



Submission to

**Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission
Inquiry into the Sharing of Government and
Community Facilities**

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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, sector peak organisations, small community services, advocacy groups and individuals 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 Indigenous custodians of the country. VCOSS is committed to reconciling all injustices with Indigenous 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.

Introduction

VCOSS welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission to this Inquiry. The efficient and equitable use of facilities, especially where they are Government owned or funded, is a matter of great interest to VCOSS and we are pleased that the Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission (VCEC) has been asked to inquire into this issue.

Sharing facilities is a natural part of partnership arrangements for many in the community services sector. Be it the ability to access a venue for free or low cost or the tremendous and instinctive co- management of emergency response centres during the recent bushfires, it is clear that sharing of facilities- and of much more- is an every day event for many of our members.

VCOSS believes in the principle all Victorians have the right to exercise their human rights. These rights, some of which are articulated in the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities, include the right to freedom of movement, expression, assembly and association. It includes a right to participate in public life. These rights, in our view, give people

the ability to freely enjoy the many publicly owned and managed facilities that exist in this State. There are also rights to privacy and rights to private property which need to be balanced against the ability of Victorians to enjoy the aforementioned rights.

VCOSS and our members have a diversity of experience with regards to shared facilities. This submission begins by addressing the threshold question of coverage including the nature of facilities that this Inquiry is seeking to address. Then, rather than addressing each of the questions or parts of the Terms of Reference, VCOSS has chosen to provide examples of the range of issues associated with shared facilities- the benefits, the barriers, the opportunities and the rewards- through sections that cover some of the key policy areas that VCOSS undertakes work in.

Definition/ Coverage of this Inquiry

VCOSS notes that the scope of this inquiry is not limited to Government facilities. The Terms of Reference state that VCEC should inquire into “the potential for increased sharing of government and community facilities throughout Victoria”. When addressing the coverage of this Inquiry in 1.1 of the Issues Paper VCEC expands its scope to examine the sharing of “government, community and/ or private facilities...” However, the VCEC working definition mentions only physical assets “owned or funded by government or the community”.

Clearly whether this Inquiry is primarily concerned with Government or with broader assets is a critical threshold question. The Terms of Reference, and subsequently much of the Issues Paper, discusses government and community facilities interchangeably. While it seems clear that “Government” refers primarily to the State and Local but perhaps also Commonwealth Government, it is not clear, nor adequately defined, what a community facility might be. It may be that a community facility is anything that is not Government or privately owned facility but the Issues Paper doesn’t make this distinction. Without a clear definition it is difficult for VCOSS to make as definite statements about some of these issues as it would like and suggests that this definition be clarified in the draft report. While VCOSS supports the notion of greater sharing of facilities, especially when this assists low income and disadvantaged Victorians, the terms on which that happens are likely to be different based on both the nature of the asset, the body who manages that asset, the way that asset was funded and the role of that asset in the community.

The following questions highlight some of these issues:

- Is a leisure centre owned by a Local Government but run by a private company under contract a Government, private or community facility?
- Does it matter if the leisure centre operator is a not- for- profit operator?
- Does it matter if the leisure centre is owned not by a Local Government but by a State Government school?
- What if the leisure centre is owned by an independent school?

- What if the independent school built the leisure centre substantially from the funds derived from a Government grant?
- What if the independent school's leisure centre is the only leisure centre in that suburb?
- What if it was the only one in the whole region?

The above questions will no doubt be answered differently by different people. This in part reflects the diversity of views in the community about the nature of property rights and of what constitutes a community asset. It is also possible for there to be many answers to what appears a simple question.

VCOSS raises these issues as more than an academic point. The extent to which Government property or Government funds are used is of crucial importance to the community, especially to low income and disadvantaged Victorians who are more reliant on those facilities that are free or low cost to access. While a large number of Victorians benefit from access to local libraries the service is arguably of more benefit to those who cannot afford to buy books or to access the internet at any other location.

To continue with the above series of examples, the local council owned leisure centre owned is likely to be considered a Local Government asset. If it is leased, the Council may be limited in its ability to deal with the property, subject to the contract with the manager. VCOSS would contest, however, that the involvement of a for-profit operator should not reduce the ability of the community to use that asset. All members of the community, especially those who are unable to access private sector spaces, should have maximum access to Government owned facilities. If a leisure centre is privately owned and managed then many would argue that it has a greater right to set its own fees and manage its own affairs. It is a much more contested and concerning public policy proposition to accept that a public funded facility is able to be used to generate private profits.

Yet there are examples of facilities that represent the difficulty of a public/ private distinction. With more Victorians shopping in undercover shopping centres these privately owned and operated facilities have become, to many, community spaces akin to the streets or publicly owned markets that were previously the only options available. While these malls are inviting and appear to be open to all, they are clearly private, for profit, spaces with the ability to set rules and regulate access. The recent heat wave highlighted the importance of these spaces for many lower income Victorians who sought relief from the hot weather and their non air-conditioned homes by seeking to access these places during the heat of the day. While there was no evidence available to VCOSS that any centres sought to exclude people who weren't purchasing goods on those days, the potential for exclusion based on social and economic factors are real and do occur. They also often affect disadvantaged Victorians, including young people and people experiencing homelessness, and are the reason that VCOSS supports an amendment to the Equal Opportunity Act that would make discrimination based on social status unlawful.

Many non Government facilities are privately owned but run for the community, albeit with some rules that set the conduct of these facilities. Churches and many community sector owned and managed facilities are examples of these. Drop in centres, neighbourhood houses, and services who invite disadvantaged Victorians to have breakfast or lunch. These facilities are regularly open to the public yet not in an unfettered manner. The manner in which those facilities are run, and in many circumstances the hours of operation, are often based not on the nature of the asset but on the related factors that impact the use of the facility. A drop in centre or neighbourhood house is just a building like any other until it has either a paid or voluntary worker or committee of management to organise its activities and engage with the community it serves. Likewise the many under- utilised buildings that community organisations would like to use are not nearly as useful without the funding to not just staff, but to light, heat and cater in. Then there are issues around whether these buildings are located in a way that allows for ease of access for the Victorians who need them.

VCOSS hopes that this Inquiry seeks to understand the nature in which the availability and accessibility of staff or managers is a relevant factor in the way in which community organisations are able to share their facilities, or indeed make use of those facilities owned by Government or the private sector.

VCOSS believes that the community is entitled not just to a greater sharing of Government facilities but also the related on- costs that allow for this greater sharing. It is the experience of VCOSS that there is no lack of good will in the community towards greater sharing but there is often not the resources- be it time, staff, or money- to make that sharing happen.

The following sections provide details relevant to the Terms of Reference and Issues Paper.

Education & Early Childhood Development

Schools are mentioned throughout the VCEC report as an example of shared facilities partnerships and it appears that greater use of educational facilities, including Government schools, was a driver in the establishment of this Inquiry.

There are some examples of good practice, many of which are detailed in the Issues Paper, and current policy initiatives, such as the *Blueprint for Education and Early Childhood Development* and the *Shared Facilities Partnerships* guide, are heading the right direction in relation to partnerships and shared resources. However, many VCOSS members report that schools and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, often view partnerships as one way – how can they benefit the school – rather than how can they benefit the community. We believe that if the State is serious about moving forward in relation to shared facilities then this needs to be rectified to ensure the development and sustainability of genuine partnerships between schools and communities.

It is not just Government Schools that have a responsibility in relation to shared facilities and community infrastructure. Independent and Catholic schools also have a responsibility, particularly given that they do receive Commonwealth and some State funding in relation to infrastructure development, therefore implying that they are host to public assets. If an

independent or Catholic school receives a Government infrastructure facility grant for a new facility then there is less justification for that asset being seen as purely private.

Shared facilities provide the catalyst for moving towards a more integrated system of service delivery in the area of education and early childhood development. Early childhood, in particular, has been moving towards an integrated system of service delivery over time and this area provides many examples of shared facilities, whether this be a child care centre that is co-located with a maternal and child health service, a kindergarten that allows a playgroup to operate out of hours in the building, or a local government that only charges a peppercorn rent to a child care centre.

VCOSS would like to draw VCEC's attention towards the Victorian Government's Children's Centres initiative, which provides a perfect example of shared facilities that are attempting to move beyond co-location and into a seamless mode of integrated service delivery. Further information can be found at www.education.vic.gov.au and in the Centre for Community Child Health's *Evaluation of Victorian children's centres – Literature review*.

An increased focus on shared facilities can be a conduit to achieving a more integrated system of service delivery. Strong linkages across the range of universal and specialist services are required to support and promote the wellbeing, learning, health and development of children and young people. International evidence highlights that the good outcomes for children and families are achieved when communities are the focus area for service delivery.¹ Shared facilities provide this community focus.

The Centre for Community Child Health research highlights that when local communities, including schools, are the driver for improved outcomes, there is a great chance for service integration and coordination and the development of flexible services that meet the needs of the community.² Teachers and other professionals, however, cannot be expected to initiate, develop and sustain partnerships and service integration in addition to their core role, and nor do many of them have the relationship building, facilitation, mediation and brokering skills required.

The development of community hubs, through integrated service delivery – whether that is through partnerships with community agencies or capital investment in multi-service facilities, is important to strive towards. To achieve an integrated system of service delivery, it is necessary to build platforms of relationships by creating spaces for meaningful collaboration, networks and partnering across and within both the community sector and government, including schools.³

Schools are the ideal entry point for the provision of additional support and enabling linkages, as for many families, schools are the only formal institutions that they engage with, this is why schools need to be committed to sharing their facilities. However schools are naturally focused primarily on the educational needs of children and young people. To address the social needs of children and young people, it is critical that schools are networked and integrated with a range of other community services and structures.

One of the key values of collaborative networks is that by linking different sectors they foster social inclusion and strengthen community involvement. Through schools being networked with

a range of other community and social services, they are able to respond proactively to the increasing concentrations of disadvantage and better support the education and social needs of children and young people. Such steps help ensure that all students are provided with opportunities to have the experience of creating, exploring and achieving despite the level of disadvantage that some also experience. Shared facilities, particularly at disadvantaged schools are one way of achieving this.

A number of enabling factors are required to better utilise and mobilise community resources.

The development of collaborative networks that are focused on supporting and enabling the learning outcomes of all students, particularly those who experience disadvantage, is the first enabling factor. The development of such networks requires two key steps. Firstly, it is vital to draw together the full range of resources that affect the learning and development of children. Such a step is critical as the evidence highlights that the quality of a child's or young person's environment as a whole – at home, in care, at school, in the community – is central to supporting their learning and development. The second step is ensuring the management of school resources and learning models are more flexible and include the capacity to be locally-driven so as to more effectively respond to the diversity of need. When thinking about shared facilities it is vital that resources are allocated to building and sustaining management and partnerships of these facilities to ensure that they are utilised to their full capacity and meet the needs of the community.

The second enabling factor is the development of new ways of working that give privilege to innovation. Such steps require all stakeholders, including government, accepting that everything tried will not be successful, and that – importantly – there will be learnings to be gained from these as well as the successful initiatives. To enable this, mechanisms need to be established that enable case studies of what works and what hasn't been effective to be shared across the community, education and government sectors. If this is not undertaken we will not be able to move forward innovatively in relation to shared facilities.

Governance also plays a crucial role and VCOSS commends VCEC for addressing issues around the governance of shared facilities. Consideration should also be given to the development of alternate governance models, such as network governance. Network governance is a sound model for developing new governance arrangements at the local level.

“Network governance ... involves multiple public and private actors collaborating in some way to further key social, environmental and economic concerns.”¹² New forms of network governance 'offer a stronger model of local public administration because they have an ability to:

- Respond flexibly to local conditions,
- Achieve lower regulatory costs by stimulating collective action,
- Reduce transaction costs associated with fragmented service delivery, and
- Increase legitimacy through increased participation in decision making.”¹³

These new forms of network governance involve five elements: partnerships, a focus on place-based initiatives, the intention to promote participation and inclusion, the willingness to decentralise public services, and a plan to enhance local economic competitiveness.”¹⁴

The collapse of ABC Learning Centres highlights the issues around for-profit service providers delivering community services and facilities. It is crucial the VCEC investigate issues of for-profit service provision within public assets and the issues around not only making money as a result of community investment but also the whole in service provision that would be created if the specific entity ceased operation. Guidelines need to be established that ensure that for-profit providers do not use shared facilities for commercial gain.

There is also a discussion of school buses in the Transport section of this submission.

Children & Young People

Facilities for children and young people are well suited to sharing arrangements. One of the key success factors for successful sharing is community engagement; therefore it is vital that children and young people are involved in both the development and governance of shared facilities. Children and young people need to be a central part of shared facilities development where relevant. The development and governance of shared facilities cannot just involve adults determining the types of facilities that children and young people need, children and young people need to be regarded as genuine players who are consulted and involved in decision making.

Any discussion about shared facilities needs to be one focussed on inclusion, not exclusion. Young people have often been the centre of debate when it comes to public space and shared facilities. In particular, young people in public spaces are often deemed to ‘be up to no good’ and this perception has resulted in young people’s use of public space being increasingly regulated⁴. These experiences of young people need to be taken into account by VCEC as they undertake this inquiry into shared facilities.

Drought has also had a significant impact on young people and their access to shared facilities, for example, sporting grounds. In a YACVic and North Central Local Learning and Employment Network (NCLLEN) drought forum report, young people from drought affected communities highlighted that opportunities for young people could be improved in their communities if they had access to spaces where they could meet, hold events and encourage each other⁵. Shared facilities are an ideal opportunity to facilitate opportunities for young people.

The relationship between the VCEC Shared Facilities and other current policy developments also needs to be considered. In the recently released *Vulnerable Youth Framework* discussion paper the development of local-youth plans was proposed. If local-youth plans are developed as part of the implementation of the Vulnerable Youth Framework resources for facilities will need to be factored in when gaps are identified. VCROSS believes that this is where shared facilities will play a crucial role.

Children also have a role to play in the success of shared facilities. VCOSS would recommend that VCEC investigate the UNICEF *Child Friendly Cities* principles to ensure that the voices of children and young people are heard in relation to developing the communities and the facilities within which they live. *Child Friendly Cities* principles refer to children 0-18 years.

"A *Child Friendly City* is a local system of good governance committed to fulfilling children's rights"

A *Child Friendly City* is actively engaged in fulfilling the right of every young citizen to:

- Influence decisions about their city;
- Express their opinion on the city they want;
- Participate in family, community and social life;
- Receive basic services such as health care and education;
- Drink safe water and have access to proper sanitation;
- Be protected from exploitation, violence and abuse;
- Walk safely in the streets on their own;
- Meet friends and play;
- Have green spaces for plants and animals;
- Live in an unpolluted environment;
- Participate in cultural and social events; and,
- Be an equal citizen of their city with access to every service, regardless of ethnic origin, religion, income, gender or disability⁶.

The *Child Friendly Cities* principles and philosophy present a system of good governance and also provide some guidance regarding appropriate governance mechanisms that involve children and young people. Governance principles, such as these, provide the opportunity for children and young people to participate and will ensure effective shared facilities.

Climate Change

Making good use of existing infrastructure is an essential component of an effective structural response to climate change in addition to the substantial social benefits of effective sharing of facilities as outlined in the Issues Paper.

Greater sharing of existing facilities increases the benefits of any retrofitting undertaken to enhance energy and water efficiency or increase climate change adaptation. Retrofitting a facility which is well utilised is more cost effective and will have greater environmental benefits than retrofitting a facility which is underutilised.

The concurrent use of community and government facilities also provides important opportunities to engage the wider community on complex issues such as climate change. Case

studies presented in the McCaughey Centre report *Community Engagement and Climate Change: Benefits, Challenges and Strategies*⁷, demonstrate the importance of using shopping centres, markets, local libraries, parks and schools as locations for providing information and engaging 'hard to reach' parts of the community who would be unlikely to prioritise attending stand-alone climate change related events or information sessions. Use of community and public facilities such as these is a valuable community engagement strategy across a range of issues.

In response to emergency situations, as exemplified by the recent bushfires, community, government and business facilities become critical sites for information provision, material aid distribution, community meetings, equipment storage and community support. These functions will become increasingly important with the probability of more frequent extreme weather events due to climate change. While existing guidelines or assumptions are currently in place for the use of facilities in these events, further investigation into appropriate use of facilities for the full range of emergency response and recovery activities is warranted. The need for example to create safe children's spaces separate from heavy equipment and within proximity to areas in which parents need to go to access assistance has been an important, but not universally applied, response to the recent bushfires.

Housing

There are examples of shared community facilities in the area of public housing. Many public housing estates have community facilities that contain computers, rooms to hold meetings or conduct home work clubs amongst other uses. These facilities are particularly important for residents who have small living areas or for whom other "community" facilities such as leisure and shopping centres require the payment of a fee to access. There are also facilities available in estates for community organisations to conduct their activities and meet with clients. These are all incredibly important community resources.

In terms of newer private sector developments VCOSS is concerned about the availability and affordability of meeting and other community spaces. Often these are not adequately planned into developments or there are only time limited requirements to provide community facilities. While a range of developers have done a good job in creating a diversity of shared open space there are less quality examples of decent built facilities for sharing. VCOSS believes a greater diversity of shared spaces are required and that there should be a clearer and more transparent method of ensuring that this happens- be it through either the developer, local or State Government or a combination of the three. Structure planning supported by the Growth Areas Authority has improved the focus on community planning and this could be built upon to create better shared spaces for community organisations and other local groups.

Disability

Physical inaccessibility of many commercial premises, and some community and government facilities, is a significant barrier to their use as effective shared facilities. Failure to implement and enforce accessibility and insufficient legislative standards need to be addressed. This

includes infrastructure which provides access to facilities including footpaths and public transport stops and facilities.

Transport

While not addressed in the Issues Paper, VCOSS considers that there are a range of facilities that are shared in the area of transport and that these examples are likely to be of use to VCEC in its Inquiry. This sharing is diverse and includes community transport and stations as community hubs. More significantly it describes how the sharing of physical assets benefit where there is both physical assets and associated service support.

By way of explanation, community transport is not-for-profit transport and mobility support which is developed to meet the needs of transport disadvantaged people in the local community. Community transport providers offer a range of services including: supported door-to-door transport; coordination and liaison with service providers; transport information, 'travel training' and emergency relief; and community vehicle sharing and cost recovery hire to community organisations.

As discussed throughout this submission, shared facilities provide a variety of accessibility benefits for vulnerable and low income communities. Co-located facilities and service hubs, especially those at existing activity centres, are more accessible via public transport. The option to access facilities and services via public transport is essential to ensure usability by low income and disadvantaged Victorians, as well as contributing towards mode shift towards more sustainable forms and transport. However, where public transport hours of operation and frequency are insufficient, this can undermine the effective use of community facilities. For example, many areas of Victoria still lack evening and weekend bus services. This compromises the accessibility of community activities which take place at these times such as adult and community education, youth programs and community festivals.

The shared use of facilities for outreach services also decreases the effect of transport disadvantage as a barrier to accessing services and reduces transport costs as well as the environmental impacts of private transport use.

VCOSS is aware that the Department of Transport, funded by VicHealth, is currently undertaking a substantial piece of work entitled *Train Stations as Creative Community Hubs* investigates the potential for using currently underutilised train station buildings as community or business spaces as has already occurred at a number of urban and regional station premises (for example Fairfield, Middle Brighton and Woodend stations). VCOSS sees substantial benefits in making better use of these highly accessible facilities including greater community access to affordable meeting space and increasing safety at stations through greater passive surveillance. The station facilities of the urban and regional rail network are also widely distributed through Victoria's communities including in disadvantaged areas.

The demand for more and better quality community transport particularly in regional and rural Victoria is high and continues to grow but without a well integrated and coordinated service system many communities are missing out and in particular:

- elderly people are becoming more isolated and unable to access medical appointments
- young people are missing out on employment and training opportunities
- facilities are being underutilized and social and cultural events are not accessible to many people
- people with disabilities and other mobility issues are not able to participate in most aspects of community life.

Areas beyond the Regional Centres across Victoria (ie >150kms from Melbourne) are reliant on often poorly timetabled V/line and Department of Transport contracted service provision with no incentives for local bus operators to provide peak hour services or accessible buses within their fleets.

For example, up until recently, there were no low floor buses in the commercial bus fleets within the Wellington Shire even though the Shire has large bus companies operating in the region. As a result of the Let's GET Connected Transport Project in Wellington and East Gippsland there is now one low floor bus in each Shire but little or no incentives for local operators to invest in accessible infrastructure. Much more is needed to address transport disadvantage in rural areas.

Nearly all Community transport vehicles are well suited to sharing arrangements and many services that coordinate community transport have developed vehicle sharing registers which facilitate cooperative use of community vehicles.

For example the TransAccess service which operates out of the Bentleigh Bayside Community Health Service supports a local vehicle register which coordinates hiring of community vehicles to community groups. In 200/7 there were 116 organisations listed on the register who made a total of 1662 bookings.

Victoria is the only state in Australia with a dedicated school bus network, with its own complex set of regulations, as distinct from school children traveling on a public transport system as in other states.

School buses are a valuable transport resource for rural communities which could be better utilised to meet community transport needs. This is particular important in areas where there are few if not no alternative public transport options available to communities.

However, rural school buses' exemption from the *Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport* (DSAPT) means that they cannot be easily utilised to provide route public transport services between school runs. An investment in accessible school buses for rural communities would provide greater transport resources for whole communities. These upgrades to rural transport services would be most effectively delivered within a framework of broader accessibility planning.

In order for sharing of transport facilities to be successful, a coordinated analysis of the need and of the barriers to providing a quality and equitable community transport service needs to be undertaken

Current barriers to successful sharing include:

- lack of compliance to DSAPT standards in buses in regional Victoria and no incentive for private companies to become compliant
- measures to address transport disadvantage in rural areas. A significant shift in government policy is required, whereby current policy identifies need and service provision by the number of passengers carried rather than the impact on people's lives and their ability to access services and activities.

Currently in Victoria, Community Transport operates in insecure, inefficient and unsustainable funding and a governance arrangement which means the level and quality of service provided is not meeting the needs of their target group. VCOSS recommends that the Department of Transport take a lead role in addressing this issue by undertaking a comprehensive mapping exercise across Victoria and by developing more sustainable and efficient funding and governance models in partnership with the Department of Human Services.

A good example of what could be implemented in Victoria is the NSW Ministry of Transport's *Utilisation of Spare Capacity policy* which was developed in conjunction with the NSW Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care. The policy targets transport disadvantaged people who at a particular point in time do not meet the eligibility criteria of available services and where there is spare capacity on a vehicle or vehicle and drive combination.

The benefit of this policy is that it seeks to maximize the value and benefits of available resources to areas of priority need.

Examples of VCOSS use of shared facilities

VCOSS has benefited from the use of facilities for a number of events and has received many benefits from this sharing. The ability for VCOSS to use free or highly subsidised facilities has either meant that VCOSS can run, more or better quality events or invite more people to attend these events. In some cases it has allowed all of these benefits.

VCOSS used the Department of Transport theatre for the 2007 Peak oil conference and more regularly since for a variety of meetings. This use has been free of charge and has enabled VCOSS to run inclusive, accessible and low costs events in the inner city.

A number of Local Councils have programs that allow community organisations to use facilities at low and no cost. The use of iconic venues such as Town Halls is an act of civic sharing and has allowed VCOSS to run high quality events with a high level of amenity. The one barrier to this sharing which has limited VCOSS' use of some venues is the requirement to use the catering services contracted to the venue. While this catering is usually of high quality, this

condition does restrict the use of self or other catering options which often result in lower overall costs to run the event.

Conclusion

VCOSS strongly supports VCEC in undertaking this important Inquiry and commends the Government's apparent desire to look beyond existing arrangements and consider new and more systemic sharing of facilities. As explained in this submission, there are a number of benefits of sharing but there are a range of costs which often prevent the community from fully benefiting from the range of facilities that already exist. There are also risks that better utilisation of facilities may actually result in privatisation of Government facilities by allowing private gain to be made from publicly owned infrastructure.

VCOSS looks forward to participating in the Commission's roundtable and in seeing the draft report.

¹ Centre for Community Child Health, *Linking schools and early years services*, June 2006, p.7

² *ibid*

³ J Barraket, *Community sector sustainability: Research evidence and public policy implications*, Paper prepared for the Sector Sustainability Task Group, VCOSS, August 2006

⁴ Youth Affairs Council of Victoria (YACVic), *Space Invaders? Young People and Public Space Forum Report*, 2005, YACVic, Melbourne.

⁵ YACVic & NCLLEN, *'Talking about the big dry': Young people and the impact of drought. Forum Report*, 2008, YACVIC, Melbourne.

⁶ UNICEF, 'Child Friendly Cities', [online] www.childfriendlycities.org, Accessed 24 February 2009.

⁷ McCaughey Centre, *Community Engagement and Climate Change: Benefits, Challenges and Strategies*, <http://www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/web14/dvc/dvcmain.nsf/allDocs/RWPOC47790245D57B16CA257045007FFBE3?OpenDocument>