

Chapter 11

SOCIAL WELFARE

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Chapter 11

SOCIAL WELFARE

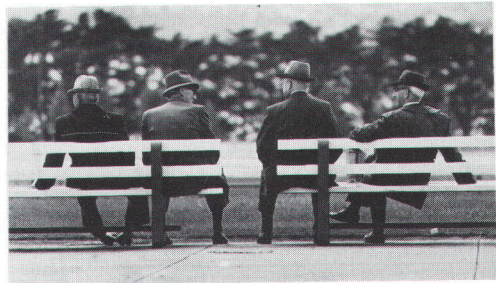
The main objective of the Australian social welfare system is the alleviation of poverty. Support for families with children is also provided in accordance with the high value Australians have traditionally placed on family formation and child rearing.

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 (e.g. to the aged, sole parents, the sick and unemployed) and, generally, according to people's means and
- support for children is provided in recognition that, at any level of income, people with children have greater needs than do those without.

Historically, the Federal 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.

In the absence of a commonly accepted framework for describing and analysing 'social welfare' in its totality, two strands are promi-



At 30 June 1989, 37 855 persons in Tasmania were receiving the age pension. Photo: Mercury

nent. A large component of 'social welfare' consists of cash payments to people in need. Although perhaps not all embracing nor definitive, the term income maintenance 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, provide a 'social welfare' system which 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 Federal Government. During 1988-89, \$23 719 million were expended in Australia on social security and welfare by the Commonwealth, 28.9 per cent of the total government outlay. The increase over 1987-88 was \$1254 million or 5.6 per cent.

In 1988-89, \$586 million were paid to Tasmanians in the form of pensions and benefits. At the end of the year (30 June 1989) in excess of 170 000 pensions and benefits were being funded in Tasmania from the Federal Government.

11.1.1 Pensions

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 DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SECURITY PENSIONS PAID, TASMANIA, 1988-89

| Pension type | Number of recipients at 30 June 1989 | Expenditure (\$m) |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Age (a) | 38 557 | 214.9 |
| Invalid (a) | 11 930 | 73.7 |
| Widows' and sole parents' (b) | 10 136 | 81.1 |
| Sheltered employment allowance | 500 | 3.5 |
| Total | 61 123 | 373.2 |

(a) Includes wife and carers pension. (b) Widows' class A pension and supporting parents' benefit were abolished from March 1989 and replaced by sole parents' pension. Widows' class B pension is gradually being phased out. It ceased to be granted after 1 July 1987 except in very limited circumstances.

Source: Department of Social Security Annual Report.

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.

11.2 AGE PENSIONS, TASMANIA

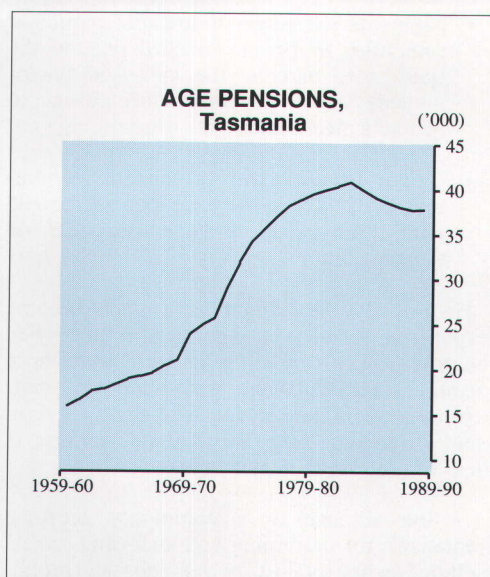
| Year | Number at 30 June (a) | Financial year expenditure (\$m) |
|------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1983 | 41 639 | 143.9 |
| 1985 | 39 782 | 165.2 |
| 1987 | 38 743 | 180.3 |
| 1988 | 38 434 | 198.0 |
| 1989 | 38 557 | 214.9 |

(a) Includes wife/spouse/carers pensioners from 1983.

Source: Department of Social Security Annual Report.

During the financial year 1988-89, \$215 million were paid to aged people in Tasmania. At June 1989, 72 330 people aged 60 or over, of whom 53 per cent were age pensioners, comprised 16 per cent of the State's population.

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 an estimated 44 000.



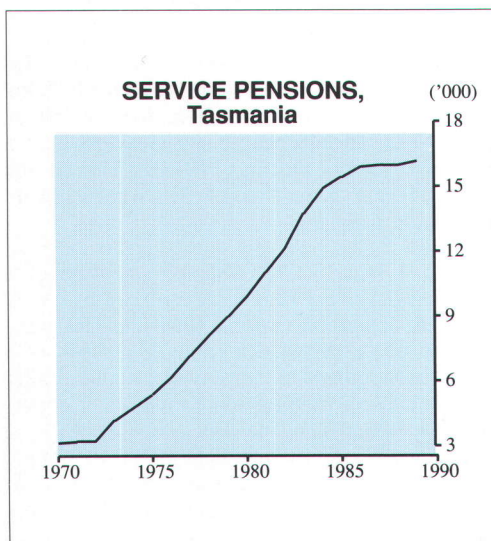
Service Pensions

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 1989, 16 162 service pensions were being paid, 9508 to veterans and 6654 to wives and widows of veterans.

11.3 SERVICE PENSIONS, TASMANIA, JUNE 1989

| War service | Number of pensions |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 1914-18 war | 83 |
| 1939-45 war | 13 691 |
| Korea and Malaya | 214 |
| British Commonwealth | 1 516 |
| Allied Forces | 388 |
| Special overseas service | 144 |
| Miscellaneous | 126 |
| Total | 16 162 |

In 14 years the number of service pensions has 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 5375 service pensioners comprised: Boer War, 3; 1914-18 war, 1088; 1939-45 war, 4265; Korea and Malaya service, 17; and miscellaneous, 2.



11.4 SERVICE PENSIONERS, TASMANIA

| Year | Number at 30 June | Financial year expenditure (\$m) |
|------|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1984 | 14 878 | 51.8 |
| 1986 | 15 895 | 63.5 |
| 1987 | 15 970 | 68.8 |
| 1988 | 15 975 | 69.1 |
| 1989 | 16 162 | 80.8 |

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 1989, 11 930 persons were receiving this pension.

11.5 INVALID AND DISABILITY PENSIONS, TASMANIA

| Year | Invalid pension (a) | |
|------|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| | Number at 30 June | Financial year expenditure (\$m) |
| 1983 | 8 530 | 32.2 |
| 1985 | 9 820 | 44.0 |
| 1987 | 10 904 | 53.9 |
| 1988 | 11 347 | 62.5 |
| 1989 | 11 930 | 73.7 |

| Year | Disability pension | |
|------|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| | Number at 30 June | Financial year expenditure (\$m) |
| 1983 | 16 805 | 28.9 |
| 1985 | 16 743 | 38.8 |
| 1987 | 15 337 | 31.8 |
| 1988 | 15 121 | 35.2 |
| 1989 | 15 164 | 54.6 |

(a) Includes spouse carer pensioners from 1983.

Source: Departments of Social Security and Veterans' Affairs annual reports.

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 1989, 15 164 disability pensions were being paid and expenditure for the year amounted to \$54.6 million.

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 1988-89, \$3.5 million were paid as sheltered employment allowances and at 30 June, 500 persons were receiving the allowance.

Widows' 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.

Sole parents who have the custody, care and control of a qualifying child aged under 16 can be eligible for a supporting parents' benefit. It was originally introduced in 1973 as the supporting mothers' benefit and renamed in 1977 when extended to supporting fathers.

Widows' class A pension and supporting parents' benefit were abolished from March 1989 and replaced by the sole parents' pension. Widows' class B pension is gradually being phased out. It ceased to be granted after 1 July 1987 except in very limited circumstances.

Widows' Class B Pension

A widows' class B pension is basically payable to a woman aged 50 years and over with no children at 1 July 1987 who is or subsequently becomes a widow. A widow for the purposes of the *Social Security Act* includes:

- 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.

At 30 June 1989 there were 2195 widow class B pensioners.

Sole Parents' Pension

A sole parents' pension is payable to a person (with at least one qualifying child) who is:

- an unmarried parent;
- a separated husband or wife or a separated de facto husband or wife;
- a parent whose spouse or de facto spouse has been imprisoned for at least 14 days;
- a person left caring for a child and unable to live with his/her spouse in the matrimonial home because of the spouse's illness or infirmity which is likely to continue indefinitely, and prevents the spouse from caring for the child;
- a person whose de facto spouse has died;
- a widow or a widower or
- a divorced person.

It is not payable where the person is living in a de facto or marriage-like relationship.

At 30 June 1989 there were 7941 sole parent pensioners.

11.1.2 Unemployment and Sickness Benefits

Unemployment Benefit and Job Search Allowance

With rising unemployment during the 1970s and 80s, the number of people receiving benefits has risen almost four fold; from 3825 recipients in 1970, to 15 246 people at June 1989 after a peak of 32 147 during 1981-82. During the 1988-89 year a total of 19 919 benefits were granted in Tasmania.

From 1 January 1988 unemployment benefits for 16 and 17 year olds were replaced by a new payment called job search allowance. The introduction of the allowance came as a result of a need to encourage unemployed 16 and 17 year olds to take up training and employment opportunities rather than become dependent on a long-term unemployment benefit and to remove any financial incentive to leave school early. At 30 June 1989, 1157 job search allowances were being paid.

11.6 UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS, TASMANIA (a)

| Year | Number of recipients at 30 June | Financial year expenditure (\$m) |
|------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1979 | 10 420 | 28.6 |
| 1981 | 12 929 | 34.7 |
| 1983 | 20 355 | 78.3 |
| 1985 | 18 870 | 96.9 |
| 1987 | 18 880 | 109.5 |
| 1988 | 18 281 | 118.2 |
| 1989 | 17 463 | 122.9 |

(a) Includes job search allowance from 1988.

Source: Department of Social Security Annual Report.

An unemployment benefit may be paid fortnightly, generally after a seven-day waiting period, to people aged between 18 and 64 in the case of men or under 60 in the case of women. They must be Australian residents and in Australia on the day claims are lodged.

- be taking reasonable steps to obtain work;
- not be unemployed due to being, or having been, engaged in industrial action;
- not be unemployed due to industrial action by other members of a trade union of which the person is a member and
- be registered as being unemployed by the Commonwealth Employment Service.

Sickness Benefits

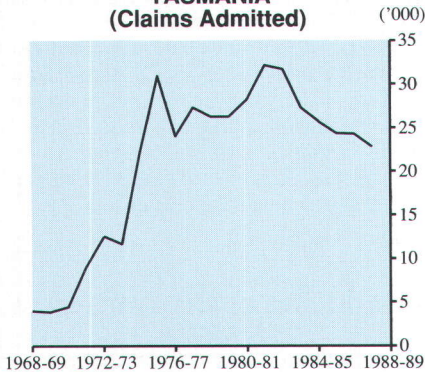
A sickness benefit is paid to people who have been temporarily incapacitated for work because of sickness or accident and who have suffered a loss of income as a result of the incapacity or who, but for the incapacity would qualify for the unemployment benefit. At June 1989, 1312 benefits were being paid. An assets test on unemployment, sickness and special benefits for recipients aged 25 and over applied from December 1986 based on the pensions assets test threshold.

11.7 SICKNESS BENEFITS, TASMANIA

| Year | Number of recipients at 30 June | Financial year expenditure (\$m) |
|------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1981 | 3 626 | 2.9 |
| 1983 | 3 750 | 4.6 |
| 1985 | 1 025 | 5.5 |
| 1987 | 1 209 | 7.5 |
| 1988 | 1 285 | 8.4 |
| 1989 | 1 312 | 9.4 |

Source: Department of Social Security Annual Report.

UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS, TASMANIA (Claims Admitted)



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;

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.

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. Payments for students aged 18-24 were withdrawn

from November 1985 (other than for those in needy families). An income test applies to family allowance payments for children under 18.

11.8 FAMILY ALLOWANCE, TASMANIA

| Year (a) | Number of dependents | Number of families & approved institutions | Financial year expenditure (\$m) |
|----------|----------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| 1981 | 123 270 | 61 309 | 27.8 |
| 1983 | 122 729 | 61 820 | 39.1 |
| 1985 | 123 079 | 62 734 | 42.8 |
| 1987 | 116 937 | 60 637 | 39.5 |
| 1988 | 111 038 | 57 021 | 39.3 |
| 1989 | 110 000 | 56 508 | 38.2 |

(a) To 30 June.

Source: Department of Social Security Annual Report.

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.

Child Disability Allowance

To qualify for a child disability allowance a person must:

- have the custody care and control of a disabled child;
- provide additional care and attention on a daily basis for the child by reason of the child's disability, in a private home which is the residence of both the person and the child; and
- in most situations be eligible to receive family allowance for the child.

A disabled child is one who:

- has a physical, intellectual or psychiatric disability;
- because of their disability needs care and attention that is substantially more than that required by a child of the same age without a disability; and

- is likely to need that care and attention for an extended period.

Child disability allowance was formerly known as handicapped child's allowance.

11.9 CHILD DISABILITY ALLOWANCES, TASMANIA

| Year | Number of recipients at 30 June | Financial year expenditure (\$'000) |
|------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1981 | 766 | 529 |
| 1983 | 863 | 839 |
| 1985 | 996 | 916 |
| 1987 | 1 027 | 975 |
| 1988 | 1 286 | 1 285 |
| 1989 | 1 364 | 2 161 |

Source: Department of Social Security Annual Report.

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 or the other parent is serving a sentence of imprisonment of 10 years or more or is an inmate of a mental hospital and will require care and treatment in that or a similar hospital for an indefinite period. It is also payable in respect of refugee children in certain circumstances.

11.10 DOUBLE ORPHAN'S PENSION, TASMANIA

| Year | Number of recipients at 30 June | Financial year expenditure (\$'000) |
|------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1981 | 88 | 53 |
| 1983 | 122 | 84 |
| 1985 | 110 | 72 |
| 1987 | 56 | 53 |
| 1988 | 74 | 49 |
| 1989 | 50 | 48 |

Source: Department of Social Security Annual Report.

Family Allowance Supplement

Certain low income families are eligible for a family allowance supplement, an income-tested, non-taxable supplement payable for each child under 16 years or dependent full-time students 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.

11.11 FAMILY ALLOWANCE SUPPLEMENT, TASMANIA

| Year | At 30 June, number of | | Financial year expenditure (\$m) |
|------|-----------------------|----------|----------------------------------|
| | Recipients | Children | |
| 1984 | 1 418 | 3 844 | 1.8 |
| 1985 | 1 309 | 3 607 | 2.1 |
| 1987 | 1 498 | 4 102 | 2.8 |
| 1988 | 5 769 | 14 122 | 8.9 |
| 1989 | 5 962 | 15 009 | 14.8 |

Source: Department of Social Security Annual Report.

The allowance is generally paid to the person receiving family allowance for the child (normally the mother). Family allowance supplement was formerly known as family income supplement.

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.

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.

11.12 SPECIAL BENEFITS AND FUNERAL BENEFITS, TASMANIA, 1988-89

| Benefit | Number of benefits granted | Expenditure (\$'000) |
|---------|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Special | 5 230 | 7 071 |
| Funeral | 1 021 | 31 |

Source: Department of Social Security Annual Report.

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 1989, 52 779 pensioners (86.3 per cent of all pensioners) were receiving pensioner fringe benefits.

11.13 SUPPLEMENTARY ASSISTANCE, 1987-88

| Assistance | No. of cases |
|--------------------|---------------|
| Heating allowance | 10 542 |
| Spectacles | 5 926 |
| Furniture removals | 253 |
| Funeral expenses | 194 |
| Transport | 68 |
| Total | 16 983 |

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 criterion.

11.2 DIRECT SERVICES

While it is the Federal 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 \$20 million in 1988-89.

11.14 STATE GOVERNMENT WELFARE EXPENDITURE, 1988-89 (\$'000)

| | |
|---|---------------|
| Management services | 1 342 |
| Assistance to families and individuals | 2 259 |
| Child welfare | 7 568 |
| Financial assistance to community organisations | 7 980 |
| Community services | 686 |
| Total | 19 834 |

Source: Department for Community Welfare Annual Report.

11.2.1 Child Welfare

Child welfare is primarily focussed on neglected, or orphaned children and children brought to notice through the courts.

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 up to three years. The principal purpose of the order is to provide advice, guidance, counselling and practical help to the child. The order also requires the child to comply to the reasonable directions of the Officer. At 30 June 1989, there were 156 children under the legal supervision of Child Welfare Officers.

11.15 NUMBER OF CHILDREN UNDER LEGAL SUPERVISION AT 30 JUNE

| Regions | 1986 | 1987 | 1988 | 1989 |
|---------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Southern | 65 | 40 | 44 | 52 |
| Northern | 34 | 38 | 27 | 55 |
| North-west | 53 | 55 | 62 | 49 |
| State total: | 152 | 133 | 133 | 156 |

Source: Department for Community Welfare Annual Report.

Wards of the State

Wards of the State are under legal guardianship of the Director. At 30 June 1988, there were 450 children under guardianship:- 254 males and 196 females. The large discrepancy between the numbers of males and females is due to the much greater number of males who are found guilty of offences. Eighty-one per cent of the children found guilty of offences were male, while only 19 per cent were female.

A child may become a Ward of the State in a number of ways. A parent may apply to the Minister to have his or her child admitted as a Ward. 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, such as assault or burglary and stealing. 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 of the Department for Community Welfare becomes his or her legal guardian to the exclusion of all others, including the parents. 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 natural parents. Even when it is necessary to remove the child from his or her normal home, the over-riding aim is to assist both the child and parents so that they can re-establish a normal family relationship.

Foster Homes

Long-term fostering is required when children are unable to return to live with their natural parents. In some cases their parents are dead, missing, or unable to provide for them. Foster homes provide long-term 'substitute care' that closely resembles the normal family environment. Unlike Family Group Homes, Foster Parents care for only one or two children.

While living with foster parents the foster child is still aware of his or her true identity and in many cases retains periodical contact with his or her natural parents and relations. In recent years there has been an increased emphasis on children retaining personal contact with their natural families. It has been found that Foster Parents are able to work effectively with natural parents for the benefit of the child.

Children's Homes

Approved Children's Homes are run by charitable bodies to provide long term care for children. Approved Children's Homes are also occasionally used for short term placements, although this type of use is declining. Children can live in the Homes on the application of their parents or at the request of the Department.

Approved Children's Homes have moved away from the traditional dormitory institutions towards the use of cottage accommodation. Cottage accommodation consists of several houses in different parts of a suburb or in different suburbs all coming under the same administration.

Some of the Approved Children's Homes also provide additional support services, such as extension fostering schemes and specialist child development workers.

Family Group Homes

The Department for Community Welfare has 18 Family Group Homes distributed throughout the State; all are run by families. This enables children to live in a family atmosphere rather than an institution. Children stay anywhere from a couple of days to a couple of weeks before they either return to their families or an alternative longer term home is arranged for them, such as with Foster Parents. While each Family Group Home may care for up to six children, the average number in a home at one time is usually four.

The largest Southern region uses Family Group Homes for short term placements for children much more than other regions. In the Southern region between the years 1984 to 1987 the proportion of children being placed in Family Group Homes increased from just under half to just over two thirds of the State total. Then in 1987-88 the use of Family Group Homes by the South dropped to just under half of the State total.

Between the years 1984 to 1987 there was little change in the use of Family Group Homes by the Northern region. However from 1986-87 to 1987-88 use of family Group Homes increased to a third of the State total. In the Northwest, after several years of decline, the use of Family Group Homes increased in 1987-88 to a quarter of the State total.

Adoption

While other forms of alternative care and accommodation are short or even long term, adoption is a permanent alternative to substitute care. When a child is adopted he or she becomes a permanent member of a new family with the same rights and legal status as if he or she were born into that family. Adoption should be seen as a service for children rather than a way of providing childless couples with children and this is reflected in the new Adoption Bill.

Adoption Legislation

Following a review of existing adoption legislation, the Adoption Bill was passed by both houses of Parliament in November 1988. The Act will enable the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the

Inter-Departmental Committee on Adoption Legislation Policy. These recommendations reflect changed community attitudes, particularly in relation to access to information.

An important part of the legislation concerns the setting up and management of an Information Service. The service deals with requests for information from adopted people, their adopted families, relinquishing parents and blood relatives, including grandparents, aunts, uncles, brothers or sisters of the adopted person. In addition the service provides adopted people with a means of obtaining their original birth certificate.

The service also maintains a Contact Register, through which people can state their willingness to be contacted. During its first four months of operation the service received 300 inquiries with almost two thirds of the requests for information being from adopted people seeking details of their parents. More than half of the requests sought personal meetings, only four asked that no contact be made with them.

Inter-country Adoptions

Tasmania remains the State with the highest ratio of inter-country adoptions per population compared with the other States. During 1988-89, 17 children were adopted by Tasmanian couples. This is a reduction from the 27 children in 1987-88. This reduction is due to the closure of the Sri Lankan inter-country adoption program during 1987-88. The closure was due to media exposure of alleged baby farming and racketeering involving a number of overseas countries. As has been the case for the last four years, the greatest number of children came from Korea. In July 1990 the State's inter-country adoption register was closed. The closure did not affect the 90 Tasmanian couples already on the register but it removed one of the last avenues open for childless couples.

| 11.16 INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTIONS | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <i>Country</i> | <i>1986-87</i> | <i>1987-88</i> | <i>1988-89</i> |
| Korea | 30 | 19 | 11 |
| Sri Lanka | 11 | 3 | 1 |
| India | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Fiji | 1 | 2 | 4 |
| Philippines | - | 1 | - |
| Total | 43 | 27 | 17 |

Source: Department for Community Welfare Annual Report.

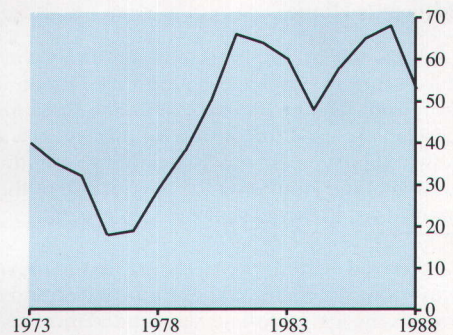
Residential and Community Youth Services

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.

Wybra Hall Closure

As part of the Department for Community Welfare's de-institutional policy, Wybra Hall at Mangalore was closed in 1988. The worst offenders were moved to a new building at Ashley Home for Boys in Deloraine. Wybra Hall was outmoded and outdated and about \$1 million were needed to make it functional. The new facility at Ashley which cost about \$500 000 to build includes recreational amenities such as table tennis, eight-ball, television and video equipment. Many problem children at Wybra, boys under 15 and girls under 17, were non-offenders and were not mixed with the more serious offenders at Ashley but were instead placed in the community. During the previous 12 months new facilities had been set up to cope with the move. In the south, the Kennerly foster care program had been extended and in the north, Fusion, which provides hostel-type accommodation, was developed. The Department's swing away from institutionalising children to keeping them in the community is to help them learn socialisation skills. Institutionalising children is only used as a last resort.

NUMBER OF ADMISSIONS, WYBRA HALL



The services are provided through one residential institution, Ashley Home for Boys and through two non-residential Resource Units.

Ashley Home for Boys

With the closure of Wybra Hall, new buildings were built at Ashley to cater for girls as well as boys.

For a number of years Ashley has been involved in integrating the children within the local community. This involvement includes attending the local and Launceston schools and joining in community sports groups, such as badminton, basketball and football.

As part of their voluntary activities, the children maintain an Apex bush walking hut. The staff and children have also maintained the Tahara Corner Reserve at the entrance to the Deloraine township and picnic grounds at Liffey Falls.

During 1988-89 there were 88 admissions and re-admissions at Ashley, 64 males and 24 females. The number of new admissions for the year was 43.

Special Contract Care

Special Contract Care, established in 1985, is a program intended to help young people with serious behavioural problems. The program deals with their problems in a positive and constructive manner. Special Contract Care is a voluntary program in the sense that parents, the Department for Community Welfare and the child, reach an agreement and sign a 'contract' for the child to live with a specially trained and supported family for an agreed period of time. The contract is not legally binding. The aims of the program include: re-uniting children with their own families; finding children alternative places to live (e.g. with relatives or foster care) and children achieving a more independent way of life.

Initially a child may spend a month with a family. As the child settles down, the time may be extended, provided all parties agree, especially the child. The average period of placement under Special Contract Care is approximately nine months, but it may be longer or shorter. The ages of the children range from 12 to 16. Most children in Special Contract Care are aged from 14 to 15.

Special Contract Care was, and still is, intended as an alternative to placing children in

institutions. However the program is also employed for children coming out of institutions. During 1988-89, 43 children were involved in Special Contract Care cases.

The carers are carefully recruited and prepared to receive children. Unfortunately, the program needs more carers to meet the demand. In 1989 the Department advertised widely to recruit more carer families.

11.17 CHILD WELFARE PROGRAM, 1988-89 (\$'000)

| | |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Adoptions | 312 |
| Approved children's homes | 683 |
| Children under supervision | 391 |
| Family and other agency care | 177 |
| Family group homes | 648 |
| Foster care | 1 239 |
| Institutions | 1 703 |
| Investigations | 380 |
| Regional resources unit | 445 |
| Special contract care | 283 |
| Rest care | 54 |
| State co-ordination | 137 |
| Regional administration support | 1 116 |
| Total | 7 568 |

Early Childhood Services Program

This program aims to develop a range of community based services to meet the needs of families whose children require access to long day care, short-term overnight care, part-time or occasional care and sessional care, that is, small sessions of two or three hours a day or a week. In Tasmania 237 long day care centre based places have been established under the Commonwealth/State co-operative arrangement.

Regional Adolescent Support Service

The purpose of the Regional Adolescent Support Service is to provide facilities and make activities available to both children and adolescents living in the full time care of the Department for Community Welfare and for children and adolescents living at home, but who are regarded by the Department as in need and would benefit from involvement in RASS's activities. RASS also gives support to the Child Welfare Officers by making them aware of the resources available to them to help the children and adolescents in their care.

11.2.2 Family Assistance

The Department for Community Welfare has developed a comprehensive program of assistance to individuals and families. The assistance available ranges from cash payments in emergency situations to help with specific items such as spectacles and homemaker schemes.

Emergency Relief Grants to Community Agencies

The State Government holds the view that provision of assistance in this area is a Commonwealth Government responsibility. To a large extent the need for emergency relief arises because of the inadequate levels of pensions and benefits or because of failures within the Social Security system. The provision of emergency relief is often seen as a form of income supplement.

The State Government has a limited responsibility to provide assistance in cases of family crisis or where the well-being of children is threatened because of the lack of financial assistance.

The State Government also has a role in the provision of personal services to those in need. In an attempt to redress the problem of long-term dependency on emergency relief agencies the Department has funded a Family Assistance Program attached to the Emergency Relief Program of Hobart City Mission. This pilot pro-

gram aims to promote longer term stability and independence for families regularly presenting for emergency relief.

Emergency relief grants to community agencies in 1988-89 totalled \$100 500.

11.19 EMERGENCY RELIEF GRANTS TO COMMUNITY AGENCIES (\$)

| Agency | 1987-88 | 1988-89 |
|---|--------------------|----------------|
| Bridgewater and Gagebrook Community Service Group | 40 000 | 43 000 |
| St Vincent de Paul | 25 000 | 12 500 |
| Launceston City Mission | 24 000 | 21 000 |
| SCG Emergency Relief | - | 12 000 |
| Glenorchy City Mission | 12 000 | - |
| Rokeby Christian Care Group | 7 500 | 4 000 |
| Hobart City Mission | 6 250 | 3 000 |
| Red Cross | 3 000 | 3 000 |
| Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre | 1 500 | 1 500 |
| Flinders Is. Aboriginal Assoc. Inc. | - | 500 |
| Total | (a) 119 250 | 100 500 |

(a) Additional funds for emergency relief were expended through the Sundry Social Services.

Source: Department for Community Welfare Annual Report.

11.18 ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITY WELFARE, TASMANIA (Number of Cases)

| Type of assistance | 1986-87 | 1987-88 |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|
| Emergency - | | |
| Family assistance | 881 | 513 |
| Food orders | 7 377 | 2 708 |
| Supplementary - | | |
| Heating allowance (a) | 10 801 | 10 542 |
| Spectacles | 5 873 | 5 926 |
| Furniture removals | 297 | 253 |
| Funeral expenses | 169 | 194 |
| Transport | 21 | 68 |

(a) Figures represent on-going cases as opposed to new cases during the year.

Source: Department for Community Welfare Annual Report.

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

Family Support

The Department for Community Welfare offers a range of support services to families seeking help to overcome their personal and to some extent their financial difficulties. While some services require only brief involvement by the Department, such as counselling, other services offer more extended forms of assistance, for example the Homemaker Service. Much of family support is funded through community organisations.

Homemaker Service

The Homemaker Service exists in all three regions. A Homemaker goes to a family once or twice a week to offer guidance and help con-

cerning a wide range of matters, such as budgeting, child care and home management. Families are referred to the Homemaker Service because of a number of problems. These may be financial, emotional or related to difficult parent-child relationships. Many families may be experiencing a combination of these difficulties all of which will be addressed by the Homemaker.

Residential Domestic Assistance

The Residential Domestic Assistance Program is a service for families who are temporarily unable to look after their children for reasons of sickness or family crisis. The program provides alternative care and accommodation for children, for instance, in Family Group Homes or with Foster Parents. Children usually stay in alternative accommodation for a few days to a few weeks before returning to their parents. Their parents, if it is necessary, may also receive assistance, such as counselling or a Homemaker may visit them to help with problems in the home.

11.2.3 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.

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.

Homeless Youth

A new outreach house at Summerleas, near Kingston was opened in July 1990. The house was established by Youth Programs Inc. and is aimed at providing a comprehensive range of crisis, medium-term and permanent accommodation for homeless teenagers. Work-oriented training and self employment initiatives are also available for those staying in the typically suburban four-bedroom brick-veneer house. A resident leader lives in the house to help youngsters with cooking and gardening rosters, tending the hens and budgeting. The Kingston outreach house is the third to be established in southern Tasmania. The others are situated at Claremont and Newtown.

Disability 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.

The Family Respite Care service is a HACC (Home and Community Care) funded statewide service, providing respite care for families caring for a disabled person. The service enables families caring for a person with a disability to receive support in two ways. A carer may come into their homes to help care for the person with a disability, or a host family may have the person with a disability in their home. This enables both the disabled person and their families to have a break.

The service was initiated and developed within the Disability Services Unit, over a two and a half year period, and in April 1989, was transferred to autonomous regionally based community management bodies.

11.20 GRANTS FOR YOUTH SERVICES ACCOMMODATION PROGRAMS, 1987-88

| <i>Organisation</i> | <i>\$</i> |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|
| Youthcare (Anglicare) | 182 589 |
| North West Youth Shelter | 156 334 |
| Northern Youth Shelter | 154 189 |
| Housing Young Peoples Outreach (HYPO) | 139 644 |
| Fusion (Burnie) | 124 551 |
| Stepping Stones Inc. | 75 601 |
| Living Skills Programme (HYPO) | 31 880 |
| Fusion (Launceston) | 30 466 |
| Total | 895 254 |

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 and to respond to the needs of migrant and refugee groups that are not met from other sources.

11.21 MULTICULTURAL GRANTS PROGRAM, 1988-89

| Recipient | \$ |
|--|---------------|
| Migrant Resource Centre (Sth Tas.) | 5 000 |
| Migrant Resource Centre (Nth Tas.) | 2 667 |
| Alliance Francaise de Hobart | 1 000 |
| Australian Croatian Association | 2 000 |
| Australian Croatian Social & Sporting Club | 2 500 |
| Greek Orthodox Church & Society of Hobart | 500 |
| Greek Orthodox Community of Nthn Tas. | 2 000 |
| Tasmanian Lithuanian Community | 1 500 |
| Polish Association of Nthn Tas. | 2 300 |
| Task Force Action for Migrant Women | 1 500 |
| Good Neighbour Council of Tasmania | 2 000 |
| North-West Multicultural Society | 1 000 |
| Women's Karadi Aboriginal Group | 1 033 |
| Total | 25 000 |

Source: Department of Community Welfare Annual Report.

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.

Most shelters have not been established 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 the 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, seven 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

The Crisis Intervention Unit provides one of the Department's specialist services. It is aimed at providing protection, support and assistance to victims of family violence and referring them to the agencies that provide long term help. The Crisis Intervention staff provide support by visiting the homes of clients, usually women, as soon as possible after an assault has taken place, offering support and advice. To ensure the safety of the women and children involved, transport is often provided to a shelter or some other form of emergency accommodation.

The women and children involved are supported and assisted in seeking legal advice and additional support services to prevent further violence. A large part of the Unit's work involves referrals to lawyers for legal advice and representation in making applications for Restraint Orders. Crisis workers will accompany clients to see lawyers, to go to Court and to see the police in order to proceed with assault charges.

The Crisis Intervention Unit administers the Domestic Violence Prevention Program. Access to a telephone is seen as an important means of obtaining assistance in case of further violence and enforcing Restraint Orders. The program enables the Unit to pay telephone installation costs for families being threatened with violence. This fund was also used to improve

household security (i.e. to purchase and install security fixtures) where the perpetrator was breaking into the house in order to further assault the partner. The cost of motel accommodation can also be paid under this program, where government funded shelters are full or inappropriate. During this financial year 34 families were assisted under this program.

The use of women's shelters and other types of emergency accommodation by women coming to the Unit has increased substantially. The use of legal services on the other hand seems to be decreasing.

MOVE

MOVE, an acronym for Men Overcoming Violent Emotions is a community organisation based in Hobart funded by the Department for Community Welfare and Mental Health Services Commission. The aim of the organisation is to help men discover non-violent ways of dealing with frustrations, fear, hurt and anger. Set up in 1985 MOVE is contacted by an average of 14 men a month seeking help to change their pattern of behaviour. MOVE attempts to give men who abuse their spouses an insight into their behaviour in a non-judgemental environment.

Men are taught to behave without resorting to violence, and learn to break a cycle of behaviour that's often learned in childhood. It does this through therapy and counselling, by helping men understand why it is they behave as they do and providing practical advice on how to recognise the danger signals and to resolve conflict without violence. Studies have shown that as many as one in three families in Tasmania suffers from domestic violence, and the perpetrators are mostly men.

Neighbourhood Houses

The aim of Neighbourhood Houses is to provide resources for individuals and families, close to the people who need them, i.e. in the neighbourhood.

Community groups who have broad local community support and interest to develop a Neighbourhood House are eligible for assistance

11.22 TASMANIAN GOVERNMENT GRANTS TO NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSES 1988-89

| House | \$ |
|---|---------|
| South - | |
| Bridgewater Neighbourhood House | 7 830 |
| Chigwell Neighbourhood House Committee | 13 850 |
| Clarendon Vale Neighbourhood Centre | 19 020 |
| Dunalley Neighbourhood House | 4 000 |
| Gagebrook Neighbourhood Centre | 16 230 |
| Geeveston Neighbourhood House | 15 100 |
| Goodwood Community Centre | 13 000 |
| Karadi Aboriginal Centre | 20 000 |
| Maranoa Heights Neighbourhood Centre | 16 740 |
| Midway Point Neighbourhood Centre | 13 935 |
| Risdon Vale Neighbourhood Centre | 13 950 |
| Rokeby Neighbourhood Centre | 10 975 |
| Warrane/Mornington Neighbourhood Centre | 13 250 |
| West Moonah Community Action Group | 8 430 |
| Westwinds Community Centre | 18 000 |
| North - | |
| Beaconsfield Municipality | 11 100 |
| Deloraine Community Research Centre | 1 816 |
| Fingal Neighbourhood House Association | 9 747 |
| Mowbray Neighbourhood House | 15 660 |
| Ravenswood Neighbourhood House | 16 550 |
| Rocherlea Community Centre | 17 437 |
| Social Action Group | 11 960 |
| St Helens Neighbourhood Centre | 13 140 |
| North-west - | |
| Acton/Shorewell Community House | 13 120 |
| Devonport Community House | 17 190 |
| Rosebery Neighbourhood Centre | 16 500 |
| Savage River Neighbourhood House | 13 720 |
| West Ulverstone Community House | 12 850 |
| Zeehan Neighbourhood Centre | 12 900 |
| Total | 388 000 |

Source: Department for Community Welfare Annual Report.

by the Government for developmental costs and for ongoing operational costs. The Neighbourhood Houses are managed by representatives of local communities.

Neighbourhood Houses provide a wide range of community services including recreational activities, child care, fitness classes, life skills classes, adult education, volunteer services, meeting facilities, community newsletters, effective parenting courses, food co-operatives and ante-natal clinics. The mix of these and other activities depends upon the specific interests and needs of the community operating the

Neighbourhood House. Free back-up child care is available to allow parents and care-givers the opportunity to participate in activities.

Neighbourhood Houses are located in isolated areas of the State, such as Savage River, Rosebery, Zeehan, St Helens, Geeveston and Dunally, as well as in urban areas.

There are currently 28 Neighbourhood Houses in various stages of development throughout the State. Most Houses average 200 contacts per week. It is estimated that the Program attracts more than 30 000 hours in voluntary labour per annum.

The Neighbourhood Houses Grants Program subsidises the operating costs of houses by making a contribution towards rental, power, telephone and administrative costs, and a contribution to the salary of a part-time co-ordinator.

11.3 VOLUNTARY AGENCIES

It has long been recognised that many welfare services are effectively and efficiently provided by the many voluntary welfare agencies which operate throughout the State.

The non-government sector can usually respond swiftly to emerging community needs and can also provide significant voluntary support to funded services.

In an environment of increasing levels of need, and increasing scrutiny of the spending of the welfare dollar, it is important to ensure that funded programs complement rather than duplicate existing services.

In 1988-89 the Department for Community Welfare was allocated \$19 million by the State Government for community welfare. In that

year the department provided \$1.6 million to assist non-government welfare organisations. In addition to receiving government grants, voluntary agencies rely heavily on voluntary labour and donations from the public to provide assistance to needy families. Services provided include shelter for the homeless, provision of household items, food parcels, clothing and toys for families in need, as well as counselling and support services. Many organisations also provide long-term accommodation in hostels and homes for invalid and elderly people.

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