

3. Create a strong public presence for the changes required

VCOSS believes that policy change can occur more effectively when those arguing for it can demonstrate a strong climate of community support. This requires a visible, well informed diverse range of voices using all types of media to disseminate and educate the broader community on the causes and solutions to poverty and disadvantage. This also requires the voices of those disadvantaged by the current status quo to speak and have their views heard. The modern concept of citizenship requires an empowered, educated community, with access to a full range of information, available as and when they need it.

The 'VCOSS identity'

Over the year, we went through a process of exploring what is the 'VCOSS identity' that threads together our diverse activity and gives us an empowering forward direction. This process, assisted by Board member Dale Renner, helped us identify that VCOSS aims to be a 'community lens' whereby we aim to focus and filter energy and effort within our diverse sector, to create a positive impact on government policy and on our sector capacity and practice development itself.

VCOSS publications review

VCOSS has recognised the need to modernise our various modes of communication. We have moved away from hard copy as our primary way of providing information and have moved to a regular e-bulletin format, with more attention to keeping all the links to our website up to date and accessible.

We identified that our much loved academic journal *Just Policy* was unsustainable, as the academic rating system made a combined academic/community publication less attractive to

would-be submitters and referees, and somewhat difficult to retain topicality where the publication of research takes longer than the short term policy cycles we are working within.

We took the hard decision to complete the journey of *Just Policy* with edition 50, published in April 2009, with a celebration that saw contributors old and new attend, to bid the journal farewell. VCOSS expresses huge appreciation to the members of the Editorial Board, who oversaw the production of JP over nearly 15 years.

In 2009 we explored a range of options around how to best communicate with our members and key stakeholders. VCOSS is committed in 2010 to replace *Just Policy* with a lively hard copy magazine that explores provocative and well researched commentaries and policy analysis.

Broadly, we aim to strengthen the capacity of members and community members to self advocate, with specific strategies and publications e.g. simple factsheets on the website and to ensure we publish monthly and annual documents on time, with regular evaluation of effectiveness and reach, while we improve the management and effectiveness of our publications production processes.

REPORTS AND PUBLICATIONS

- Noticeboard (member newsletter), 6 issues, July 2008 - December 2008
- e-Bulletin, 5 issues, February 2009 - June 2009
- PIECES – Training and Development E-Newsletter, 12 Editions (monthly), July 08- June 2009
- *Just Policy*, 3 issues, editions 48,49,50
- Clearing House Online, calendar of training opportunities, February 2009
- Corporate Social Responsibility: A Not-For-Profit Perspective, February 2009

- The Interoperability Challenge, October 2008
- VCOSS State Budget Submission 2009 -10, October 2008
- VCOSS State Budget Submission 2009 -10: Executive Summary, October 2008
- VCOSS Annual Report 2007-08, November 2008
- Universal Housing Universal Benefits: A VCOSS discussion paper on universal housing regulation in Victoria, July 2008
- Housing Affordability: More than Rent and Mortgages, October 2008
- Under Pressure: An interim report on the findings of research on the costs of living pressures experienced by Victorians between 2007-2008, October 2008
- Under Pressure: Costs of living, financial hardship and emergency relief in Victoria, June 2009
- November 2008, Response to the Precinct Structural Planning Guidelines
- November 2008, Submission to National Disability Strategy consultation
- February 2009, Submission to the Essential Services Commission: Metropolitan Melbourne Water Price Review 2008-09
- March 2009, **Submission to Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission Inquiry into the Sharing of Government and Community Facilities**
- March 2009, VCOSS Submission to the Children's Services Regulations Review
- March 2009, Submission to *Senate Inquiry into the investment of Commonwealth and State funds in public passenger transport infrastructure and services*
- March 2009, Submission to the Essential Services Commission: Guideline 19: Energy Price and Product Disclosure
- May 2009, Modernising Victoria's Planning Act
- May 2009, Submission to the Essential Services Commission: Metropolitan Water Price Review 2008-09 Draft Decision
- May 2009, Submission to the 2009 Bushfire Royal Commission
- June 2009, First Exposure Draft - National Energy Retail Law
- June 2009, Submission to the National Human Rights Consultation Committee
- June 2009, Submission to *Contribution of the Not for Profit Sector Productivity Commission Issues Paper*

SUBMISSIONS

- July 2008, Response to *Investing in Transport: East West Link Needs Assessment Report* and priorities for boarder transport investment
- July 2008, Response to the Taxi Fare Review 2007- 08 Draft Report
- July 2008, **Response to A State of Liveability: An Inquiry into Enhancing Victoria's Liveability** Draft Report
- August 2008, Review of the Regulation of Supported Residential Services in Victoria
- August 2008, Submission to Inquiry into Improving Access to Victorian Public Sector Information and Data
- September 2008, VCOSS Submission to the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme Green Paper
- September 2008, **Submission to Vulnerable Youth Framework Discussion Papers**
- October 2008, Submission to the Inquiry into the Provision of Supported Accommodation for Victorians with a Disability or Mental Illness
- October 2008, Associations Incorporation Amendment Bill – Exposure Draft
- November 2008, Retailer of Last Resort- Development of a National Policy Framework

CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

July 2008

- 03 July, VCOSS Transport policy forum
- 14 July, VCOSS CEO and Board Chair Roundtable on workforce issues
- 17 July, VCOSS Doing IT Better seminar: data security, maintenance and disaster recovery
- 22 July, DARU Disability Related Legislation - How Do the Pieces Fit
- 23 July, HSPIC Eastern region partnering assessment workshop
- 24 July, VCOSS Clearinghouse Training

- Program - Workplace Supervision
- 29 July, VCOSS/MUHA Launch of Victorian Universal Housing Alliance
- 27 & 26 July, VCOSS Community Careers stand at Reinvent Your Career Expo

August 2008

- 02 August, Human Rights roundtable
- 05 August, VCOSS Peaks & Statewide Networks Forum
- 11 August, DARU Disability Rights
- 18 August, VCOSS NGO Price Indexation Forum
- 19 August, HSPIC Hume region partnering assessment workshop
- 21 August, VCOSS CEO and Board Chair Roundtable on leadership
- 27 August, VCOSS Clearinghouse Training Program - Getting Along at Work

September 2008

- 10 September, VCOSS /YACVic Roundtable for Vulnerable Youth Framework
- 10 September, VCOSS Clearinghouse Advocacy Training - What is good advocacy?
- 10 September, DARU Disability Rights
- 11 September, VCOSS Doing IT Better Seminar: accessing hardware and software donations
- 15 September, DARU Disability Rights
- 17 September, VCOSS Clearinghouse Training Program - Making Sense of Financial Reports for Boards
- 17 September, VCOSS Clearinghouse African Women's Organisations Information Session – Philanthropy

October 2008

- 02 October, ACOSS/VCOSS Climate change forum with Minister Penny Wong
- 06 & 07 October, DARU Strengthening Disability Advocacy National Conference
- 07 October, VCOSS Peaks and Statewide Networks Forum
- 08 October, VCOSS Clearinghouse Advocacy Training - Before you lobby: Going from worthy to worthwhile – Communication strategy development.

- 08 October, ACOSS/VCOSS Participate in workshop on National Compact
- 09 October, VCOSS Community Sector Futures Task Group
- 09 October, VCOSS Leaders Dinner
- 16 October, Launch of Community Transport Snapshot at the VCTA AGM
- 22 October, VCOSS/Travellers Aid Transport and Access to Health Forum
- 28 October, VCOSS/DHS HSPIC Meeting
- 30 October, DARU Effective communication
- 30 October, DARU Submission Writing
- 31 October VCOSS/Centrelink Dialogue Meeting

November 2008

- 12 November, VCOSS Clearinghouse Advocacy Training - Getting your ideas on the table: how ideas get communicated
- 12 November, VCOSS Clearinghouse Advocacy Training - Understanding the political parties and how they work
- 12 November, VCOSS, Infoxchange Presentation at Making Links Conference
- 14 November, VCOSS Clearinghouse Training Program - Financial Literacy for Not-for-Profit Organisations (MORWELL)
- 27 November, VCOSS Occupational Violence & Bullying in the Workplace

December 2008

- 02 December, VCOSS Peaks and Statewide Networks Forum
- 03 December, VCOSS Clearinghouse Training Program – Recruitment and Retention
- 10 December, VCOSS Clearinghouse Advocacy Training - How caucus works / lobbying backbenchers
- 10 December, VCOSS Clearinghouse Advocacy Training - How Departments work
- 10 December, VCOSS Doing IT Better Seminar: finding funding for ICT projects
- 15 December, VCOSS Member Forum - The Collapse of ABC Child Care

February 2009

- 03 February, VCOSS Clearinghouse – Corporate Social Responsibility Forum
- 10 & 11 February, VCOSS OHS Introduction to OHS for Managers- Carlton
- 11 February, VCOSS Clearinghouse Advocacy Training - How Treasury works – the Budget process
- 19 February, VCOSS Doing IT Better Seminar on Integrating Quality Assurance reporting
- 24 February, VCOSS OHS Introduction to OHS for Staff- Melbourne
- 25 February, VCOSS/The McCaughey Centre, University of Melbourne Communities in a Changing Climate: Social and equity impacts of climate change and social justice
- 26 February, VCOSS Clearinghouse Training Program - Financial Literacy for Not-for-Profit Organisations (Melbourne)

March 2009

- 05 March, VCOSS Victorian Bushfires and the Community Sector Roundtable
- 05 March, VCOSS Doing IT Better Forum: Addressing the Interoperability Challenge – Forum
- 27 & 28 March, NW EOC Group Hosted Community Careers stand at the National Careers and Employment Expo
- 11 March, VCOSS Victorian Community Sector Advocacy Day
- 11 March, VCOSS Clearinghouse Parliamentary Processes
- 23 March, VCOSS Clearinghouse - Financial Literacy for Not-for-Profit Organisations (Portland)
- 24 March, VCOSS Greening the Sector

April 2009

- 02 April, PILCH Present at seminar on legal issues with regard to ICT for community organisations
- 02 April, VCOSS OHS Introduction to OHS for Staff- Carlton
- 03 April, VCOSS OHS Dealing with Occupational Violence and Bullying- Managers- Melbourne

- 23 April, VCOSS Clearinghouse Training Program - Financial Literacy for Not-for-Profit Organisations (Sale)
- 20 & 24 April, VCOSS OHS Rep Training- Carlton
- 28 April, VCOSS Clearinghouse Training Program – Managers as Coaches (Ballarat)
- 29 April, VCOSS Clearinghouse Advocacy Training - Beginners guide to Parliamentary processes

May 2009

- 05 May, VCOSS OHS Introduction to OHS for Staff- Melbourne
- 07 May, VCOSS Clearinghouse Training Program - Financial Literacy for Not-for-Profit Organisations (Castlemaine)
- 12 May, DARU GG Meeting Bi Monthly Governance Group Meeting
- 13 May, DARU Forum Inclusive Education Forum
- 13 May, VCOSS Clearinghouse Advocacy Training - Feedback from experts: Participants make a presentation to a panel of experts for constructive feedback.
- 14 May, DARU How the Different Levels of Government Works
- 14 May, VCOSS Clearinghouse Training Program - Financial Literacy for Not-for-Profit Organisations (Ballarat)
- 15 May, VCOSS Clearinghouse Training Program - Financial Literacy for Not-for-Profit Organisations (Melbourne)
- 18 May, VCOSS CEO and Presidents' Forum *Local action in a global crisis: Leading the sector through tough times*
- 19 May, VCOSS Clearinghouse Training Program - Board Members: Roles, Responsibilities, Liabilities and Protections (Wangaratta)
- 20 May, VCOSS DIB Seminar on ICT audits
- 26 May, VCOSS Clearinghouse Training Program - Board Members: Roles, Responsibilities, Liabilities and Protections (Warrnambool)

June 2009

- 02 June, VCOSS Portable Long Service Leave Consultation and Strategy Discussion
- 18 June, VCOSS Doing IT Better Conference
- 18 June, VCOSS Clearinghouse Training Program - Financial Literacy for Not-for-Profit Organisations (Geelong)
- 26 June, VCOSS Launch of "Under Pressure" Emergency Relief Report

- *Occupational Health & Safety (OHS) - An Introduction for Staff and Volunteers in the Community Sector*
- *Occupational Health & Safety (OHS) - An Introduction for Committees of Management and Board Members*
- *Dealing with Occupational Violence and Bullying at your workplace*
- *Managers As Coaches*

More than two hundred people attended the regional training program in the past financial year.

The success of the program has drawn in additional councils, regional organisations and regional networks that want to be involved.

Regional Engagement

REGIONAL TRAINING CALENDAR 2009

At the end of 2008, Clearinghouse evaluation showed a significant under representation of rural and regional organisations accessing Clearinghouse support services.

To address this issue, the Clearinghouse developed a regional partnership strategy and training calendar to deliver better support to regional organisations.

Through partnership with the VCOSS OHS Education Project, PILCHconnect and individual trainers from the Clearinghouse database, the Clearinghouse launched the 2009 Regional Training Calendar containing 30 training opportunities for community organisations in regional Victoria.

This was an opportunity for staff and volunteers of regional community organisations, to access training in their local area. This low cost training, with fees ranging between \$20 and \$80, was provided by a range of highly qualified, experienced facilitators and consultants.

The Clearinghouse has established hosting relationships through partnerships with local councils and regional community organisations to enable these opportunities to be delivered across the state.

Topics included:

- *Board Members: Roles, Responsibilities, Liabilities and Protections*
- *Financial Literacy for Managers and Committee Members of Not-For-Profit Organisations*
- *Occupational Health & Safety (OHS) - An Introduction for Managers and Employers in the Community Sector*

July 2008

- 01 July, HSPIC Barwon region partnering assessment workshop
- 08 July, HSPIC Southern region partnering assessment workshop
- 15 July, HSPIC Grampians region partnering assessment workshop
- 22 July, HSPIC Loddon Mallee region partnering assessment workshop
- 23 July, HSPIC Eastern region partnering assessment workshop

August 2008

- 26 August, HSPIC North & West region partnering assessment workshop

October 2008

- 28 October, VCOSS, Cambridge and Worksafe week training in Warrnambool
- 29 October, VCOSS, Cambridge and Worksafe week training in Warrnambool
- 30 October, VCOSS, Cambridge and Worksafe week training in Warrnambool

November 2008

- 14 November, VCOSS Clearinghouse Training Program - Financial Literacy for Not-for-Profit Organisations (Morwell)

March 2009

- 23 March, VCOSS Clearinghouse - Financial Literacy for Not-for-Profit Organisations (Portland)

April 2009

- 22 April, VCOSS Gippsland bushfire conversation
- 22 April, VCOSS OHS Dealing with Occupational Violence and Bullying Staff-Wangaratta
- 23 April, VCOSS Clearinghouse Training Program - Financial Literacy for Not-for-Profit Organisations (Sale)
- 28 April, VCOSS Clearinghouse Training Program – Managers as Coaches (Ballarat)

May 2009

- 07 May, VCOSS Clearinghouse Training Program - Financial Literacy for Not-for-Profit Organisations (Castlemaine)
- 14 May, VCOSS Clearinghouse Training Program - Financial Literacy for Not-for-Profit Organisations (Ballarat)
- 19 May, VCOSS Clearinghouse Training Program - Board Members: Roles, Responsibilities, Liabilities and Protections (Wangaratta)
- 26 May, VCOSS Clearinghouse Training Program - Board Members: Roles, Responsibilities, Liabilities and Protections (Warrnambool)

June 2009

- 18 June, VCOSS Clearinghouse Training Program - Financial Literacy for Not-for-Profit Organisations (Geelong)

Media strategy

One form of communication that has been very effective for VCOSS over the past year has been reaching an audience through the public media.

By positioning our stories in response to government processes and by being willing to work hard to source background information and 'human interest angles' for journalists, our effort to resource good coverage paid off many times over the year.

MEDIA RELEASES AND MEDIA HITS

July 2008

Media Releases

- 29 July, 'Universal Housing delivers Universal Benefits'

Media Hits and Interviews

- 01 July, "At home at last" Published in the *Brimbank Leader*, pg 9
- 01 July, *Interview*: Federal government tax cuts not reducing pressure on families/ increases in water costs, Aired on 3AW, 730am and 800am news bulletin
- 01 July, "Low-income renters suffer most from government inaction" *The Age*, pg 15
- 07 July, "Container home plan would lead to ghettos, says critic" *The Age*, pg 5
- 09 July, *Interview*: Shipping container homes idea for the homeless, JJJ, Hack program, 553pm
- 11 July, "Battlers left out in cold; Public housing tenants on \$78,000" in the *Herald-Sun*, pg 11
- 11 July, "Drive for better public transport" *Herald-Sun*, pg 22
- 11 July, "Geelong's twin towers won't be affordable: High tower = high end" *Geelong Advertiser*, pg 9
- 15 July, Response to the Eddington Draft Report Government, websites (VCOSS and DOT)
- 15 July, *Interview*: Housing affordability and rental crisis, ABC 774 morning show, 840am
- 16 July, *Interview*: Rising cost of living and that all levels of Govt need to take urgent action around infrastructure and community planning, Aired on ABC Gippsland, 10am news
- 16 July, "Rail tunnel vision praised, road link less popular" *The Age*, pg 4
- 17 July, *Interview*: Forthcoming emissions trading scheme impacting on middle income earners the hardest hit, Channel Ten, 5pm news
- 25 July, *Interview*: Calling for the Fed Govt's new rental affordability scheme to assist struggling Geelong locals, *BAY FM*, 1200pm news, and *K-ROCK FM*, 1pm news
- 26 July, "'Bashed-up' investors steer clear of rental property" *The Australian Financial Review* (abstracts), pg 21
- 28 July, "Calls for housing to be safer for the elderly" *The Age*, pg 6
- 28 July, *Interview*: Universal housing prior to launch with Chris Lamont from HIA, ABC 666 Canberra, 650pm
- 29 July, "\$160m Vic plan for low-cost homes" *The Australian Financial Review*, pg 64

- 29 July, "Surge in rent sparks call for controls on landlords" *The Age*, pg 2
- 29 July, *Interview*: Announcing VCOSS' launch of the universal housing alliance, on WIN Bendigo, Gippsland and Shepparton and Mildura news, 630 & 730pm
- 30 July, *Interview*: Victorian Universal Housing Alliance ABC Central Victoria, 9am

August 2008

Media Releases

- 11 August: "Outer suburbs and rural areas seeing red on transport"
- 18 August: "VCOSS commits to closing the gap"
- 21 August: "Universal housing gaining universal support"
- 26 August: 'Skills strategy sound first step'

Media Hits and Interviews

- 01 August, *Letter to the editor*: Letter regarding Murdoch children's research institute report on link between parental stress and mental health problems in children, *The Age*
- 02 August, *Interview*: Urging government to support more housing developments in regional Victoria, ABC TV news, 7pm
- 03 August, "Ambo danger zones: Streets, buildings blacklisted as violent attacks increase" *Sunday Herald Sun*, pg 8
- 03 August, "Taxi drivers flag \$10 start-up fee" *Sunday Age*, pg 7
- 06 August, "Banks slammed on 100 per cent lending" *The Age*, Front page and pg 6
- 06 August, *Interview*: Banks offering 100% loans in the face of falling property prices ABC 774, 745am, 9am news; also K-ROCK, 12pm news
- 06 August, David Bell from the Australian Banking Association, defending banks lending 100% of house prices in response to VCOSS comment, 3AW, 9am & 12pm news; ABC 774 12pm news, 3YB (Warrnambool) 12pm news; K-ROCK FM, 2pm and BAYFM, 3pm news
- 06 August, *Interview*: ACCC's inquiry into grocery prices, ABC Ballarat, morning news
- 07 August, "First home buyer's grant embraced by Victorians" *The Age*, pg 11

- 08 August, *Interview*: Victorian Universal Housing Alliance, Radio Adelaide, The Wire program, 530pm
- 14 August, DI General public "Fewer public housing places" the *Australian Financial Review* abstracts, pg 62
- 20 August, Interview re launch of the Trentham Community Plan ABC Central Victoria
- 25 August, *Interview*: Federal government's plan to suspend welfare payments to parents of children who miss school, MIX FM 9am and 10am news; GOLD 1043, 9am and 10am news
- 29 August, "Planners urged to cut urban sprawl" *Herald Sun*, p17
- 30 August, "Fury grows as rates rocket" *Herald Sun*, p5

September 2008

Media Releases

- 01 September, "Victorian Government urged to continue building a Fairer Victoria during Financial Crisis"
- 02 September, "Urgent investment required to support Victoria's young people"
- 15 September, "New report confirms that housing affordability is about more than rent and mortgages"
- 16 September, "Community Transport: Very Important"
- 28 September, "Low Income Victorians are under increasing financial pressure - new research shows"

Media Hits

- 01 September, "Heat's on over childcare crisis" *Herald Sun*, p10
- 03 September, *Interview*: Housing affordability and the need for a State Government housing plan, ABC 774, Talkback
- 04 September, *Interview*: Multi purpose taxi program, Channel Nine, 6:00pm news
- 05 September, *Interview*: Transport system that looks after the interests of low income and disadvantaged people as the Victorian Government finalises a transport plan ABC 774, 7pm news; ABC Goulburn Murray 7pm news
- 05 September, "DHS investigating treatment of four-year old crash victim" *Australian Associated Press General News*

- 09 September, *Interview*: Universal housing, 3CR Breakfast 7:30am
- 13 September, "Poor Old Australia" *The Age*, Insight section, p 2
- 17 September, "Pride in the flags to cost \$350,000" Published in *The Age*, p 3
- 18 September, *Interview*: Strengthening Disability National Conference, RPH Melbourne, Access All Areas Program, 10am
- 26 September, "Slipping through the cracks" Letter to the editor *Herald Sun*
- 13 October, *Interview*: Housing affordability 3BA FM, 12:00pm news
- 13 October, *Interview*: Inaccessible public transport for disabled passengers, particularly regional areas ABC South Western Victoria, 1230pm news
- 13 October, "The crisis in affordable housing" *The Record* (St Vincent de Paul Society Newsletter), Spring 2008, pg 10
- 14 October, "Family break-ups may lead to poverty cycle" *The Age*, p 5
- 15 October, *Interview*: Housing affordability (with Don Henry of ACF and Brian Howe of Centre for Public Policy) Radio National Morning Show, 7:15am
- 15 October, *Interview*: Exclusion of unemployed and public and community housing residents from Federal Government's economic stimulus package ABC Goulburn Murray Morning Show, 9:30am
- 15 October, *Interview*: Inaccessible public transport for disabled passengers, particularly regional areas ABC Central Victoria, 12:30pm news
- 15 October, *Interview*: Cost of living due to poor urban design, inefficient housing and lack of investment in public transport ABC 774, 5pm news
- 16 October, "Volunteer transport is at busting point" *The Age*, p 23
- 17 October, "Tullamarine Freeway could get extra lane" *The Age*, p3
- 22 October, *Interview*: State government grants free Sunday travel for carers and disability pensioners, ABC South Western Victoria, 6:30am and 8:30am news; ABC Central Victoria, 10:30am news
- 29 October, "Singles suffering" *Herald Sun*, p 22
- 29 October, *Interview*: Economic stimulus plan and its housing component, emergency relief research, state budget submission, 3CR Breakfast 7:00am
- 29 October, *Interview*: Emergency relief research, 3AW Talkback, 4:30pm

October 2008

Media Hits

- 01 October, "Victorian Government urged to continue building a Fairer Victoria during financial crisis" Media distribution lists
- 01 October, *Interview*: Plight of low income Victorians in current international financial crisis & the need for investment in outer, rural and regional transport ABC Ballarat, 5:30pm news
- 02 October, *Interview*: International financial crisis & the need for investment in outer, rural and regional transport ABC Central Victoria, 6:30am news, 7:30 news, 8:30am news; ABC South West, 7:30am news; ABC Ballarat, 7:30am news
- 03 October, *Interview*: Plight of low income Victorians in current international financial crisis & the need for investment in outer, rural and regional transport ABC Gippsland, 6:30am, 7:30am & 8:30am news
- 03 October, *Interview*: Death of pensioner in Moonee Ponds Housing Commission National Nine News, 6pm
- 04 October, "Dead for 3 weeks" *Herald Sun*, p 11
- 06 October, *Interview*: Interest rates and cost of living 3AW Talkback, 12:15pm
- 13 October, "Disabled disadvantaged by system, says report" *The Age*, p 3
- 13 October, *Interview*: Anti-poverty week and housing stress ABC Goulburn Murray Breakfast Show, 7:13am
- 03 October, *Interview*: Inaccessible public transport for elderly and disabled passengers in rural and regional areas ABC Ballarat Morning Show, 8:30am

November 2008

Media Releases

- 19 November, "VCOSS tells the whole story on energy campaign"

- 19 November, "VCOSS welcomes positive improvements to taxi services"

Media Hits

- 05 November, "Late-rates pay costs in question" *Manningham Leader*, p 5
- 07 November, *Interview*: Rising water and other utilities prices, Channel Ten, 5pm news
- 08 November, "Households face big rise in water bills" *The Age*, p 6
- 15 November, *Interview*: First home buyer's grant reporting, 774 ABC - 10am, 11am, 12pm, 1pm news; 3AW - 11am, 12pm, 2pm, 6pm news
- 15 November, *Interview*: First home buyer's grant reporting Channel 7 news, 6pm; ABC 1, 7pm news
- 19 November, *Interview*: Rise in taxis and fares Channel Ten, 5pm news
- 19 November, *Interview*: Rise in taxis and fares 3AW, 3pm news
- 20 November, "Electricity, gas prices may rise" *The Age*, p 10
- 20 November, "Energy bills to rise as controls go" *Herald Sun*, p 10
- 20 November, "500 new licences just not fare, say angry cabbies" *The Age*, p 7

December 2008

Media Releases

- 09 December: "Transport Plan delivers landmark public transport infrastructure with more needed to eliminate transport disadvantage"
- 10 December, "VCOSS welcomes national move to protect human rights"
- 12 December, "Victorians need strong action on climate change"
- 22 December, "Only regulated standards will ensure low income and vulnerable protected in the housing market"
- 22 December, "VCOSS pays tribute to the hard working staff of the community sector"

Media Hits

- 01 December, *Interview*: Rising gas and electricity prices, Aired on ABC Gippsland, Morning Show 8:30am

- 01 December, *Interview*: Rising gas and electricity prices, WIN TV Gippsland, Ballarat, Bendigo, 6:30pm news; WIN TV Shepparton, Mildura, 7pm news
- 03 December, *Interview*: Interest rate cuts, housing affordability and cost of living, ABC Central Victoria 6:30am, 7:30am news; ABC South Western Victoria, 6:30am, 7:30am 8:30am, 12:30pm news; ABC Ballarat, Morning Show; ABC Mildura Swan Hill, ABC Western Victoria, 10:30am news
- 09 December, "Western suburbs upgrade welcome" *The Age*, p 16
- 10 December, *Interview*: Impact of global financial crisis on emergency relief around Christmas time, ABC Newsradio, 12:00pm news
- 10 December, "Saleyards are no place for hotheads" (re: climate change report released by VCOSS) *The Weekly Times*, pg 88
- 15 December, *Interview*: Federal Government's plan to develop a national Charter of Human Rights in 2009, 3CR Breakfast program
- 22 December, *Interview*: The need to address exploitation of international students, ABC1 News, 7:30pm; ABC Newsradio, 4:15pm
- 26 December, *Interview*: Raising awareness about financial responsibility and avoiding the accumulation of debt in the context of the Boxing Day sales Channel 7 News, 6pm
- 31 December, *Interview*: State Government's deregulation of gas and electricity pricing ABC Newsradio, 12:00pm news, 3pm news, 6:30pm news report; 774 ABC Melbourne 12:00pm news

January 2009

Media Releases

- 05 January: "VCOSS calls for water concessions to rise"
- 15 January: "Services for rural and regional Victorians under threat as State Government funding cuts bite"
- 15 January: "Services for vulnerable Victorians under threat as State Government funding cuts bite"

Media Hits

- 07 January, *Interview*: Possibility of serious rises in water prices at the start of a new four year water pricing cycle 3CR Breakfast
- 14 January, "Help families not business" re: state budget submission calls for reduction in cost of living pressures rather than reduction in business taxes in the May budget 774 ABC, 3pm news
- 15 January, *Interview*: Community services organisations struggling to deliver services due to funding not keeping pace with costs (inadequate price indexation) 702 ABC Sydney, AM program (national syndication across central, north-east); ABC Far West, Outback Outlook program, 8:50am; ABC Newsradio Mornings, 9:55am
- 21 January, *Interview*: Community services organisations forced to turn clients away due to funding cuts (price index campaign) ABC Gippsland (Sale), 6:30am, 7:30am, 8:30am news; ABC Mildura Swan Hill (Mildura), 6:30am, 7:30am news; ABC Western Victoria, 6:30am
- 21 January, *Interview*: research listing most the affordable housing market in Australia is in Shepparton and Albury Wodonga ABC Goulburn Murray (Wodonga), 6:30am news
- 22 January, "ABC staff entitlements at risk in takeovers" *The Age*, pg 4
- 22 January, "Rent rises halted" *The Age*, pg 2
- 26, January "Call for housing regulators" *Moreland Leader* pg 17
- 26 January, "Tenants in need" Melbourne/Yarra Leader, pg 13
- 31 January, "Train system completely off the rails" *The Age*, pg 4

February 2009

Media releases

- 03 February: "Victorian Government can enhance Commonwealth economic stimulus package"
- 09 February: "VCOSS working with Victorian community to recover as fires still burn"
- 25 February: "Governor of Victoria launches Communities in a Changing Climate Conference"

Media Hits

- 03 February, "Vic students continue to struggle with spelling and maths" Australian Associated Press general news
- 03 February, "Melbourne leads house price tumble" *The Age*, pg 6
- 04 February, *Interview*: Government fast tracking major projects and bypassing the normal planning appeals process in an effort to generate jobs Channel 7 6pm news
- 04 February, "Surprise \$66billion to create 20,000 houses" *The Age*, pg 11
- 06 February, "Unimaginable situation for high flyer" (re: accesible housing) *The Age*, pg 6
- 08 February, "Tram delays leave disabled behind" *The Age*, pg 11
- 20 February, "Crowe to help fund rebuilding - BLACK SATURDAY DISASTER" *The Australian*, pg 6
- 22 February, "State fails call to upgrade transport" *The Age* (Sunday), pg 12
- 23 February, *Interview*: Housing crisis and the need for minimum rental regulation standards, MIX FM, 4pm news; ABC 774, 7:00am, 7:45am news
- 23 February, "Jump in first home sales" *The Age*, pg 1
- 24 February, *Interview*: housing crisis and the need for minimum rental regulation standards, JOY FM, 9am news
- 24 February, "No room to move, desperate times for 60 tenants" *Progress Leader*, pg 1
- 25 February, *Interview*: Communities in a Changing Climate conference ABC Western Victoria, 9am news; ABC Mildura Swan Hill, 9am news; ABC Central Victoria, 9am news;
- 27 February, "Consumer watchdog powerless against fast-food slug Quarter pound of flesh" *The Herald Sun*, pg 13

March 2009

Media releases

- 10 March: "Day of Action for Community Services at Parliament House"
- 11 March: "Day of Action for Community Services at Parliament House"

- 19 March: "Investment in community services the best budget choice to help all Victorians"

Media Hits

- 06 March, General public Families to feel pinch Water price charges to double *The Herald Sun*, pg 13
- 22 March, "\$900m storm rocks homeowners Lenders bite as families struggle to pay mortgage" *The Sunday Herald Sun*
- 24 March, *Interview*: Increases to other income support payments beyond the aged penions in this year's Federal Budget, such as disability and youth allowance payments, ABC Ballarat, 10:30am,12:30pm and 5:30pm news; ABC South West Victoria, 10:30am news, ABC Gippsland, 10:30am news
- 31 March, *Interview*: Stronger access to premises standards for regional Victorians re: Federal Government draft legislation on disability access to premises, ABC Ballarat, 6:30am news; ABC South West, 6:30am news

April 2009

Media releases

- 03 April: "Investment for Victoria's most vulnerable children urgently required"
- 14 April: "Accessible housing regulation a step in the right direction"
- 30 April: "Investment for vulnerable children a welcome step"

Media Hits

- 01 April, *Interview*: Stronger access to premises standards for regional Victorians re: Federal Government draft legislation on disability access to premises ABC Gippsland, 6:30am and 7:30am news
- 03 April, "Rail lines critical" (Letter) *The Age*, pg 16
- 03 April, *Interview*: Support for Rudd Government's economic stimulus package being approved Mix FM, 5pm news
- 06 April, *Interview*: Out of home care funding 3CR Breakfast, 7:48am
- 08 April, *Interview*: Transport disadvantage 3CR 'Raise the Roof', 6:00pm
- 18 April, "Poor children 'less likely to improve' through school" *The Age*, pg 1

- 20 April, "Water price rise to slam battlers" *The Herald Sun*, pg 2

- 20 April, *Interview*: Water price rises Vega 915FM, 7am news
- 20 April, *Interview*: Housing and housing affordability ABC Radio National, 'Australia Talks', 6:30pm, 6:50pm, 7pm
- 21 April, *Interview*: Lifting cap on concessions in the face of water price rises ABC TV, 7pm news
- 22 April, "Water bills to soar by: \$100 Another blow for struggling households" *The Herald Sun*, pg 13
- 27 April, "Hand-outs fuel pokies binge" *The Herald Sun*, pg 1
- 27 April, "Next tram years away for disabled travellers" *The Age*, pg 5
- 27 April, *Interview*: Gambling Aired on 3RPH Melbourne, 8:30am news
- 29 April, "Price hikes flowing in pipeline" Oakleigh Monash/Springvale Dandenong Leader, pg 15
- 30 April, *Interview*: Cost of living and increases in basic food prices Gold 1043 FM, 10am news; MIX 1011 FM, 11am news

May 2009

Media releases

- 04 May: "A welcome boost for community services",
- 06 May: "Decent spending in tough time"
- 06 May: "Tackling climate change cannot be put off"
- 14 May: "Some transport relief in sight with federal budget"

Media Hits

- 04, May "Pressure on budget to give more to disability housing" *The Age*, pg 6
- 05 May, *Interview*: VCOSS submission to State Budget and importance of out of home care South West Victoria 8:50am
- 05 May, *Interview*: VCOSS submission to State Budget and importance of transport services ABC Ballarat, 4:45pm; syndicated to: ABC Goulburn Murray; ABC Central Victoria; ABC Western Victoria; ABC Mildura Swan Hill; ABC Gippsland; ABC Shepparton; ABC South West Victoria

- 05 May, *Interview*: VCOSS response to state budget Channel 10, 5pm news, syndicated to: Southern Cross Ten Albury; Southern Cross Ten Ballarat; Southern Cross Ten Bendigo; Southern Cross Ten Gippsland; Southern Cross Ten Shepparton
- 05 May, *Interview*: VCOSS response to state budget 3AW, 8pm, syndicated to: 3TR Gippsland; 3GV Gippsland; 3SR FM; 3YB; 2AY Albury; 3BA; Mixx FM 985; 3WM; Light FM
- 06 May, "Aid to keep their heads above water" *The Herald Sun*, pg 9
- 06 May, "Opposition lambasts Labor's wasted years" *The Age*, pg 8
- 06 May, *Interview*: VCOSS response to state budget Voice FM, 12:15pm news headline
- 06 May, *Interview*: VCOSS response to State Budget, investment in transport, education, housing and water concessions welcome, GOLD 1043 FM, 9am news
- 07 May, "Critics say state budget ignores environment" *The Age*, pg 6
- 13 May, *Interview*: Federal Budget VCOSS welcomes increase for pensioners but disappointed with no increase for single parents, young people and the unemployed 774 ABC Melbourne, 7:30am
- 17 May, "Waiting, waiting welcome to the suburbs where there's always a seat, if you can ever find the bus" *The Sunday Age*, pg 9
- 19 May, "Senior's anger at small rise" *Maroondah Leader*, p 3
- 20 May, "Senior's anger at small rise" *Whitehorse Leader*, p 13
- 16 June, *Interview* with Chair of Essential Services Commission, Chair of the Essential Services Commission, Dr Ron Ben-David, who mentions work with VCOSS around energy marketing ABC Mildura-Swan Hill, 9:35am; ABC Western Victoria, 9:35am; ABC Central Victoria, 9:35am
- 26 June, "Emergency relief boost for families" *The Age*, pg 6
- 26 June, General News report re: VCOSS Emergency Relief Report findings, Voice FM, 5:00pm
- 26 June, CS General News report re: rises in utilities bills in South West Victoria, 5:00pm news, 6:00pm news; 774 ABC, 12:00pm (The World Today), 5:00pm news, 6:00pm (PM); ABC Ballarat, 5:00pm news, 6:00pm news; ABC Central Victoria, 5:00pm news, 6:00pm news; ABC Western Victoria, 5:00pm news 6:00pm news; ABC Gippsland, 5:00pm news, 6:00pm news; ABC Goulburn Murray, 5:00pm news, 6:00pm news; ABC Newsradio, 5:38pm news (Drive); Voice FM, 6:00pm news;
- 26 June, VCOSS Emergency Relief report findings 4TTT, 7:00pm news, 8:00pm news
- 26 June, Cath Smith concerned about water price rises for low income earners 3BO, 11am news
- 26 June, *Interview*: water price rises Channel 10, 5pm news
- 27 June, "Women fall into poverty" *Herald Sun*, pg 35
- 27 June, "Go out and get a real job then save the world" *The Australian*, pg 2
- 27 June, "EMERGENCY HELP Women in need" *The Advertiser*, pg 51
- 27 June, Women and single parents most at risk of poverty according to VCOSS emergency relief research *Kalgoorlie Miner*, pg 13
- 29 June, *Interview* with CommSec's Chief Economist Craig James and discussion of findings in VCOSS Emergency Relief/Costs of living report ABC Goulburn Murray, 7am
- 30 June, "Our blighted lives" (re: costs of living and chronic disease) Published in *Wyndham Leader*, pg 8

June 2009

Media releases

- 25 June, "Minister Macklin to launch new report outlining who's UNDER PRESSURE"
- 26 June, "New Report on Emergency Relief reveals who's Under Pressure in Rural and Regional Victoria"
- 26 June, "New Report on Emergency Relief reveals who's Under Pressure"

Media Hits

- 14 June, "Crackdown urged on rogues" *The Sunday Age*, pg 4

just POLICY

A Journal of Australian Social Policy



Edition 50
April 2009
Published by VCOSS

The Bush, Birthing and the Baby Bonus
Margaret Alston, Elaine Dietsch, Carmel Davies, Pam Shackleton & Margaret McLeod

Rethinking Care: a Critical Analysis of Family Policies, Caring and Women's Negotiation of Dependency
Kerreen Reiger, Joan Garvan & Sinem Temel

Babies for the Deserving: Developments in Foster Care and Adoption in one Australian State - Others to Follow?
Frank Ainsworth & Patricia Hansen

Starting Life Anew: Resettlement Challenges of Salvadoran Refugees in Melbourne
Beatriz Santos & Ruth Webber

Advocacy Evaluation: Review and Opportunities
Justin Whelan

The Third Way
Peter Gibilisco

Local Government and Local Economic Development in Australia: An Iterative Process
Julie Douglas, Ed Carson & Lorraine Kerr

Restorative Justice and Pre-Court Diversion: Implications for the Development of Social Policy in the Northern Territory
Teresa Cunningham

Regulation of Privatised Public Utilities: Interests and Ethics
Marty Grace & Aaron Hart

The last edition of Just Policy was published in April 2009.

4. Sustain just, equitable and efficient outcomes through collaboration

VCOSS recognises that collaborative approaches lead to more sustained results. As the cross-sectoral peak body for the community and social sector, we value collaborative leadership and recognise there are many VCOSS member organisations, partners, allies and other stakeholders who influence community sector impact and generate public debate and outcomes on important issues. The examples below are just a few of the collaborations that we prioritised for effort during 2008-09.

AIM

Through the *Just In Time* agreement, the Australian Institute of Management (AIM) provides free training opportunities to VCOSS member organisations with an annual income of less than \$500,000 in the form of spare places on their short courses (subject to availability). Through this partnership, VCOSS members have accessed 140 training opportunities, worth a total of \$175,840 since the beginning of the project.

These places provided 262 days of training to 85 different community sector organisations that could not otherwise have afforded to attend. Places were offered in 57 different courses addressing a wide range of community sector organisations' training needs, including management, communication, presentation, leadership, human resources and interpersonal skills.

In May 2008, AIM provided four scholarships to their Diploma of Business (Intensive) and Diploma of Management (Intensive). VCOSS took responsibility for the management of the scholarship process. VCOSS promoted the opportunity, called for applications and shortlisted and selected appropriate recipients. VCOSS' commitment to AIM to take on this administrative work allows AIM to continue and expand their contribution to the sector.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community and Philanthropy Working Group

Arising from a successful Indigenous capacity building program conducted in 2004 and 2005, a Steering Committee has been working and now formally established, representing major Indigenous organisations.

The Steering Committee has developed a significant state-wide capacity building project to assist the 170 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to increase their capacity to access funds, particularly from philanthropic sources and to work with philanthropy to enhance the grant making processes.

We lead the Steering Committee with the Koorie Heritage Trust and other key partners including Swinburne University and the Reichstein Foundation. The Helen Macpherson Smith Trust has lent its support to this critical initiative, committing \$90,000 over the three years of the project, which continues to seek further collaboration.

Assisting children and young people

VCOSS proactively partners with non-community sector stakeholders, including local governments, on issues such as children's development, by consulting and collaborating in response to government consultations and submissions. Examples of this include the joint sector consultation that VCOSS undertook with YACVic to inform our submissions to the Vulnerable

Youth Framework as well as signing up to a joint statement with early childhood sector peaks and organisations regarding the development of the Children's Services Regulations to ensure a common voice around regulatory principles.

We continue to work with YACVic, other community sector organisations and local governments, such as the Interface Councils, (those local governments that interface between metropolitan and regional areas) to highlight the inadequacy of investment in young people and to advocate for investment in generalist youth services.

Centrelink Dialogue meetings

(3 meetings)

- 22 August 08 - Ballarat
- 31 October 08 - Broadmeadows
- 05 June 09 - Shire of Melton

Centrelink/VCOSS Dialogue Meetings are community forums jointly organised by Centrelink and VCOSS and are held every four months, rotating between metropolitan, outer metropolitan and rural and regional locations. They have been an opportunity for representatives of local community sector organisations to raise issues of service delivery and policy with representatives of Centrelink and Department of Workplace Relations (DEWR).

Climate Equity Policy Network

(4 meetings)

- 05 December 08
- 06 February 09
- 03 April 09
- 19 June 09

During 2008-09 VCOSS convened the Climate Equity Policy Network which provided an opportunity for community sector organisations to share information and discuss climate change policy in an effort to **identify and respond to** opportunities for more joined-up policy work.

This group has been instrumental in developing informed advocacy and policy around climate change. A strong focus on supporting vulnerable

communities and community transition in the Victorian Climate Change Green Paper has been an outcome of strong community sector involvement in climate change policy development.

Closing the Gap in well-being for Aboriginal Victorians

VCOSS continued to engage with and work collaboratively with a range of Aboriginal community-controlled organisations and Aboriginal community leaders to support improved outcomes for Indigenous Victorians, particularly across the areas of children, young people, families, education, health, and justice; and in advocating for the establishment of an Aboriginal Commissioner for Social Justice in Victoria.

One of the most significant events this year was VCOSS being invited to be one of the signatory organisations supporting the signing of the *Statement of Intent to Close the Gap* by the Victorian Government with VACCHO (Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation) on 17 August 2008.

Collaborators

The Clearinghouse continues to facilitate the Collaborators Group, representatives from Victorian skilled volunteer providers.

In July 2008 the Collaborators initiated the 'CSR and the Community Sector Perspective' project the purpose of which was to understand and document the Community Sector perspective on Corporate Social Responsibility. The project produced two documents, *'Corporate Social Responsibility, A Not-For-Profit Perspective: Literature Review'* and *'Corporate Social Responsibility, A Not-For-Profit Perspective: Interviews with the sector'*, were launched in February 2009 with 80 community sector representatives in attendance.

Participants at the launch were included in a forum to hear stories of successful CSR engagement; explore the contents of the documents and contribute their own perspective; and develop ideas on how to build the capacity for the community sector to engage effectively in CSR.

Skilled volunteer providers involved in the Collaborators group in 2008/09 include:

PILCHConnect, Leadership Victoria, Australian Business Arts Foundation, Leadership Ballarat, goodcompany, Melbourne Cares, Ballarat Cares, Volunteering Victoria, Volunteering Australia, Oxfam Skill Share, MelBITMentor, and Pro Bono Australia

Community Leadership Alliance Project

(CLAP)

VCOSS, together with Environment Victoria and Vic Sport, was delighted to work with the Victorian Arts Industry Council, in a statewide consultation process to identify areas of mutual interest with a view to developing a 'third sector' voice across our various non-government sectors. The initial consultation was funded by the office for the Community Sector in Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD). The findings from the consultation indicated that Victorians involved in one or more of our networks would value more opportunities to network and collaborate, and would value the opportunity for a more coordinated voice to advocate about shared sector issues and build a stronger public profile for our non-profit / non-government sector. Given the enormous diversity and scale of the sector, and despite the shortage of financial resources to run such developmental work, there is clearly more time and work required, before a structure and strategy could be finalised for any new Third Sector Council.

Community Sector Advocacy Day

VCOSS hosted a Community Sector Advocacy Day at Parliament House on 11 March 2009. The Advocacy Day was a new initiative for the community sector in Victoria and provided an opportunity to showcase the diversity of our sector and the challenges and opportunities it faces. In total, thirty-seven Members of Parliament along with forty-nine representatives of the community sector participated.

A key aim of the day was to highlight the funding pressures faced by community organisations particularly given the global economic downturn and the increased demand for services. The community sector called for indexation of 4.2% to ensure the value of funding keeps pace with the costs of service delivery.

Community Sector Futures Task Group

(CSFTG) (7 meetings)

The task group chaired by Paul Linossier, CEO of MacKillop Family Services, funded by supportive member organisations, and staffed by the VCOSS office, signed off a strategy plan and started developing a values statement and vision for the community sector. Occasional papers were commissioned and published on various significant topics, and submissions have been made to key government processes including the Productivity Commission Inquiry into the contribution of Non-Profit Organisations, due to be published in late 2009. The CSFTG also provides stimulus to identify topics and speakers to bring forward to the VCOSS CEO and President Forum – such as: workforce planning, the role of public voice, and responding to the global financial crisis.

Emergency Relief Victoria

VCOSS continued to participate on the Executive of Emergency Relief Victoria, to support the coordination, action research and advocacy of this important statewide network of 300 large and small Emergency Relief providers.

A highlight of the year was the launch of *Under Pressure* by the Hon Jenny Macklin on 26 June 2009, a research report co-produced between RMIT, Good Shepard, Emergency Relief Victoria and VCOSS, involving surveys with over 2000 recipients of emergency assistance in 2007 and 2008.

Equity in Education Alliance

VCOSS convenes the Equity in Education Alliance which continues to advocate for improved education affordability. Members include Good Shepherd Youth & Family Services, Esther's Voice, Melbourne City Mission, the Brotherhood of St Laurence and Berry Street Victoria and the Australian Association for Research in Education, Special Interest Group Social Justice, Victoria.

The strong focus by all members has resulted in the Alliance gaining a strong public presence and positive collaborations with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

Human Services Partnership Implementation Committee

(HSPIC) (6 meetings)

Partnership Assessment Workshops

(8 workshops)

The signing of the new 2009-12 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the independent health, housing and community sector and the Department of Human Services (DHS) was of great significance. VCOSS continues to lead this collaboration with the DHS on behalf of the sector and through this partnership we continue to see positive outcomes for the sector, with price review processes, indexation, collaboration around simplification of quality standards, publication of partnership assessment learnings and development tools, and a range of other useful sector-wide processes being developed.

Peaks and Statewide Networks Forum

(6 meetings)

Peaks' price index working group

(15 meetings)

VCOSS convenes and offers staff support to the 'combined peaks' every two months, with the aim of sharing information and pursuing outcomes on mutual concerns. There are about 90 peak or statewide organisations on the list and between 15-30 representatives attend each meeting. The Forum achieved really effective collaboration in the past year, with a shared planning, research, lobbying and campaign strategy to secure an improved 3.14% annual indexation rate in recurrent service funding, plus the continuation of \$2m capacity building payments shared across the sector, covering more than \$1.1 billion per year in service agreements with the Victorian

Government.

While the NGO Price Index 2009-12 only covers DHS and DEECD funded organisations, the precedent has already been passed on to community, legal and a number of other sectors. It will make it harder for Government to refuse to fund adequate indexation in agreements coming up for renewal in 2010.

Transport

- Coalition for People's Transport (9 meetings)
- Community Transport Roundtables (2 meetings)

VCOSS Transport and Disadvantage Working Group

The Transport and Disadvantage Working Group continues to be an active and influential forum for representative groups across Victoria and guides much of the work we do around transport and disadvantage.

Group members represent regional and remote areas of Victoria as well as specialist disability organisations and travel support services. Peak bodies YACVic and the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) are also members of the working group.

VCOSS is also actively involved with the Metropolitan Transport Forum (MTF) and the MTF's Advocacy Working Group and is a founding member of the Sustainable Melbourne Alliance.

Our working relationship with the Department of Transport (DoT) through the recently instigated Social Transit Unit as well as participating in the departments key consultative groups and roundtables: Transport & Social Inclusion Committee (TASIC), Public Transport Access Committee (PTAC) and DoT Stakeholder Quarterly Roundtable.

Victorian Community Union Roundtable

(VCUR) (6 meetings)

VCOSS hosts a regular meeting between active non-government peak bodies outside the community services sector, and the main participants include the leadership of Trades Hall Council, Victorian Council of Churches, Environment Victoria and the Victorian Local Governance Association. This enables information sharing and development of relationships, mutual support on shared policy concerns, and an opportunity to identify a social and sustainable vision for Victoria. Effort was invested in late 2008 to refresh the VCUR Visions for Victoria policy platforms first developed in 2004, in order to run an event in early 2009. However this was deferred in the face of urgent demands of engaging with the new Fair Work Bill, and in the case of VCOSS involvement, the pressing nature of responding to bushfires in February 2009.

Victorian and national human rights processes

VCOSS continued to work collaboratively with a range of agencies, including the Victorian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, to promote an awareness and understanding of the *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities*.

VCOSS worked with ACOSS and PILCH in contributing to the national human rights consultation process about the protection and promotion of human rights within Australia.



*The launch of Under Pressure, June 2009.
Rivkah Nissim (VCOSS), Kathy Lanvoigt (Good Shepherd), The Hon Jenny Macklin (Minister
for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs), Dr Benno Engels (RMIT).*

5. Sustain an effective, ethical, healthy organisation

In our 3 year strategic plan 2008-2010, VCOSS set out to act as a model workplace for the community, to maintain best practice standards of governance, to be financially viable over both the short and long term, to manage our risk to an appropriate level and be forward thinking and engage in regular planning.

We aimed to ensure resources, internal systems and infrastructure are aligned to achieve the strategic plan and be accountable to our various stakeholders, including members, funders, broader community and the people whose interests we represent.

In 2008-09 we focused on meeting all statutory and legal obligations, including negotiation of a new collective agreement with staff in 2009, maintaining effective financial management including annual budget and three year forecasting, ensuring adequate funding for overheads, regular financial reporting to the Board and development of indicators and trend analysis to ensure the Board's full oversight of the financial position.

Over the past year, VCOSS also prioritised development of risk management, facilities management and human resource policies, processes and reporting systems with our strategic plan, and to plan and develop revenue development and membership strategy, including marketing and member services and strengthen involvement by members in VCOSS work.

We also committed to establishing a quality improvement regime and to strengthen and continuously improve our governance policies and processes.

Over the past financial year, all these areas were developed, within a continuing trajectory of active growth.

Internal systems, processes and supports

Clearly, one of the most significant risks for organisations such as VCOSS is our viability and the capability of internal governance and financial controls.

Internal financial and human resource policies have been developed to keep pace with our expanding turnover, diversity of activities, and overall staffing numbers. During the year, VCOSS maintained effective financial management including annual budget and three year forecasting, ensured adequate funding for overheads, provided regular financial reporting to the Board and further developed reporting and analysis to ensure the Board's full oversight of the financial position.

As the scale and diversity of activities have grown, VCOSS has now moved to establish a more formal risk management framework to identify, quantify and appropriately respond to the various risks we face as an organisation. Finalisation and implementation of this framework will occur during 2009-10.

Given the need to attract and retain skilled professional staff in a tight employment market, and where fixed term rather than on-going contracts are a key part of the staffing mix for financial reasons, VCOSS has entered into a new three year enterprise agreement covering all our employees, excepting the CEO. A robust consultation process was undertaken with significant input from employees across VCOSS. The result is an improved agreement which will now see VCOSS through until 2012. It is available on our website as a reference for the sector. This agreement was approved by Fair Work Australia in August and was formally in place by 1 July 2009.

During the year, we made some changes to our staffing structure, and expect to make further changes as we consolidate our growth. Upon

our Policy Manager's return from maternity leave into a part-time role, we moved to align several existing and new part-time roles of media liaison, publications, communications strategy and membership within one new team and will make further changes to this as we test different ways to resource our many needs within our financial constraints.

Another 'green' achievement early in 2008 was the agreement by Department of Justice (DoJ) to provide access for VCOSS staff to secure bike racks opposite our office, in their building. For the transport advantaged staff located within a ride to work, this was a positive and practical offer and we've been delighted to take it up.

Confirm and strengthen funding and other revenue streams

VCOSS has entered into a new three year funding agreement with DHS in relation to our core funding. This agreement will now see us through until 2012. We also secured significant project funding from various government and philanthropic sources, which allows us to undertake specific project work in various priority areas. Project revenues and grants, diversified across 8-10 government agencies and independent funders, are less plannable than core funding, and projects range from 1-2 months through to 3 years in length. This requires considerable management, reporting and negotiation to ensure we can develop the organisation effectively with this mix of support. In order to keep diversifying these revenue streams, we will strengthen our focus on securing our non-government revenue sources over the next financial year.

Greening the office

VCOSS undertook a green office audit in late 2008, with assistance from the Green Steps intern project at RMIT. We wanted to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and generally improve our environmental performance. **The audit focused** on energy, paper, waste, purchasing and general office systems. The key recommendations to come out of the report included selective de-lamping of fluorescent lights, a policy of switching equipment off at the point, organisation of co-mingled recycling, reducing the usage of disposable items, creating ethical purchasing guidelines and switching to green energy. Many of these have already been implemented. Apart from the environmental benefits and the opportunity to engage enthusiastic staff, we also expect some cost savings so it's a great outcome all round.

Individual Members

Melissa Afentoulis
Kerrie Ambry
Geoff Baker
Michelle Barnett
Ruth Barr
Tom Beggs
Linda Bennett
Robyn Berrie
Colin Blackburn
Susan Blackburn-
Mitchell
Jenny Blakey
Mary Bluett
Michael Bradford
Paul Bradley
David Brant
John Burke
Olga Bursian
Paul Butler
Melisa Chabierski
Lin Chandler
Margaret Clausen
Kaye Cole
Brian Collingburn
Joseph Connellan
Karen Crinall
Tony Dalton
Kylie Dare
Janie Davey
Warwick Dilley
Jenny Dyer
Lauren Eagle

Jenny Elvey
Anne Emery
Twanny Farrugia
Kristy Fraser
Denise Goldfinch
Mary Hall
Linda Hancock
Helen Harris
Lesley Harris
Lorraine Harrison
Judi Hollingsworth
Terry Holman
David Imber
Judith Klepner
Bev Kliger
Robert Laird
Tony Lang
Dymphna Laurie
Marg Leser
Lesley Lightfoot
Heather Mackay
Reynoldson
Judy Magassy
Yvonne Magyar
Ray Manley
Magi Marcon
Sarah Massey
Alison McClelland
Irene McGinnigle
Andrew McSwain
Philip Mendes
Judith Moore

Meg Moorhouse
Becky Morton
Sally Moseby
Sandra Mounsey
Ros Moye
Ashton Mutasa
Elisabeth Newman
Evelyn Nicholson
Leanne Nicholson
Tammy Osborne
Eric Passaris
Joy Phillips
Barry Pullen
Rebecca Quinn
Rose Read
Tom Reisner
Dale Renner
Jo Richie
Jean Roberts
Sarah Rothera
Don Siemon
David Simmons
WendyJoy Smith
Linda Staehli
Gary Steadman
Lindy Steel
Fred Stern
Nikki Stevens
Jo Tenner
Guinever Threlkeld
Natalie Tomas

Judith Voce
Robert Were
Lorraine Wheeler
Judith Willis
David Wood
Mary Wooldridge
Sally Wright
Peter Yewers

Life Members

Alison Matthew
(from 1983)
Joan Brown (from 1980)
Margaret Kelley
(from 1980)
Ms K L Shepherdson
(from 1980)
Mrs V F Leigh (from 1980)
June Roberts (from 1996)
Merle Mitchell
(from 1996)
Jean McCaughey AO
(from 2001)
Sam Biondo (from 2001)
Mark Feigan (from 2003)
Rob Nicholls (from 2005)
John Honner (from 2005)
Andrew McCallum
(from 2006)
Brian Howe (from 2007)

Organisational Members

Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and
Legal Service

Action for Community Living

Action on Disability Within Ethnic Communities

Action Research Issues Association

Advocacy and Rights Centre Limited

Aged & Community Care Victoria

AIDS Housing Action Group

Alphington Community Centre (ASHE) Inc

Amaroo Neighbourhood Centre Inc.

Amnesty International

ANEX Inc

Anglicare Victoria

Antiochian Care

ARAFEMI Victoria

ARBIAS

Ardoch Youth Foundation

Ashburton Support Services

Ashcare Inc

Association for Children with a Disability

Association of Neighbourhood Houses &
Learning Centres

Australian Association of Social Workers
(Victorian B)

Australian Institute of Welfare & Community
Workers

Australian Services Union
Community Sector Division

Autism Victoria

Banksia Gardens Community Centre

Banyule Housing Support Group

Barwon Adolescent Task Force Inc

Barwon Community Legal Service

Bendigo Community Health Services

Bendigo Loddon Primary Care Partnership

Bendigo UnitingCare Outreach

BENETAS

Berry Street Victoria

Berwick Neighbourhood Centre

Blind Citizens Australia

Borderlands Cooperative

BrainLink Services Ltd

Braybrook Maidstone Neighbourhood
Association

Brenda House Inc

Broadmeadows Uniting Care

Brotherhood of St.Laurence

Brunswick Neighbourhood House

Buoyancy

CAE - CSE Department

Camcare Incorporated

Carers Victoria

Carlton Community Co-operative Ltd

Caroline Lodge

Casey North Community Information & Support
Service

Castlemaine and District Accommodation
Group

Catholic Social Services Victoria

CAUS Inc

Centacare Catholic Family Services
 Centre for Excellence in Child & Family Welfare
 Centre for Sustainability Leadership
 Change Unlimited
 Chelsea Community Support Services Inc
 Chronic Illness Alliance
 Church of All Nations
 City of Whittlesea
 Clota Cottage Neighbourhood House
 Collaborations
 Combined Pensioners & Superannuants Assoc of Victorian Inc
 Community Child Care Association Inc
 Community Houses Association of the Outer Eastern Suburbs
 Community Housing Federation of Victoria
 Community Information Diamond Valley
 Community Information Glen Eira
 Community Information Victoria Inc
 Community Planning Maroondah City Council
 Connections UnitingCare
 Cooroonya House Inc
 Cornerstone Contact Centre
 Council of Gambler's Help Services
 Council of Single Mothers and Their Children
 Council on the Ageing (VIC)
 Council to Homeless Persons
 Cranbourne Information and Support Service Inc
 Cystic Fibrosis Victoria
 Dandenong Community Advisory Bureau
 Deaf Children Australia
 Deakin University – Social Work Program
 Dignity Financial Counselling
 Dingley Village Community Advice Bureau
 Disability Justice Advocacy
 Disability Rights & Advocacy Service
 DISTSS Inc
 Doncare
 Early Childhood Australia
 Early Childhood Intervention Australia (VIC CHAPTER)
 EASE
 Eastern Community Legal Centre Inc
 Eastern Domestic Violence Service
 Eastern Volunteer Resource Centre
 Emma House Domestic Violence Services
 EW Tipping Foundation
 Extended Families Australia Inc
 Family Access Network Inc
 Farnham Street Neighbourhood Learning Centre
 Fawkner Community House
 Federation of Community Legal Centres
 Financial & Consumer Rights Council
 Financial Counselling (VIC) Inc
 Fitzroy Legal Service
 Flemington & Kensington Community Legal Centre Inc
 Footscray Rental Housing Cooperative Ltd
 Foster Care Association of Victoria (FCAV)
 Frankston Community Support & Information Centre
 Gatehouse Centre
 Geelong Mental Health Consumers Union
 Gippsland Disability Advocacy Inc
 Gippsland Lakes Community Health
 Gippsland Trades & Labour Council
 Glenroy Community Information Centre
 Good Samaritan Inn
 Good Shepherd Youth and Family Service
 GordonCare for Children
 Groupwork Institute of Australia
 Grovedale Community Centre
 Hanover Welfare Services
 Healesville Interchurch Community Care Inc
 Health Issues Centre
 Healthwest Partnership
 Hepatitis C Victoria
 Holden Street Neighbourhood House
 HomeGround Services
 Horsham Christian Emergency Food Centre
 Housing for the Aged Action Group
 Housing Resource & Support Service
 Humanist Society of Victoria
 Humanitarian Crisis Hub
 Huntington's Victoria
 Immigrant Women's Domestic Violence Service

Inner South Community Health Service
 Interact Australia
 Interchange Loddon Mallee Reg
 Ithaca CERC
 Jesuit Social Services
 Jewish Care
 Job Watch Inc
 Kerrimuir Neighbourhood House
 Kids Under Cover
 Kildonan UnitingCare
 Kindergarten Parents Victoria
 Knox Community Volunteers Inc
 Knox Infolink
 Laverton Community Centre Inc.
 Leadership Ballarat Western Region
 Lifestyle in Supported Accommodation (LISA) Inc
 Limbs 4 Life Inc
 LINK Community Transport Inc
 Loddon Mallee Accommodation Network
 Macedonian Community Welfare Association
 MacKillop Family Services
 Mallee Accommodation & Support Program
 McAuley Community Services for Women
 ME/CFS Australia (Victoria)
 Melbourne Community Foundation
 Melbourne Unitarian Church
 Meniere's Support Group of Victoria
 Mental Health Foundation Victoria
 Mental Health Legal Centre Inc
 Mission Australia
 Monash Volunteer Resource Centre
 Moreland Community Legal Centre Inc
 Moreland Fibromyalgia Support Group
 Motor Neurone Disease Association
 Network of Inner Eastern Community Houses
 Network West Inc
 New Peninsula Community Caring Inc
 No To Violence
 North East Housing Service
 North East Neighbourhood House Network
 North Melbourne Legal Service
 North Yarra Community Health
 Northwest Neighbourhood House Network Inc
 Norwood Association Inc
 Office of the Public Advocate
 Open Door (Seaford) Inc.
 Opening the Doors Foundation
 Orana Family Services
 Oxfam Australia SkillShare
 PACT Community Support
 Parents Without Partners (VIC) Community Services Inc
 People Living With HIV/AIDS Victoria Inc
 PILCH (VIC) Inc
 Port Phillip Community Group
 Prahran Mission
 Prahran/Malvern Community Housing
 Project Respect
 Queen Victoria Women's Centre
 South Port Uniting Church & Uniting Care
 Reach Out For Kids Foundation
 Retina Australia (VIC) Inc
 Road Trauma Support Team Vic
 Robinson House BBWR Inc
 Ross House Association
 Royal District Nursing Service
 Rural Housing Network Ltd
 Sacred Heart Mission
 Save the Children Victoria
 Scope (VIC) Ltd
 Selby Community House
 South Barwon Community Centre
 South Port Day Links
 Southern Peninsula Community Support &
 Information Centre
 SPAN Community House
 Spring Creek Community House
 Springvale Community Aid & Advice Bureau
 Springvale Neighbourhood House Inc
 St Kilda Community Housing Ltd
 St Luke's Bendigo
 St Mary's House of Welcome Ltd
 St Vincent de Paul Aged and Community Services

STAR Victoria
Sunbury Neighbourhood House
Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic Communities Council
TADVIC Co-op Ltd
TaskForce Community Agency Inc
Tenants Union of Victoria
Thalassaemia Australia
The ALSO Foundation
The Centre Connecting Community in North & West Melbourne
The Community Coach
The McCaughey Centre
The Myer Foundation
The Neighbour's Place Inc
The Reichstein Foundation
The Salvation Army – Social Policy Unit
The Smith Family
Travellers Aid Society of Victoria
Trentham Neighbourhood Centre
United Way Ballarat Community Fund
UnitingCare – Sunshine Mission
UnitingCare Victoria and Tasmania
UnitingCare Werribee Support & Housing
Upper Murray Centre Against Sexual Assault
URCOT
VACRO
VANISH
VICCSO Inc
VicHealth
VICSERV - Psychiatric Disability Services of Victoria Inc
Victorian AIDS Council/ Gay Mens Health Centre
Victorian Alcohol & Drug Association
Victorian Coalition of ABI Service Providers – VCASP
Victorian Public Tenants Association Inc
Victorian Women's Housing Association
Villamanta Disability Rights Legal Service
Volunteering Geelong
Volunteering Victoria Inc
Warragul Community House
Warrandyte Housing & Support Services
Wellsprings for Women Inc

Wesley Mission Melbourne
West Heidelberg Community Legal Service
Western Region Disability Network
Whittlesea Community Connections
Wombat Housing & Support Services
WIRE – Women's Information
Women's Health In the North Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service of Victoria Inc
Women's Health Grampians Incorporated
Women's Health in the South East
Women's Health Loddon Mallee
Women's Health Victoria
Women's Health West
Women's Housing Ltd
Women's Liberation Halfway House
Women's Resource & Information Centre
Woorarra Inc
Yarra Community Housing
Yarraville Community Centre
Yarrawonga District Health Service Yooralla
Youth Affairs Council of Victoria
Youth Emergency Accommodation Programs
Preston Inc
Youthlaw
YWCA Victoria

Affiliates

Victoria Legal Aid

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Victorian Government Departments:

- Department of Human Services
- Department of Justice
- Department of Planning and Community
Development
- Department of Primary Industries
- Department of Sustainability and Environment
- Department of Transport

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