

Chapter 11

SOCIAL WELFARE

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Chapter 11

SOCIAL WELFARE

The main objective of the Australian social welfare system is the alleviation of poverty. Support for families with children is also provided in accordance with the high value Australians have traditionally placed on family formation and child rearing.

In pursuing these objectives, certain major principles have long been embodied in the system:

- the community as a whole accepts responsibility for the provision of income support to those individuals and families who are unable (or are not expected) to support themselves;
- payments are provided to such people as a right;
- payments are targeted towards particular categories of people in need (eg. to the aged, sole parents, the sick and unemployed) and, generally, according to people's means;
- support for children is provided in recognition that, at any level of income, people with children have greater needs than do those without.

Several major social and economic changes have occurred in the last decade with significant implications for the social security system. There have been significant changes in economic conditions and the labour force. Changes have occurred in family composition, including an increase in the number of sole parent families whose circumstances limit participation in the workforce. There has been also a large increase in the number of families with children dependent on pensions or benefits.

Historically, the Commonwealth Government became responsible for income security at a time when the only people seen to be 'in need' were those unable, as a result of age, widowhood or handicap, to support themselves.

The State Government's role has been one of child welfare, in areas of protection, neglect and care.

The past ten years, however, have seen both State and Commonwealth Governments broad-

ening their spheres of operations, introducing both family and community oriented services. For example:

- the recognition of the lone father by extending, in 1978, the supporting Mothers Benefit to encompass *all* lone parents;
- the introduction in the same year of the family Support Services Scheme for the introduction of new and innovative welfare services by the non-government sectors.
- in 1975, funds became available for Family Day Care Schemes and Childhood Services;
- in 1979, the Department for Community Welfare introduced the Family Assistance Scheme;
- funds were allocated to Neighbourhood Houses in 1981;
- such allowances as Family Income Supplement, Rental Assistance, Carer's Pension are among some of the many other services to be made available.

Against this, however, have been:

- the demise of the universal pension for people over 70 years.
- the abolition of family allowances for students over 16 who got Secondary Allowance Scheme (SAS) payments, and
- the change in child care funding from an operational subsidy to a fee relief scheme.

In the absence of a commonly accepted framework for describing and analysing 'social welfare' in its totality, two strands are prominent, even if fuzzy at the edges. A large component of 'social welfare' consists of cash payments to people in need. Although perhaps not all embracing nor definitive, the term income main-

tenance can be used to encompass all regular cash benefits paid to individuals.

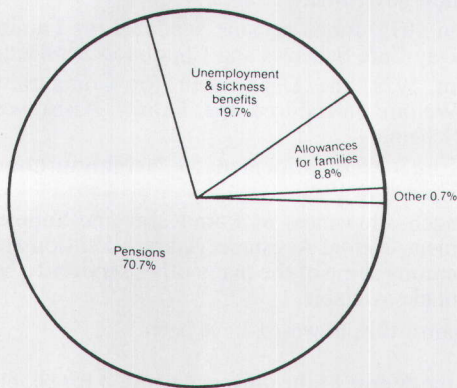
An equally large, if not larger, component of 'social welfare' consists of a vast array of direct services provided by governments, and non-government agencies, often with at least some funding provided by government.

Together, income maintenance payments and direct services to individuals, the 'social welfare' system is a complex net of activities providing communal assistance to individuals that in one way or another involves almost all members of our society.

11.1 INCOME MAINTENANCE

Income maintenance payments to individuals are mostly provided by the Commonwealth Government. During 1984-85, \$17 833 million were expended in Australia on social security and welfare by the Commonwealth, almost 28 per cent of the total Government outlay.

In 1984-85 more than \$500 million were paid to Tasmanians in the form of pensions and benefits. At the end of the year (30 June 1985) in excess of 155 000 people (almost one third of the State's population) were being financially assisted with cash payments direct from the Commonwealth Government.



Components of income maintenance payments, Tasmania, 1984-85

11.1.1 Pensions

'The pension is in lieu of wages. It supposes that the pensioner's situation is permanent, or at least long-term, and carries with it no rehabilitative implications.'

(Rennison, 1970, p.58)

The introduction of a pension for aged persons in 1909 began Australia's national provision of

social security payments. Since then a number of other regular income payments have been introduced to meet specific cases of perceived need: for people incapacitated for work, for spouses of age or invalid pensioners, for sole supporting parents. In addition, disability and service pensions have been provided for returned servicemen and women and their dependents.

11.1 Pensions Paid, Tasmania, 1984-85

Pension type	Number of beneficiaries at 30 June 1985	Expenditure (\$m)
Age	39 782	165.2
Service	15 416	58.4
Invalid (a)	10 291	46.5
Disability	16 743	38.8
Widow's	4 979	27.7
Supporting parents'	4 776	30.3
Total	91 987	366.9

(a) Includes Sheltered Employment Allowance

Source: Departments of Social Security and Veterans Affairs reports.

Age Pensions

Women aged 60 and over and men aged 65 and over are eligible for the age pension subject to income and assets conditions and residential qualifications.

During the financial year 1984-85 just over \$165 million (2.9 per cent of total expenditure) were paid to aged people in Tasmania. At the end of June the 39 782 persons registered, comprised the lowest total for that month since 1980. Nevertheless since 1979 the number of pensioners has shown a levelling off after a 59 per cent increase during the 1970s when the eligibility criteria were broadened.

11.2 Age Pensions and Expenditure, Tasmania

Year	Number at 30 June (a)	Financial year expenditure (\$m)
1971	24 894	21.8
1975	34 269	60.1
1979	39 428	97.0
1983	41 639	143.9
1985	39 782	165.2

(a) Includes wife/spouse/carer pensioners from 1983
Source: Department of Social Security Reports

However, unless the eligibility criteria are further tightened, the number of age pensioners are estimated to again increase significantly. At June 1985 an estimated 66 600 persons aged 60 or over comprised 15 per cent of the State's population of whom 58 per cent were age pensioners. By

the year 2001 an estimated 82 600 persons or 22 per cent of Tasmanians will be aged 60 or over. At the same rate of pension claim, the number of pensioners will increase to 48 500.

Service Pensions

In addition to the Social Security age pension, the Department of Veterans Affairs provides service pensions to male veterans aged 60 years and over and female veterans aged 55 and over. At June 1985 15 416 service pensions were being paid, 9 049 to veterans and 6 367 to wives and widows of veterans.

11.3 Service Pensions, Tasmania, June 1985

War service	Number of pensions
1914-18 war	217
1939-45 war	13 684
Korea and Malaya	107
British Commonwealth	1 054
Allied Forces	239
Special overseas service	55
Miscellaneous	60
Total	15 416

In 10 years the number of service pensions has almost trebled. In that time the composition of the recipients has undergone considerable change due principally to a trebling in the number of World War II veterans reaching the age of eligibility. In 1975 the 5 375 service pensioners comprised: Boer War, 3; 1914-18 war, 1 088; 1939-45 war, 4 265; Korea and Malaya service, 17; and miscellaneous, 2.

11.4 Service Pensioners, Tasmania, 1975-1985

Year	Number at 30 June	Financial year expenditure (\$m)
1975	5 375	6.7
1979	8 960	18.5
1981	11 017	27.4
1983	13 738	42.3
1985	15 416	58.4

Invalid and Disability Pensions

An invalid pension is payable to people over 16 years of age who are permanently incapacitated for work (to the extent of at least 85 per cent), or are permanently blind. At 30 June 1985, 9 820 persons were receiving this pension, an increase of 2 554 on the number at June 1984.

In addition to the invalid pension provided through the Department of Social Security, the Department of Veterans Affairs provides a similar pension to veterans as compensation for incapacity accepted as war-service related. At 30 June

1985, 16 743 disability pensions were being paid and expenditure for the year amounted to \$38.8 million.

11.5 Invalid and Disability Pensions and Expenditure, Tasmania

Year	Invalid pension (a)	
	Number at 30 June	Financial year expenditure
1979	8 052	20.7
1981	8 142	25.3
1983	8 530	32.2
1985	9 820	44.0

Year	Disability pension	
	Number at 30 June	Financial year expenditure
1979	18 127	18.7
1981	16 944	21.9
1983	16 805	28.9
1985	16 743	38.8

(a) Includes spouse carer pensioners from 1983

Source: Departments of Social Security and Veteran Affairs reports.

An allowance equal to the invalid pension can be paid to people who work in approved sheltered employment services, if they are otherwise eligible for the invalid pension. During 1984-85 a total of \$2.5 million were paid as sheltered employment allowances and at 30 June, 471 persons were receiving the allowance.

Widow's Pension and Supporting Parents Benefit

The widows' pension was introduced in 1942 to provide a regular income for women who had lost the support of their partner. For the first year since 1977 the number of pensions paid dropped to under 5000 at June 1985.

11.6 Widow's Pensions and Expenditure, Tasmania

Year	Number of recipients at 30 June	Financial year expenditure (\$m)
1977	4 572	12.5
1979	5 229	16.6
1981	5 230	21.0
1983	5 144	24.2
1985	4 979	27.7

Source: Department of Social Security reports

Sole parents who have the custody, care and control of a child aged under 16, or a dependent full-time student aged 16 to 24 inclusive can be eligible for a supporting parent's benefit. It was originally introduced in 1973 as the supporting mothers' benefit and renamed in 1977 when extended to supporting fathers.

Widow's Pension

A widow's pension may be paid to:

- a (de jure) widow;
- a woman who is a divorcee;
- a woman who has been deserted by her husband without just cause for a period of not less than six months;
- a woman whose husband has been convicted of an offence and has been imprisoned for a period of not less than six months;
- a woman who was the de facto wife of a man for at least three years immediately before his death; and
- a woman who is a victim of a bigamous marriage in certain circumstances.

Supporting parent's benefit

A person eligible for a supporting parent's benefit includes:

- a widower, or a man whose de facto wife has died;
- a male divorcee;
- a separated husband or wife or a separated de facto husband or wife;
- an unmarried parent;
- a parent whose spouse or de facto spouse has been convicted of an offence, and has been imprisoned as a result for 14 days or longer; and
- a married person left caring for a child or children and unable to live with his/her spouse in the matrimonial home because of the spouse's illness or infirmity.

11.7 Number of and Expenditure on Supporting Parents' Benefit, Tasmania

Year	Number of recipients at 30 June	Financial year expenditure (\$m)
1977	1 778	5.6
1979	2 057	7.5
1981	3 519	13.6
1983	4 047	22.1
1985	4 776	30.3

Source: Department of Social Security reports

11.1.2 Unemployment, and Sickness Benefits**Unemployment Benefits**

With rising unemployment during the 1970s and early 80s, the number of people receiving benefits has risen more than five fold; from 3 825

11.8 Unemployment Benefits, Tasmania

Year	Number of recipients at 30 June	Financial year expenditure (\$m)
1971	782	0.4
1975	4 439	7.8
1979	10 420	28.6
1981	12 929	34.7
1983	20 355	78.3
1985	18 870	96.9

Source: Department of Social Security reports

recipients in 1970, to 18 870 people at June 1985 after a peak of 32 147 during 1981-82. As a consequence the amount paid on this category of welfare expenditure is now exceeded only by age pension payments. During the 1984-85 year a total of 25 719 benefits were granted in Tasmania.

An unemployment benefit may be paid fortnightly, generally after a seven-day waiting period, to people aged at least 16 but under 65 in the case of men or under 60 in the case of women. They must have lived in Australia for at least one year immediately prior to claiming or intend to remain in Australia permanently.

To be eligible for unemployment benefit a person must:

- have been unemployed for the period covered by the benefit;
- be capable of undertaking and willing to undertake suitable paid work;
- be taking reasonable steps to obtain work;
- not be unemployed due to being, or having been, engaged in industrial action; and
- not be unemployed due to industrial action by other members of a trade union of which the person is a member.

Sickness Benefits

A sickness benefit is paid to people who have been temporarily incapacitated for work because of sickness or accident and who have suffered a loss of income as a result of the incapacity or who, but for the incapacity would qualify for the unemployment benefit. During the 1984-85 financial year a total of 3 411 benefits were granted in Tasmania, the lowest number since 1972-73. At June 1985, 1 025 benefits were being paid.

11.9 Sickness Benefits, Tasmania

Year	Number of recipients at 30 June	Financial year expenditure (\$m)
1977	4 662	2.4
1979	3 881	2.0
1981	3 626	2.9
1983	3 750	4.6
1985	1 025	5.5

Source: Department of Social Security reports

11.1.3 Allowances for Families**Family Allowances**

In 1976 child endowment, along with tax rebates for dependent children, was replaced by a family allowance, usually payable to the mother. At the same time the value of the allowance was significantly increased so that total payments in Tasmania increased from \$7.7 million in 1975-76 to \$31 million in 1976-77.

People who have the custody, care and control of one or more children under 16, or one or more full-time students aged 16 to 24 inclusive, who are wholly or substantially dependent on them, may receive the family allowance. Payment is normally made to the mother. Payments for students aged 18-24 were withdrawn from November 1985 (other than for those in needy families).

11.10 Family Allowance, Tasmania, 30 June

Year	Number of dependents	Number of families & approved institutions	Financial year expenditure (\$m)
1977	129 394	61 358	31.2
1979	125 603	61 135	28.9
1981	123 270	61 309	27.8
1983	122 729	61 820	39.1
1985	123 079	62 734	42.8

Source: Department of Social Security reports

To be eligible for the allowance the person and children must have been born in Australia or intend to remain permanently in Australia. If neither of these conditions is met, family allowance is payable after the claimant and children have been in Australia for 12 months.

Handicapped child's allowance

A handicapped child's allowance is available to parents or guardians of mentally or physically handicapped children under 16 or dependent full-time students aged 16 to 24 inclusive. The allowance is not payable if the student is receiving an invalid pension or supporting parent's benefit.

For the allowance to be payable the handicapped child must require and receive constant, or almost constant, care and attention because of the disability and must be living in the family home.

There is no formal income test but payments for a handicapped child in this category are restricted to parents or guardians with low incomes.

11.11 Handicapped Children's Allowances, Tasmania

Year	Number of recipients at 30 June	Financial year expenditure (\$'000)
1977	467	345
1979	568	407
1981	766	529
1983	863	839
1985	996	916

Source: Department of Social Security reports

Double orphan's pension

A guardian or an institution may be paid a double orphan's pension for a child under 16, or a dependent full-time student aged 16 to 24 inclusive, whose parents are dead. The pension is also payable if one parent is dead and:

- the whereabouts of the other parent are not known to the claimant;
- the other parent has been convicted of an offence and sentenced to imprisonment for at least ten years and is serving that sentence; or
- the other parent is an inmate of a mental hospital and will require care and treatment in that or a similar hospital for an indefinite period.

A double orphan's pension may also be paid in respect of a refugee child whose parents are both outside Australia or if their whereabouts are unknown.

The pension is paid free of any income test and is not subject to income tax.

11.12 Double Orphan's Pensions, Tasmania

Year	Number of recipients at 30 June	Financial year expenditure (\$'000)
1979	93	54
1981	88	53
1983	122	84
1985	110	72

Source: Department of Social Security reports

Family income supplement

Certain low income families are eligible for a family income supplement, an income-tested,

non-taxable family income supplement payable for each child under 16 years or dependent full-time student aged 16 to 24 inclusive.

A person may qualify, subject to residence requirements, for the allowance provided that:

- the person or his/her spouse is qualified to receive family allowance for a child;
- the person or his/her spouse is not in receipt of other forms of Commonwealth income support or overseas payment that provide for additional payments in respect of that child; and
- the child does not receive or attract payment of a Commonwealth income-tested pension, benefit or allowance.

The allowance is generally paid to the person receiving family allowance for the child (normally the mother).

11.13 Family Income Supplement, Tasmania

Year	At 30 June, number of		Financial year expenditure (\$m)
	Recipients	Children	
1983	1 076	2 843	0.2
1984	1 418	3 844	1.8
1985	1 309	3 607	2.1

Source: Department of Social Security reports

11.1.4 Other Benefits and Allowances

The social security system provides a number of other allowances additional to the main benefit provided, the most significant of which are the Special benefit, funeral benefits, and fringe benefits for pensioners.

Special benefit

A special benefit may be paid to people who are not eligible for a pension, unemployment or sickness benefit but who are unable to earn a sufficient livelihood for themselves and their dependants.

The grant of a special benefit and the rate of payment are at the discretion of the Secretary of the Department of Social Security. The rate may not exceed the rate of unemployment or sickness benefit that would be paid if the claimant were qualified to receive either of those benefits.

The benefit is designed to meet cases of special need and payments may be made immediately in an emergency.

Special benefit is generally taxable, but a special tax rebate for beneficiaries ensured that persons wholly or mainly dependent on the benefit would have had insufficient income to attract tax in 1984-85. The first two weeks of benefits paid to victims of natural disasters are not taxable.

Funeral Benefit

A funeral benefit of \$20 is payable to a person liable for the funeral costs of an eligible age,

invalid, wife or spouse carer pensioner or of a recipient of sheltered employment allowance, a tuberculosis allowance, or rehabilitation allowance in lieu of one of these payments. A benefit of up to \$40 is payable to an eligible age, invalid, wife, spouse carer or widow pensioner, a supporting parent beneficiary, or a person in receipt of a sheltered employment allowance, tuberculosis allowance, or rehabilitation allowance in lieu of one of these payments, or a repatriation service pensioner who is liable for the funeral costs of a spouse, child or other eligible social security pensioner. An 'eligible' pensioner is one who is permanently blind or whose income (other than pension) or assets comply with the income and assets tests for Commonwealth pensioner fringe benefits.

11.14 Special Benefits and Funeral Benefits, Tasmania, 1984-85

Benefit	Number of benefits granted	Expenditure (\$m)
Special	3 565	3.4
Funeral	1 346	0.4

Source: Department of Social Security reports

Fringe Benefits

The majority of pensioners, beneficiaries of sheltered employment, rehabilitation and supporting parent allowances are entitled to a range of non-cash benefits including concessions on pharmaceuticals, free hearing aid services, telephone and postal concessions, concessions on some rail and bus travel, council rates, driver's licences, car registration fees, power charges and land taxes. At 30 June 1985 51 526 pensioners (85.7 per cent of all pensioners) were receiving pensioner fringe benefits.

In addition, the State Department for Community Welfare provides a number of supplementary allowances to people who are in receipt of pensions or benefits and who satisfy a means criteria.

11.15 Supplementary Assistance 1984-85

Assistance	No. assisted	Expenditure (\$)
Heating allowance	11 327	587 317
Spectacles	5 627	379 355
Furniture removals	195	28 837
Funeral expenses	148	85 316
Transport	67	3 148
Mortgage Rental Relief Scheme	922	167 241
Other (a)	330	7 755

(a) Includes assistance under Residential Domestic Allowance Scheme, Miscellaneous Relief, multiple birth and disaster relief.

11.2 DIRECT SERVICES

Tasmania's early settlers gave little consideration to the causes of poverty, the wisdom of helping those in need or whose responsibility it was to help the aged, the sick, the handicapped or the poor. The hardships of establishing the settlement gave sufficient reason for assistance to be needed as well as given. And while fellow settlers could offer some comfort and help, the responsibility for those in need fell inevitably and naturally to the colonial administration. There were no other sources of help.

The churches barely existed and with only six clergymen, even by 1824, for the entire colony, there was little time for helping to establish social services. The settlers were in no better position to help. According to Joan Brown's study of the development of social services in Tasmania 46 per cent of the population of 14 992 in 1825 were convicts with ex convicts comprising a considerable number of the remainder. 'Wealthy emancipees were still a comparative rarity in 1825 and the bulk of the free settlers were still struggling to establish themselves. Few were in a position to contribute largely to the aid of the less fortunate.'

An early priority was feeding the destitute and for this the principle instrument was the government store. Periods of famine, the need to feed the convicts, newly arrived settlers, the military and public functionaries all combined to produce a situation where more people were on than off the store.

The aged and infirm were soon giving concern to the authorities and one of the biggest problems was the lack of hospital services. Roads, houses, quarters for the troops, stores, a gaol and barracks for the convicts all had precedence over hospitals for the sick and accommodation for the aged, invalid and orphans.

In the 1830s Benevolent Societies were set up in both Launceston and Hobart to help the needy. However, both were soon in constant financial difficulties as a result of public indifference and faded out. The need was constantly greater than the available private resources could meet. Nevertheless, in spite of the problems and inadequacies, services were established; hospitals were built, special provision was made for the mentally ill, indoor and outdoor relief services, although meagre, were provided for the aged, the infirm and for fatherless families and an institution was opened for orphans and destitute children.

After self-government and assumption of local control of the welfare institutions, the second half of the century saw the voluntary agency once again being put at the centre of social service provision, but in an environment of insufficient resources, indifference or hostility. By the end of

the century the Government had increasingly become involved in financially supporting agencies and institutions thus cementing a blending of government and voluntary involvement in providing direct welfare services to people in need. At Federation, Tasmania compared well with the other States providing almost all of the services that are provided today.

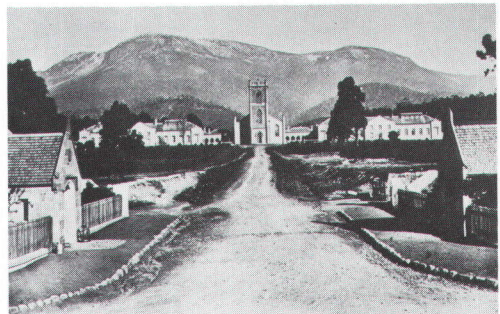
While it is the Commonwealth Government that provides almost all income maintenance payments, it is the State Department for Community Welfare, together with voluntary agencies that provide the personalised help to people in need. Services provided by the Department including child welfare, assistance to families and individuals, community programs and grants accounted for almost \$12 million in 1984-85.

11.16 State Government Welfare Expenditure, 1984-85 (\$)

Administration	6 042 034
Relief	1 633 241
Child Welfare	1 731 139
Grants	2 301 695
Total	11 708 109

11.2.1 Child Welfare

The foundations of the State's child welfare policies were set, as were most social services, under the administration of Governor Arthur. It was he who accepted responsibility for and tackled the problems of destitute and neglected children of the colony who were in 'danger'. In 1827 the administration established a nursery at Cascades for younger children which, although proving unsuitable, was an improvement. The following year a separate establishment at Port Arthur was opened for boy convicts and the Kings Orphan School was opened for children of female convicts, or destitute children without one or both parents. Thus child welfare was and has remained primarily focussed on neglected, or orphaned children and children brought to notice through the courts.



Orphan Schools, New Town (State Archives)

Children Under Supervision

The *Child Welfare Act* provides that children who are found guilty of offences and those who are found to have been neglected may be placed under the supervision of a Child Welfare Officer for a period up to three years. Whilst this order requires the child to comply with the reasonable directions of the officer, its principle purpose is to facilitate the provision of advice, guidance, counselling and practical help. At 30 June 1985 there were 177 children under the legal supervision of Child Welfare Officers.

Wards of the State

As at 30 June 1985 there were 505 children under Guardianship of which 280 were males and 225 females.

A child may become a Ward of the State in a number of ways. A parent may apply to the Minister to have their child admitted into Guardianship. This practice is most common in the case of babies who are offered for adoption but who are not suitable for immediate placement. A Children's Court may declare a child to be a Ward of the State after finding that the child is neglected, or after finding the child guilty of a certain class of offence. The *Child Welfare Act* also provides for a parent to submit a plea at a Children's Court that their own child is beyond their control.

Once a child has become a Ward of the State, the Director for Community Welfare becomes his or her legal guardian to the exclusion of all others. Through the staff of the Department, and with the help of individuals and groups in the community, the Director may exercise this responsibility for guardianship in a variety of ways.

In many cases it is considered to be in the best interests of a child to provide care by supplementing, rather than substituting for, the care offered by the natural parents. Where it is necessary to remove the child from his/her normal home, it often remains possible to assist both the child and parents in a way which leads towards the re-establishment of a normal and fulfilling parent/child relationship.

11.17 Placement of Wards of the State, June 1985

Children's Homes	51
Family Group Homes	25
Government institutions	9
Foster homes	268
Hospitals, nursing homes and hostels	10
Prisons	5
Living with parents or relatives	102
Living independently	27
Other	8
Total	505

Foster Homes

Some children, through circumstances beyond their control, are unable to live with their natural parents. In some cases their parents are dead, missing, or unable to provide for them. Foster homes provide a form of long-term 'substitute care' approximating more closely to that of a normal family environment. Whilst cared for by foster parents the foster child is still aware of its true identity and in many cases retains periodical contact with his or her natural parents and relations.

Foster care also provides sensitive and appropriate short-term care for special categories of children. In recent years there has been an increase in its application in this area.

Children's Homes

Children's Homes are run by charitable bodies to provide care for children. They are approved under the *Child Welfare Act* 1960 to care for Wards of the State, but also receive other children on the application of their parents or the request of the Department for Community Welfare.

Each home has its own style of operation and seeks to meet the needs of a particular group of children. The Department pays an allowance for each approved bed as well as a board rate for each Ward and a contribution towards the cost of caring for other children. At June 1985 the Children's Homes with Wards were:

Roseneath Children's Home, Launceston,
Glendell Children's Home, Deloraine,
Roland Boys' Home, Sheffield,
Glenhaven Children's Home, Devonport,
Clarendon Children's Home, Kingston,
Kennerley Children's Home, Claremont,
Maylands Salvation Army Home, New Town,
Rosebank Cottage, Moonah,
Yalambee Hostel, Glenorchy.

Family Group Homes

The Department for Community Welfare owns 18 family group homes. All residences are large family homes, strategically placed throughout the State and run by married couples who care for up to six children at a time. Care is provided for a wide range of children including Wards of the State, for short periods of time.

Reasons for admittance to a family group home include the emergency care of children who are — or appear to be — neglected, and care whilst a child's normal family home is unavailable (perhaps because a mother is in hospital). These homes are also used when normal child/parent relationships break down, and a period away from home by the child would appear most beneficial to the family as a whole whilst domestic problems are sorted out. During 1984-85, 690 children were placed in the homes.

Adoption

Adoption is regarded first and foremost as a service for children. Adoption is the legal and social process which enables a child to become a complete and permanent member of a new family. Through adoption the child is able to enjoy the same rights and acquire the same legal status within the family as if he or she was a child born of the marriage.

The majority of children offered for adoption are babies aged between three and six weeks. However, in common with all parts of Australia, Tasmania continues to experience a steady decline in the numbers of such children being offered for adoption.

1981	140
1982	119
1983	117
1984	87
1985	97

Adoptions, Tasmania

Inter-Country Adoption

Interest in inter-country adoption continues at a high level within Tasmania with a total of 112 applications recorded on the waiting list as at 30 June 1985.

Because of the extreme complexity of inter-country adoption the time and effort required for processing applications tends to be proportionately far greater than for local applications.

Couples who will be able to meet successfully all the needs arising from an inter-country adoption over the years will need to demonstrate exceptional qualities as parents and other members of their families will also need to be responsible and supportive of the adoption. For these reasons people given the responsibility of investigating applications for inter-country adoption are required to maintain the highest standards in assessing the suitability of couples and their families and to make their assessment in terms of the applicant's understanding of the specific cultural characteristics of the country nominated, as well as the broader and more long-ranging implications of such an adoption for the child and themselves.

Between July 1984 and June 1985, 71 applications for inter-country adoptions were received and 24 children from overseas were placed with approved applicants (8 more than for the previous year). Countries from which children were received during this period were; Korea 15, Sri Lanka 6, and Mauritius 3.

Residential and Community Youth Services

Residential and community youth services in co-operation with field services provides special support and assistance to children and young people whose behaviour may be damaging to themselves or others.

The services are provided through two residential institutions (Ashley Home for Boys and Wybra Hall) and through two non-residential Resource Units.

Ashley Home for Boys

Ashley provides residential institutional care for 14 to 17 year old male offenders. It includes a secure section, although most of the Home is regarded as a medium to low security facility. The daily routine includes a wide range of educational, occupational and recreational activities.

The Superintendent and staff of Ashley in close co-operation with Child Welfare Officers located throughout the State, provide a highly personalised service aimed at assisting each boy to find a satisfying and socially acceptable way of life. The school and trade sections offer a range of practical skills, whilst the whole staff works to encourage and assist their charges with every-day life skills.

Wybra Hall

The purpose of Wybra Hall is to provide residential care, custody, control, guidance and direction to boys and girls whose ages range from 10-14 years for boys and up to 16 years for girls.

Most of the children at Wybra have been placed in the care of the Department for Community Welfare following the commission of offences, although a proportion have been found to be in need of care under the *Child Welfare Act*.

Children are placed at Wybra only after their circumstances have been closely examined by a Child Welfare Officer and it is clear that placement is the most appropriate step. That officer will then maintain a close involvement with the child throughout their stay in the institution, and after discharge.

Some residents are able to return home or move to some other place to live after a short stay. Others need to stay at the institution for longer periods.

It has been normal practice for the children at Wybra to attend local schools if they are able to do so. However, the Education Department has assisted with the establishment of a special class at the institution for those children who are unable to go out to school.

The recent completion of a medium security closed section has greatly enhanced the quality of care offered to young people who are experiencing

severe difficulties. It has also reduced the level of absconding from the institution.

11.18 Occupancy of Government Residences for Children, Tasmania

At 30 June	Ashley Boys Home	Wybra Hall
1979	14	7
1981	19	13
1983	21	14
1985	12	3

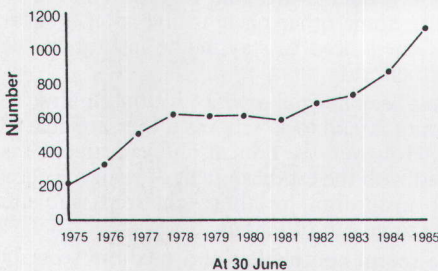
Child Care

The Department for Community Welfare is responsible for the licensing and supervision of facilities where a fee is charged to provide substitute care for children younger than seven years.

These responsibilities include assessment of applicants, maintenance of a support service to licensees, and the keeping of records of holders of current licences. In carrying out these duties, the over-riding aim is to encourage and develop a range of services to meet the needs of families who require substitute day care or short term overnight care for their children.

The Department for Community Welfare staff actively foster community management of locally based children's services and promote high quality care, particularly through training programs and meetings, provision of resource materials, and access to the Department's toy and equipment library. The total of 1095 child care facilities throughout the State compares with a total of 848 as at 30 June 1984, an increase of 29.1 per cent for the year.

A total of 2 000 childcare places were provided in Tasmania by the Commonwealth Department of Community Services. Programs provide care for pre-school aged children through day-care services and for other young children through after-school and vacation care schemes. Expenditure for 1984-85 totalled \$5.1 million in Tasmania. In addition, the Tasmanian Government provided almost \$146 000 in grants for child care groups.



Child Care Facilities, Tasmania

Regional Resource Centres

These centres offer day, after-school and holiday activities as a medium through which children and families requiring assistance can receive the support and help which would otherwise have only been available if the children had been received into the full-time care of the Department for Community Welfare. The service provides a more cost-efficient service than residential services and has the capacity to reduce the pressure of numbers, and thus costs, of residential care.

11.2.2 Family Assistance

The Department for Community Welfare has developed a comprehensive program of assistance to individuals and families. These programs comprise financial relief in emergency situations, supplementary and on-going assistance programs and services such as the home-help and home-maker schemes.

Emergency Assistance

Funds are available to field officers to be used in times of crisis or in situations where the family is in danger of breakdown because of immediate financial pressures.

Under Family Assistance, needs such as accommodation costs, debt settlement, essential repairs to household appliances, clothing and household power costs, can be met. All applications for assistance are carefully investigated and need established before a payment is made.

In providing assistance, the Department tries to develop a plan for each individual and family to assist them to cope better with the financial and other demands on them. Child Welfare Officers provide support and counselling to assist in solving some of the problems facing the families.

11.19 Emergency Assistance Provided by Department for Community Welfare, Tasmania

Item	1983-84	1984-85
<i>Family Assistance</i>		
Number of cases of assistance	1 152	1 385
Number of families involved	834	1 119
<i>Food Orders</i>		
Number of food orders	7 468	7 056
Number of families involved	2 865	2 904
<i>Expenditure (\$)</i>		
Total expenditure (\$)	220 781	197 970
Expenditure per case	29.56	28.06
Expenditure per family	77.06	68.17

In recent years, there has been an increasing demand for assistance.

The number of families who benefited under the family assistance program increased State-wide by 34 per cent from 834 families in 1983-84 to 1 119 in 1984-85. The number of cases of assistance grew by 20 per cent from 1 152 to 1 385 in the same period.

In addition to the provision of direct assistance, the Department of Community Welfare provides grants to enable agencies to meet demands for emergency relief.

11.20 Grants to Voluntary Agencies for Emergency Relief, 1984-85

Organisation	\$
Hobart City Mission	33 000
Glenorchy SCG	8 500
Christian Care Group, Rokeby	7 500
Bridgewater-Gagebrook Community Service Group	24 000
Launceston City Mission	26 000
Society of St Vincent de Paul	38 100
Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre	1 200
Total	138 300

Home Help

Home help services are designed to help families who find themselves in difficulty due to internal family problems. Although a comparatively small program, the service has enabled a number of children to remain in their own home during a crisis period when otherwise they may have required State care.

Home help is also a valuable contribution in cases of multiple births occurring in a family, when three or more of the babies survive. In these cases the small amount of regular home help gives time for the family to adjust to a new situation. The needs of the children and the parents have to be assessed and assistance integrated with other forms of assistance, including the help given by relatives and friends.

During 1984-85 42 families were assisted helping a total of 107 children. The cost of providing this service was \$21 500 for 1984-85.

Homemaker Service

The Homemaker Service is a family and community support service, provided by the Department for Community Welfare and is designed to provide neighbourly contact and practical assistance for families under stress.

The single largest category of persons for whom assistance was provided comprised of one-parent families in receipt of pensions and benefits. Generally these were families experiencing situational or life-cycle crises. Increasingly the

most common area in which assistance is requested and provided relates to difficulties experienced with budgeting and debt counselling. Child-related areas (e.g. child management, child development) constituted another major area in which assistance was provided.

Increasingly, the traditional notion of one-to-one work between family and Homemaker is broadening to include the use of group situations. Homemakers are involved in running community education programs in Neighbourhood Houses, Community Centres and Health Centres on parenting skills, budgeting, cooking, relaxation and recreation. This approach attempts to provide information and transfer skills to families before difficulties in these areas occur. Increasingly families are referred to the service because of problems relating to social isolation. These families are often most effectively helped by being linked into the support services in their communities that provide the opportunity for them to develop and maintain relationships with others.

The majority of families using the service are in receipt of pensions or benefits and do not have resources or access to services in times of stress. There is an increasing recognition that services need to be developed at the community level so that families can be assisted and supported without having to rely on formal welfare services.

11.23 Community Programs

Youth Services

The Tasyouth Unit of the Department for Community Welfare is responsible for identifying and meeting, where possible, the needs of young people by providing grants to non-government organisations working with unemployed youth.

11.21 Tasmanian Government Grants for Youth Services, 1984-85

Organisation	\$
South	
Hobart Streetwork Group	17 000
Kingborough Unemployed Concern Group	6 000
Risdon Vale C.Y.S.S. Evening Program	4 000
Chigwell C.Y.S.S. Evening Program	3 000
Clarence Council Evening Program	4 000
Midway Point Neighbourhood House Program	960
North	
Outreach Youth Worker	6 500
Youthline	500
North West	
Atlas Club, Ulverstone	1 886
Kentish Action to Restore Employment	7 864
Fusion, Burnie	2 750
Other	
Project Hahn	20 000
Total	74 460

The problem of homeless youth, while not new, has become more visible in recent years. Services to homeless youth include: emergency shelters, teaching of survival skills and reconciliation where possible between parents and youth.

The aim is to provide homeless youth with shelter in the short term and the skills in the long term to maintain independent accommodation. The valuable work of non-government organisations is an important adjunct to this service for which funds are provided.

11.22 Tasmanian Government Grants for Youth Accommodation, 1984-85

Organisation	\$
Gateway Youth Shelter	37 000
Anglican Family Care (opened in November 1984)	26 874
McIntyre House Youth Shelter (closed September 1984)	9 126
Northern Youth Shelter Association	24 000
North-West Youth Shelter Association, Devonport	29 000
Salvation Army, Oakleigh House, Burnie	6 000
Total	132 000

Handicapped Persons' Services

The trend towards disabled people living at home rather than in special institutions has increased the demand for community support services as disabled people strive for a better quality of life.

During 1984-85 grants totalling \$542 000 were paid to 53 non-government organisations to enable them to provide and develop services.

The Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service assists handicapped people to become economically and socially independent. The service is free to virtually any disabled person in the broad working age group who can benefit from it. Teams comprising medical specialists, therapists, trade instructors, teachers and vocational counsellors work towards developing each person's maximum physical, mental, vocational and social potential. A rehabilitation allowance is payable to people who are receiving vocational treatment or training under the CRS program.

Multicultural Services

Assistance is provided to help integrate migrants and refugees into the Tasmanian community. Financial support is given for the continuation of ethnic cultures.

Migrants and refugees totalling 772 persons arrived during 1983-84. This was the lowest intake for four years, but represented 1.1 per cent of the total Australian overseas migrant intake.

11.23 Grants to Migrant Organisations, 1984-85

Organisation	\$
Greek Orthodox School	1 000
Migrant Resource Centre (Southern Tasmania)	5 000
Polish Association of Northern Tasmania	1 000
Migrant Resource Centre (Northern Tasmania)	2 667
Ethnic Communities Council of Tasmania	1 500
Southern Tasmanian Refugee Assistance Committee	750
German-Australian Association of Tasmania	1 600
Good neighbour Council of Tasmania	1 000
Task Force Action for Migrant Women	480
Total	14 997

Compared with the previous year, there were significant reductions in migration from Northern Europe, the United Kingdom and Ireland, but notable increases in arrivals from New Zealand, the United States of America, Canada, Hong Kong and China.

Women's Shelters

Women's Shelters have as their primary purpose the provision of shelter and support services to women and children who have been subjected to domestic violence or who are rendered homeless through some personal or social crisis. Most shelters are not designed to provide accommodation to women and children requiring intensive, sustained specialised services and in cases where it is necessary to provide longer term accommodation and more intensive support, funding is made available to specific purpose refuges. Annie Kenney and Karinya for example accommodate single young women only and Caroline House provides for women with alcohol and drug related difficulties.

Approximately 1 883 women and children were accommodated during 1984-85.

Most shelters have not been established and do not have the resources to provide longer term support although most are forced into this role because of the increasing difficulty faced by women with children in locating alternative accommodation. The Housing Department continues to provide valuable assistance to both the Launceston and Hobart Women's Shelters in making special provision for women and children accommodated in refuges who seek public housing. Women moving out of the shelter in need of financial assistance may apply to the Family Assistance Scheme.

Shelters vary in respect of mode of management employed and the intensity and breadth of services provided to users. Some shelters employ

a style of management which involves the users of the shelter in the everyday operations of the shelter, e.g. cooking, cleaning, shopping. Staff are free to engage in the primary functions of the shelter, e.g. the provision of support and information to women in crisis. Other shelters have adopted a less participatory style of operation and have as their primary focus the provision of accommodation to women and children in crisis. All shelters are required, as a condition of funding, to provide services which are accessible on a 24 hour, 7 day a week basis. Some shelters provide a field work service to women who have left the shelter but who require continued support and visitation to prevent their return to the shelter.

The Crisis Intervention Unit

A crisis intervention service was established in May 1985. The service is statewide and is primarily directed at providing a crisis service (in co-operation with the police) to victims of domestic violence and their families.

The service aims to provide crisis counselling and intervention in domestic violence situations in order to safeguard the immediate well being of family members. A follow up service provides appropriate referral and advice to ensure that people receive the maximum available assistance.

Crisis Intervention Workers are employed in Hobart, Launceston and Burnie to operate a mobile service to people in domestic violence situations in their own homes. The service accepts referrals from three sources; the Police, other welfare agencies, and self referrals. Although the service does not operate on a 24 hour basis, shifts are planned to operate at peak periods of domestic violence as indicated by police statistics. Crisis Workers are available until midnight seven nights a week and a follow-up service operates during normal office hours.

During the first 8 months (June 1985–January 1986) Crisis Intervention Workers attended approximately 540 crisis calls relating to domestic violence around the State. 66 per cent of those calls were referred by the Police, 19 per cent from other agencies, and 15 per cent were self referred. Approximately 85 per cent of those calls related to male partners or ex-partners assaulting their wives or defacto wives. A small number related to adult 'children' assaulting parents, sibling assault, or wives assaulting husbands or ex-husbands.

Neighbourhood Houses

The Neighbourhood Houses Program is a joint investment by government and local communities in the planning, development and management of community services at the neighbourhood level. Houses provide a wide range of community services such as recreational

activities, child care, fitness classes, life skill classes, adult education, meeting facilities, community newsletters, effective parenting courses, food co-operatives and ante-natal clinics.

Neighbourhood Houses are managed by representatives of local communities and not by single organisations. Although Houses may employ a paid co-ordinator to assist in management of the day-to-day activities of Houses, most of the projects and activities are run by local residents. In this way, Houses can take advantage of people with a broad range of skills and backgrounds, promote the development of services relevant to the needs of the local area and be more accountable to the communities they serve.

The aim of Neighbourhood Houses is to assist families and individuals to identify and solve their own problems, reduce dependence on formal government services, establish and strengthen local community networks and provide people with a greater opportunity to control their own lives.

11.24 Tasmanian Government Grants to Neighbourhood Houses, 1984–85

House	\$
North	
Bridgewater Neighbourhood House	6 020
Chigwell Neighbourhood House Committee	1 500
Clarendon Vale Neighbourhood Centre	10 800
Clarence Council for Clarendon Vale Neighbourhood Centre	2 080
Gagebrook Neighbourhood Centre	13 020
Geeveston Neighbourhood House	12 720
Goodwood Community Centre	11 750
Maranoa Heights Community Centre	10 360
Midway Point Neighbourhood Centre	11 450
Risdon Vale Neighbourhood Centre	8 600
Richmond Neighbourhood Centre	6 220
Rokeby Neighbourhood Centre	9 600
Warrane/Mornington Neighbourhood Centre	4 675
South	
Dover Neighbourhood House	13 880
George Town Ladies' Leisure Centre	3 420
Ravenswood Neighbourhood House	10 620
Rocherlea Community House	12 985
Social Action Group, George Town	5 690
St. Helens Neighbourhood House	12 480
North-West	
Acton/Shorewell Community House	9 910
Highfield Neighbourhood House	13 233
Rosebery Neighbourhood House	11 580
Savage River Neighbourhood House	13 125
Total	215 718

The provision of child services has facilitated women's involvement in Neighbourhood Houses. Women comprise the largest group of users of Neighbourhood Houses and most Houses are

managed by women. Problems of isolation and disadvantage caused by geographic location, inadequate income, poor transport services and lack of community services are often most intensely felt by women, the aged and the unemployed. Neighbourhood Houses provide women especially with opportunities to reduce individual isolation, widen their range of interests and help them develop skills which can be used in the development of a better environment for themselves and for the benefit of the wider community.

There are 22 Neighbourhood Houses in various stages of development throughout the State. Most Houses average 200 contacts per week.

11.2.4 Residential Care for the Aged and Disabled

Under the *National Health Act* and the *Nursing Homes Assistance Act*, the Commonwealth provides recurrent subsidies to nursing homes for the aged and disabled. There are 51 nursing homes in Tasmania providing 2400 beds for which the Commonwealth provided \$22.63 million in 1984-85. There are also 22 hostels offering 716 beds which in 1984-85 received \$1.2 million in Commonwealth subsidies.

In addition the *Aged or Disabled Persons Homes Act* 1974 of the Commonwealth provides for capital grants to non-profit organisations and local government bodies. During 1984-85 grants totalling \$1.3 million were paid in Tasmania.

11.3 VOLUNTARY AGENCIES

State Government grants to voluntary welfare agencies in 1984-85 totalled just over \$2.3 million or just under 20 per cent of the State's total expenditure on welfare. This is in recognition that many services are more appropriately administered and provided by non-government organisations. Indeed, as previously noted, voluntary organisations have always played an important part in welfare provision.

The Non-Government Perspective

An article contributed by TASCOS

The non-government community services sector is an integral part of our world, and is constantly adjusting to function in a changing world. The complexity of our society demands that an array of options be available to all people. The community sector must be recognised as a valid conduit, influencing government service provision, and identifying needs and solutions.

Perhaps the best way to highlight the differences between the non-government welfare section and its equivalent within government is to look at specific topics such as security of funding, career paths, security of tenure, extent of paid and unpaid overtime, extent of volunteerism,

worker burnout or stress, nature and appropriateness of any off-the-job training, extent of union coverage, awards and conditions.

Security of Funding

An examination of funded agencies under the Sundry Social Services Grants system administered by the State Government of Community Welfare shows significant developments within the non-government sector.

- The nature of welfare provision has changed. The traditional concept of welfare organisations as being institutional, religious or philosophically-based bodies, is being superseded, in number terms at least, by the idea of specific interest, self-help and localised agencies catering to the diverse needs of the community.
- Government is responsive to innovative programs which originate from welfare 'clients'.
- There is an increasingly equitable regional distribution of resources.
- With increasing pressure on specific services, e.g. accommodation services, separate funding sources are being developed, and are responding to the needs expressed by the non-government sector.

Employment

- Expansion and contraction of employment (and hence service delivery) is to a very high degree dictated by the extent of public funding.
- Funding is frequently unpredictable, making planning a hazardous task. (e.g. no one foresaw that pre-school funding would be cut and the precise effects of the cuts remain unclear.)
- There are delays in receipt of funding and few other resources to get by on until funds arrive.
- The extent to which the community-based services can fund themselves (e.g. fee for service) is restricted as characteristically services are targeted to those least able to pay.
- Many employees have no security of tenure.
- Many employees have short-term tenure, (e.g. the increasing use of contract work, short-term job creation programs etc).
- Many people "donate" hours of unpaid overtime every week, e.g. (CYSS workers and home care workers).
- Some areas of the sector rely on volunteer or unpaid labour, e.g. child care.

The last few months have highlighted some of the problems that can come about when a government changes an act of parliament regulating an area of rapid growth and change without consulting service providers and users.

The recent changes to the *Child Care Act* stirred up concern and confusion and showed the need for some very fast, in-depth consultation throughout the whole spectrum of care providers and care users.

Training

- In some areas, training is ad hoc or non-existent.
- Funding frequently makes no allowance for training.
- Staff resources are often insufficient to provide on-the-job training, i.e.
 - staff are themselves temporary or short-term;
 - they may be unqualified or untrained;
 - their priority (or that of the organisation or service) is service delivery; and
 - staff are over-worked.
- In other areas, training is seen as inappropriate, (e.g. neighbourhood centres which prefer to draw on existing skills and resources from within the community).

With the introduction of short-term employment, projects such as the Community Employment Programme (which allocated \$7.7 m to the community sector since its inception) comes the need for increased sophistication within community groups. For example, groups must be able to understand incorporation and its implications and conditions, employment procedures including awards, staff management and training, auditing and accountability.

Also, when services established through CEP funding are no longer supported by full time employees, community groups must adapt or close services, even if needs are identified and clients have developed a dependency on the staff or the service.

Industrial Issues

In some areas, union coverage is still being contested, such as in home care.

In others, numerous unions cover the one service area.

Many workers are not members of unions because of:

- the ethic of voluntarism
- confusion over which union they should belong to.

Markedly different conditions for employees within one centre can cause resentment, e.g. four weeks holiday for one group and ten weeks for another, working side-by-side in child care centres.

Many areas are award free.

Volunteers

The increasing use of volunteers in the community-based part of the sector over the past two decades suggests that the issue of unpaid labour is central to an understanding of the nature of the community services industry.

As yet, there is no comprehensive survey of the agencies in and activities of community-based services. However, a final report released in 1984 estimates that there were between 26 000 and 49 000 welfare agencies operating in Australia in 1981. Most of these had been established since 1962, and approximately 50 per cent had been set up in the last decade. These data suggest that the long tradition of volunteer service in the charity, then non-government and more recently community based sector has been strengthened during the past twenty years.

If the information on the number of employees working in community based services is added to the number of volunteers, it is clear that we are dealing with a work force of considerable magnitude, far larger than that indicated by official employment figures which ignore most forms of unpaid work. Similar patterns may well apply to other parts of the community services industry as well as to other industries, though the allocation of unpaid tasks by sex may well differ. What seems clear is the need to consider the role of unpaid labour in the community-based part of the sector which has remained invisible because it does not count as 'real' work.

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