for Employment Hartsuyker re letter
- May 14: WFTD 2014-15 scheme announced by the government.
- Jun to Jul 14: New DSS grant scheme rolled-out – implications for capacity of volunteering sector to support WFTD

ACTIONS BY VOLUNTEERING PEAK BODIES



- June 14: VV & VW met DoE re WFTD scheme in Victoria
- August onwards:
 - VV prepared draft WFTD discussion paper
 - VA submission on behalf of all peaks re Draft Purchasing Arrangements for Employment Services 2015-20, highlighting:
 - impact on the sector & need for resourcing
 - relationship between employment providers & the sector
 - issues re managing job seekers.
 - VV continuing consultations, discussions, research
- October: VV AGM Forum: Hijacking Volunteering: for Fair Means or Foul

ISSUES TO CONSIDER

- Do WFTD obligations contradict the current definition & spirit of volunteering?
- Impact of WFTD on the reputation of volunteering & the volunteering sector?
- Can we address concerns by treating WFTD as a different category to volunteering?
- What extra workload & resource requirements will WFTD place on peak bodies, VSOs & VIOs?
- Will JSA's pass on a fair portion of the placement fee to resource this extra workload?
- What resources are available to help VIOs negotiate with JSAs or deal with disputes?



ISSUES TO CONSIDER

- Availability of other resources to the volunteering sector to support WFTD?
- Will these WFTD job seekers be 'job-ready' for volunteering?
- Are there guidelines about what constitutes a 'work-like' volunteer experience?
- Availability of resources for training in job-readiness and/or vocational skills?
- How do we ensure JSAs don't send unsuitable or unready job seekers to VSOs & VIOs?
- How will WFTD support job seekers with additional disadvantage & in need of more support?



ISSUES TO CONSIDER

- Are there sufficient suitable volunteer positions that meet WFTD criteria in the NFP & govt sectors?
- Can or will job seekers work in those volunteer positions for required hours per week for 6 months?
- What impact might WFTD have on existing paid staff, existing volunteers, service delivery?
- What should the volunteering sector be doing to support job seekers?
- Will available volunteering opportunities help job seekers with work readiness & getting a job?



ISSUES TO CONSIDER

- What other benefits can volunteering provide to job seekers?
- What are the benefits for the volunteering sector from WFTD?
- Does VIO management understand the:
 - workload that WFTD will place on volunteer managers?
 - true cost of recruiting/retaining WFTD job seekers?
- What are the implications of WFTD not being available in the 'for-profit' sector?
- What sort of reporting requirements will be imposed on VIOs?



ISSUES TO CONSIDER

- What role will VIOs be expected to play in dealing with unwilling, difficult, non-compliant job seekers?
- Will VIOs be 'pressured' to participate in WFTD?
- What differences will there be between mandatory WFTD & current Centrelink arrangements for participating in volunteering?
- What are management, governance, insurance & legal issues/implications?
- How will impending funding cuts to the sector impact our ability to deal with WFTD?



ISSUES TO CONSIDER

- Currently, its up to VIOs to decide whether they can or should take on WFTD ‘volunteers’
- VIOs must ensure participating in WFTD does not:
 - Distract them from their purpose, raison d’etre
 - Result in poor morale of staff & existing volunteers
 - Negatively impact service delivery
 - Result in an undue/unexpected financial burden
 - Result in poor outcomes for WFTD job seekers
- VV will provide information to help VIOs make an informed decision





Volunteering Victoria

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Resilient communities and empowered and active citizens through volunteering