



Tasmanian Community Services Industry Plan

2009 2012

Strong Foundations – Challenging Futures

The Tasmanian community services industry is crucial to the health and well-being of Tasmania and makes a significant contribution to the Tasmanian economy. The industry comprises over 350 organisations that employ up to 11,000 Tasmanians in paid work and thousands more as volunteers. It attracts at least \$281 million in combined private, State and Commonwealth investment, with a turnover of at least \$300 million.

The community services industry, along with the business and government sectors, operates in a demanding environment of continuous and converging change. State and Commonwealth Governments are rethinking service delivery priorities, funding models and modes of contracting. Increasingly, more services are being outsourced to non-government organisations. Compliance is becoming more complex. Client demographics are changing. Like other industries, the community services industry is also experiencing the pressure of skill shortages that makes it difficult to attract, and retain, staff and volunteers.

The Purpose of this Plan

The Community Services Industry Plan has been developed to enable community organisations to define the priority issues that the industry, government and other stakeholders must address to ensure quality services in Tasmania continue to be delivered on behalf of the community.

The Plan also provides the Tasmanian industry with a strong platform from which to engage in national debates that will affect the future of community service organisations. The formulation of this Plan comes at a crucial time. The Federal Government is pursuing its national reform and social inclusion agendas; the government in Tasmania is also committed to addressing the issue of social inclusion. These reforms are having significant impacts on the role, capacity and quality of community service organisations.

The community services Industry Plan identifies four key areas that must drive reform, investment and improvement in practice within the industry:

- **Building on our strengths.**
- **Securing a workforce for the future.**
- **Getting the right sort of investment in social services.**
- **Strengthening the social service system.**

The Plan shall guide the building and maintenance of quality community service organisations that meet the needs of the Tasmanian community. This must be done in partnership with consumers, with all levels of government, with philanthropic groups and with other stakeholders.



A Vision for Our Community: a fairer, healthier, more just and inclusive society for all.

Our Vision for Community Services: a vibrant industry of well-governed and well-managed, non-profit community service organisations that deliver quality services for all Tasmanians. This industry shall focus on improving health and well-being; on involving consumers in our practice; and, in our role as advocates, on addressing poverty, disadvantage and social exclusion.

Our Values

- We recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are the traditional owners of the land.
- We believe in upholding and advancing fundamental human rights.
- We believe in advancing the well-being of individuals, their communities and our society as a whole, and in ending disadvantage.
- We respect and value all forms of diversity.
- We stand for self-determination and consumer participation.
- We believe in cooperation, participation and collaboration.
- We value the commitment, knowledge and skills of the paid and volunteer workers within our sector.
- We value honesty, openness and accountability, and integrity.
- We affirm our autonomy from government and commercial interests. We value diverse voices and approaches to the provision of community services, within a democratic society.



1. Building on our Strengths

The community services industry has a long history of working with people to achieve positive and lasting social change. Moreover, the past thirty years has seen this work have a profound impact on government policy.

The strength of the community services industry lies in its democratic nature; in it being not-for-profit, in it being community owned and governed; and in its delivery of professional and quality services.

The staff and volunteers of community organisations have relationships with businesses, local government, state and commonwealth government agencies, schools, and other groups in their communities. These relationships foster community cohesiveness and community capacity.

Community organisations continue to build on these strengths, and to uphold the values and practices that differentiate the industry from for-profit organisations and from government. Central to this difference is the belief that people have a right to a say in the decisions that affect their lives. Thus the role of clients as consumers and as participating members of our organisations is crucial to the way we operate.

Priority 1.1: Improve our accountability to clients, consumers, members and financial supporters, and increase the levels of client participation in community services.

Outcome: There are higher levels of client engagement with, and support for, community services. Information about community services is easily accessible and understandable. There are more community members involved with the industry. Services are client-focused. There are continuous improvements in service delivery and consumer participation mechanisms facilitate service quality assurance activities.

Priority 1.2: Increase the access of Aboriginal people to mainstream social support services.

Outcome: Community services that work with Aboriginal people and Aboriginal organisations to overcome the systemic disadvantage faced by them, resulting in Aboriginal people having greater access to mainstream support services.

Priority 1.3: Develop the management, leadership and governance capacity of our Boards and managers.

Outcome: Community services are governed and managed to the highest standards with resources and capacity to invest in continual improvement, and in the development of management and governance skills and practice. This provides a guarantee to the community, to clients, to consumers and to our funding bodies of quality services that lead to better outcomes for the people we serve.

Priority 1.4: Develop learning cultures that foster continual improvement and innovation.

Outcome: Community services have the capacity to invest in continual improvement and in innovation, in order to ensure the highest standards of client support and the continuation of client-centred services that respond to changing and emerging needs.
(See also Priority 4.1 for second outcome.)

Priority 1.5: Increase practical, collaborative activities that enhance service delivery, and consumer and community outcomes.

Outcome: More community services work in partnership, formally and informally, to achieve administrative efficiencies and to deliver high quality services. This results in more diverse, viable and sustainable community services organisations across the state.

Priority 1.6: Increase capacity for cross-industry advocacy.

Outcome: The industry continues to play a vital role in the process of democratic decision-making and in public debates on how to respond to the needs of the Tasmanian community.



2. *Securing a Workforce for the Future*

The future of the community services industry is dependent upon the quality of its staff and volunteers. This will have a direct bearing on the standards of care and support provided to Tasmanians.

The industry will not be able to respond to the projected growth in service delivery and the changing demographics of the Tasmanian community, without a clear strategy for securing, retaining and developing its workforce.

Organisations must be equipped to support staff, and to ensure their health and well-being in the workplace. Where once the industry was dependent upon the passion and commitment of individuals, it must become more professional in how it fosters staff development and career pathways, and in how it creates professional networks and learning opportunities.

The inadequacy of wages within the community services industry can no longer be ignored. This issue must be addressed in order to ensure that the industry has a professional workforce to deliver the services the Tasmanian community expects. Likewise, flexibility and innovation in work design and work conditions, are essential so that in the future it can attract the best workforce.

Currently the industry has an ageing workforce. There are significant gaps in the data on the structure and size of this workforce. We must improve our knowledge about the profile of the existing workforce, so that the industry's future workforce needs can be met.

Priority 2.1: Establish a Planning and Development Framework for the Community Services Workforce that addresses issues to do with the paid and volunteer workforces.

Outcome: A strategic approach to attracting, developing and retaining a community services workforce. Its implementation involves all stakeholders and ensures the right skills are being developed to meet clients' needs.

Priority 2.2: Promote and develop the community services industry as a career-pathway of choice.

Outcome: More people choose to work and choose to keep working in the community services industry. Community organisations employ highly-skilled and motivated individuals. This increases the capacity of the industry to develop and deliver services into the future.

Priority 2.3: Reduce the gap in remuneration and conditions between the public sector and the community services industry.

Outcome: The community services industry is competitive in the labour market. This enables the industry to attract and retain a high quality workforce, now and into the future.

Priority 2.4: Improve the responsiveness and the relevance of training, and devise a range of strategies to develop skills within the workforce.

Outcome: The community services industry values and utilises appropriate, well-priced, training and skills- development opportunities to ensure that its workforce maintains its skills and its commitment to the highest standards of professional practice.

Priority 2.5: Invest in volunteer recruitment, training, management and recognition.

Outcome: Volunteers who deliver services and who govern organisations are well-supported. They have access to training and skills development. The role of managing and supporting volunteers is highly valued by community organisations. This ensures that the experience of volunteering is more satisfying for individuals, and improves the efficiency and effectiveness of individual organisations.



3. Getting the Right Sort of Investment in Social Services

Community services are finding it increasingly difficult to meet the costs of service delivery overheads. These costs are integral to any project or service and include insurance, administration and IT costs.

Increasingly, as government departments move towards funding only direct project costs, organisations are being forced to manage a number of funding contracts in order to achieve financial viability. This is a risky business model that threatens the sustainability of community organisations.

Essential to the continuing viability of the community services industry and its ability to deliver high quality services, is a model of investment in social services that is based on fair pricing principles. Community organisations will need to identify the full cost of delivering services, in order to protect its industry and in order to develop the diverse capacities of organisations, so that they can continue to serve Tasmanians well and address disadvantage.

Priority 3.1: Advocate for a community services industry investment strategy which is built on identifying the level of investment needed to deliver outcomes for individual clients, families, and communities.

Outcome: Governments and other funders invest in developing the capacity of community organisations to be well-governed, well-managed and well-staffed organisations that deliver high quality support and care to their clients.

Priority 3.2: Develop industry standards and/or descriptors of service outcomes.

Outcome: There is agreement between the industry, government and funders on the meaning of quality, outcomes, and on the meaning of efficiency and effectiveness, in relation to the delivery of essential, non-profit, care and support services.

Priority 3.3: Develop full cost-recovery and fair pricing principles, as part of government and other funder policies.

Outcome: Governments and other funders pay the true cost of service delivery and organisational development. This provides a strong financial base for community service organisations, so that they can continue to support Tasmanians to achieve high levels of health and well-being.

Priority 3.4: Support innovation and learning in community services.

Outcome: A well-resourced industry that is built on learning cultures and that is able to invest in new service delivery practice and organisational development, and shares knowledge and practice in order to continually improve our ability to serve clients and consumers.

Fair Funding Principles promoted by the Community Services Industry

Funders must recognise:

- the value of the community services industry in building social cohesion and improving participation, health and the well-being of Tasmanians in their communities;
- the need for sustainable community service organisations that can deliver service quality, and the need for 3 year or longer funding agreements;
- the need for cooperation and collaboration between Governments, other funders, the community services industry, and between organisations within the industry, in order to deliver efficient and effective outcomes for Tasmanians;
- the importance of innovation (the development of new approaches and new methods of responding to need) as an essential component of the work community service organisations and the Government undertake;
- the importance of diversity and equitable access to funding, and the benefits of service delivery by a variety of providers (large, small, localised, state / regional-wide, rural and urban) that contributes to the quality of the service system supporting Tasmanians;
- flexibility as an important quality of CSOs that supports the delivery of client-centred services that can quickly, efficiently and effectively respond to changing individual and community needs from a strong evidence base;
- that quality services have a culture of continual learning, and meet quality and accountability obligations to funders, consumers and the general public;
- the importance of transparency and consistency in funding arrangements;
- the need for appropriate, high quality management decisions about funding processes, as essential to a well-functioning service system; and
- the efficient and effective use of funds that recognises the diversity of need and maximises the number of services available to the community and the number of people who are assisted.

These principles are based on the work of the Queensland Community Services Sector Futures Forum www.qcross.org.au



4. *Strengthening the Social Service System*

As an industry we need to look to the future and shape the services system to best suit Tasmania in the years to come. This includes looking for more immediate opportunities to strengthen the system with the aim of increasing its overall effectiveness and accountability.

Strengthening the architecture of the social service system is essential at a time when more services, which were once the responsibility of government, are being out-sourced to the community services industry.

Stronger institutional mechanisms, that drive joint action and services system planning, are needed to underpin the relationship between the government and the community services industry.

There needs to be a commitment to build upon existing accountability practices and to ensure we have the right mechanisms to protect consumers.

Priority 4.1: Increase the number of practical, collaborative activities that enhance service delivery, and consumer and community outcomes.

Outcome: A coordinated service delivery system with fewer gaps in services, and one that supports efficiency and diversity within the industry, in order to support Tasmanians to achieve higher levels of health and well-being.

Priority 4.2: Develop a partnership agreement, between the industry and the State Government, that includes a joint implementation plan to guide service system reform and investment.

Outcome: The industry and State Government work together to achieve shared goals. This is done according to agreed principles that ensure greater accountability between partners and strengthen the community system of health and support services in Tasmanian. A partnership agreement at a State level also complements the development of a similar agreement at the national level.

Priority 4.3: Promote the development of a 2020 Community Services Futures Plan for the State.

Outcome: At a state level, the industry and the government work towards common objectives and have the systems, services and processes in place to meet changing population needs and to improve health, and well-being outcomes for the community.

Priority 4.4: Streamline data collection, and improve data analysis and usage, to enhance service planning by governments, funders and organisations.

Outcome: Data is collected and shared between the industry and the government. It provides the evidence base for planning and delivering services to the community, and for assisting community services in the efficient use of time and resources.

Priority 4.5: Reduce State Government regulatory barriers to effective service delivery, and implement consistent and appropriate accountability systems.

Outcome: Community services experience reduced reporting and compliance costs. They meet simplified, but effective, legislative and contractual requirements. This ensures good accountability for public and private funds, while keeping costs low.

Priority 4.6: Promote the establishment of Community and Disability Services Commissioner in the Office of the Ombudsman.

Outcome: A stronger and more accountable service system with an independent mechanism in place to provide the Tasmanian public with confidence about the quality of services provided by the community services industry.



The Next Step: Shaping our Collective Future

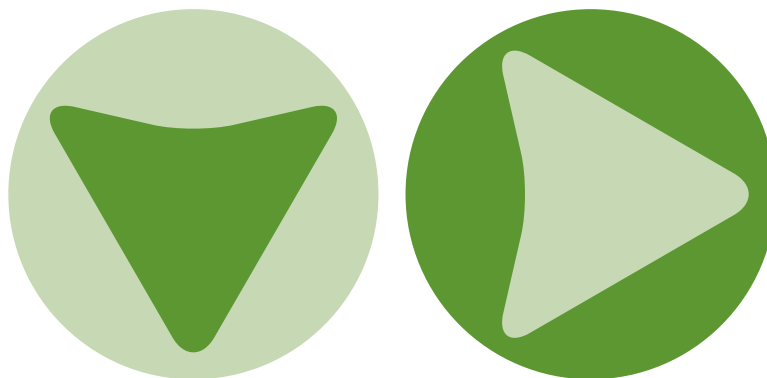
This Plan, developed by the community services industry, outlines the issues that must be addressed between 2009-2012 to ensure the viability and sustainability of community service organisations into the future. It is essential to address these priority issues to ensure that Tasmania continues to be served by high quality and effective, care and support services.

There are issues that the industry can address by itself, but there are other issues that require State and/or Federal Government leadership, and as an industry we need to be working to ensure this happens.

The following initiatives are planned for 2009:

- The establishment of an Industry Plan Reference Group that sits under the Community Services Peaks Network and works towards progress in the priority areas.
- The release of a communications plan outlining how individual organisations can use and work to progress the priority areas of the Industry Plan.
- The release of a vision and values charter.

All members of the industry must own the Plan and take action on it, in order to achieve reform in the listed areas. This includes: individual organisations in their practices, planning and advocacy; peak bodies in their representation, advocacy, policy analysis and sector development; and coalitions of organisations that come together to tackle particular issues.



Project Governance

The Community Services Industry Plan project has been auspiced by the Community Services Peaks Network.

Aged and Community Services Tasmania
 Alcohol, Tobacco and other Drugs Council
 Family Support Services Association
 Mental Health Council of Tasmania
 Multicultural Council of Tasmania
 National Disability Services
 Shelter Tasmania
 Tasmanian Council of Social Service
 Tasmanian Association of Community Houses
 Volunteering Tasmania
 Youth Network of Tasmania



The Project has been guided by the Industry Plan Steering Group comprising the following community service providers.

Darren Matthewson	<i>Aged and Community Services Tasmania</i>
Patrick Carlisle	<i>Richmond Fellowship</i>
David Coe	<i>Oak Enterprises / NDS President</i>
Ken Hardaker	<i>Advocacy Tasmania</i>
Tim Jacobson	<i>HACSU</i>
Tamara Johnstone	<i>Northern Suburbs Community</i>
Chris Jones	<i>Anglicare Tasmania</i>
Gwyn Jones	<i>Mental Health Consumer's Network</i>
Roseann Lee-Luttrell	<i>NW CASA</i>
Cedric Manen	<i>MRC South</i>
Kevin Marriott	<i>TasCAHRD</i>
Jill Maxwell	<i>Volunteering Tasmania</i>
Tom Muller	<i>TasCOSS</i>
Noel Mundy	<i>Mission Australia</i>
Stuart Smith	<i>City Mission / ATDC</i>
Therese Taylor (Chair)	<i>Colony 47</i>
Theresa Moore	<i>Youth Network of Tasmania (YNoT)</i>

The Industry Plan has been developed over 20 months, and included research and consultation with community services across Tasmania.

December 2006	Future of the Sector Forum.
April 2007	State-wide consultations on key issues, and agreement on need for a Plan.
October 2007	Nominations for Industry Plan Steering Group.
December 2007	Steering Group Establishment Meeting.
Jan – May 2008	Working Groups.
May – July 2008	State-wide consultation on draft Industry Plan document.
September 2008	State-wide endorsement process.
October 2008	Launched.

The development of this Industry Plan has been facilitated by the Tasmanian Council of Social Service Inc.

This Industry Plan has been developed with the support of the Tasmanian Department of Health and Human Services