ONE YEAR ON
ANNUAL REPORT CARD

What does Tasmania’s ageing population mean for volunteerism?
BACKGROUND


• the involvement and discussions of the many stakeholders who helped develop the SOVR 2012, and

• the impact the published document has had subsequently.

FININDS

The Report concluded that ‘one of the main focuses of addressing an ageing population is engaging with a larger group of older Tasmanians and the opportunities this offers our communities. However, the overarching approach for the recommendations is that all age groups need to be engaged in volunteering and volunteer-delivered services for our future needs.’

The SOVR 2012 focussed its recommendations on two key principles:

Managing Volunteerism. How we plan for and develop the skills to provide for relevant volunteering and volunteer-delivered services for Tasmania in future years. These recommendations are also about how we ensure volunteer-involving organisations can effectively review, evaluate and report on volunteering and volunteer delivered services.

Volunteer Engagement. These recommendations focus on what needs to happen to ensure inclusive volunteering opportunities and a continuous supply of volunteering opportunities within local communities.

It is recognised that the development of appropriate actions and decisions to implement the recommendations from the SOVR2012 would take a number of years. VT has adopted an adaptive management technique to help build practical step-wise changes around the findings. This approach also acknowledges the interconnections between the myriad of stakeholders and players who both impact the results and are potential beneficiaries in planning for demographic change.

Consequently this Report Card has been developed after one year to highlight changes to date and help in the development of the next one to three year strategic planning around the implementation of the SOVR 2012.

AIM OF THE SOVR 2012

The SOVR 2012 explored the impact that the ageing population will have on volunteerism and offered ways forward for volunteer-involving organisations, business and government. It produced a set of recommendations based on the research and through the lenses of four broad themes: volunteer management, workforce development, social inclusion and digital technology.

The SOVR highlighted the need for many entities to review their processes and better plan ahead for changes in volunteering and volunteer-delivered services. It created a sense of urgency to this task. Importantly it gave individuals and organisations the evidence and context to have meaningful discussions, re-prioritise actions and re-focus their existing and future work. The major areas of change are listed here.

IMPROVED VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

VT has significantly improved its capacity to support organisations to deliver best practice volunteer management, recognising the changing nature of volunteering (such as episodic, virtual and spontaneous volunteering) and the concept that volunteers will shift between agencies and not necessarily stay long term in the same roles. Specific new actions are:

• A statewide volunteer management review of the 33 programs of Meals on Wheels.

OUTCOMES AROUND INCLUSIVE AGEING

The SOVR helped focus the ‘Engaging in different ways: volunteer contributions’ project, one of six projects contained in the State Government’s Inclusive Ageing Tasmania 2012-2014 Strategy. The Strategy aims to increase the capacity for all older people to be fully included in community life, particularly those who are socially excluded or at risk of becoming so.

The aim of the project is to recognise and enhance the voluntary contributions made by older Tasmanians and is a collaborative project with State Government, Volunteering Tasmania and COTA Tas. Ongoing discussions between Volunteering Tasmania and the Department of Premier and Cabinet’s Community Development Division assisted in shaping the initial project, and the findings and recommendations of the SOVR 2012 are supporting the implementation of the project.

GREATER LEADERSHIP

The production of the SOVR led to calls for VT to provide further leadership in volunteer management, particularly around spontaneous volunteering during times of crisis.

VT’s School’s Project review that aims to help ensure communities have a continuous supply of meaningful volunteering roles that are appealing and promote and support the growth of volunteerism.

VT has become active in the Tasmanian Community Services Peaks Network group ‘workforce development and communities of practice group’ aiming to improve future service delivery planning and the role volunteering could play in the delivery of outcomes.