

SOCIAL WELFARE

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Commonwealth Commission of Inquiry into Poverty

In August 1972 the Prime Minister of Australia announced the establishment of an independent non-government Commission of Inquiry into Poverty in Australia. The original terms of reference given to the Commission were :

- (a) the extent of poverty in Australia, including changes in its level ;
- (b) the incidence of poverty in Australia upon special categories of persons of localities ;
- (c) factors which cause poverty in Australia ;
- (d) the ways in which Federal and State Governments, local government bodies, and other persons currently assist the alleviation of poverty in Australia, the extent and effectiveness of existing measures and services, and the differences between and within States in the efforts of State Governments, local government bodies, and other bodies and persons to alleviate aspects of poverty in Australia ;
- (e) any desirable changes that would contribute to the reduction of poverty in Australia ; and
- (f) any associated matters relevant to the general objects of the inquiry.

Subsequently, in March 1973, the Prime Minister announced the appointment of four additional commissioners to concentrate on specialised areas.

The Commission issued an interim report in March 1974 and will in total make five main reports to the Australian Government, each of which will reflect the areas of concern relating to each commissioner. The first main report was forwarded to the Australian Government in April 1975, and this will be followed by the other main reports during the latter half of 1975 and early 1976. In addition to the main reports to the Australian Government, the Commission is also publishing the results of its numerous research studies in order to stimulate discussion and action to reduce poverty.

Social Welfare Commission

The Social Welfare Commission was a social welfare policy development and review body set up by Act of Parliament in 1973. It was responsible for advising the Australian Government on the priorities it should follow in social welfare planning so as to develop a nationally integrated system of services and facilities. The Commission was required to keep the whole field of social welfare under constant review. Its reports were tabled in Parliament, published, and widely distributed.

The Commission had a wide range of research projects in progress ; these included a permanent working party on social welfare manpower planning, studies into aged persons' housing, the needs of the physically and mentally handicapped, and family and child welfare services.

Australian Assistance Plan

The Australian Assistance Plan was devised by the Social Welfare Commission to give all people in Australia an opportunity to take part in planning, developing, and controlling their own local community services. The Plan aims to assist in the development of integrated patterns of welfare services at a regional level within a nationally co-ordinated framework.

Under the auspices of the Australian Assistance Plan it is envisaged that Regional Councils for Social Development will be created upon boundaries based on groups of local government areas. Each Regional Council will comprise representation of local government, citizens, and voluntary groups, business and trade union organisations, and Australian and State Government Departments—all drawn from the local area.

The Regional Council will be responsible for determining the social needs of the area and then in turn devising welfare programmes to meet those needs. An allocation based on the formula of \$2 per head of all population residing in the area will then be made by the Australian Department of Social Security to the Regional Council for the purpose of funding welfare programmes. It is intended that this grant will complement other funding sources and will enable the development of programmes which do not have funding cover from elsewhere.

An additional grant of at least \$40,000 a year will go to each Regional Council to cover necessary administrative costs and allow the Regional Council to create its own professional social planning secretariat.

So that the practicality of the Plan may be thoroughly tested in its present exploratory stage, thirty-five pilot projects had been launched throughout Australia by 31 May 1974. Of the thirty-five regions selected so far, nine are in Victoria and are receiving specific grants of up to \$40,000 a year to help develop local planning groups to form the basis of Regional Councils for Social Development. Also, a number of individual grants of up to \$12,000 per annum will be made available to local governing bodies and community agencies in each region to employ community development officers.

These organisations are in the areas known as the Central Highlands, Barwon, Loddon-Campaspe, Western Port, Southern, Outer-Eastern, North-West, and Western Regions. The Western Region (taking in ten municipalities in the western suburbs of Melbourne) has received a capitation grant of \$705,000 which is being used to support welfare projects within the Region.

It is intended that on the basis of the successful completion of the pilot schemes, legislation will be passed in 1975 by the Australian Government so that fully operating Regional Councils will be established in all regions of Australia.

In anticipation of the Plan continuing nationally at the conclusion of the experimental phase, initiating grants of \$2,000 each are being allocated to community groups in previously non-funded regions to thereby assist in the early creation of additional Regional Councils.

Children's Commission

The Children's Commission Bill was passed by the Australian Parliament on 4 June 1975. The intention of the Commission is to consider the stimulation and development of integrated children's services throughout Australia, giving first preference to services in priority needs areas. Community involvement in the development of these services will be encouraged and close liaison with State Government departments and instrumentalities is anticipated.

Australian Government social services

The principal social welfare benefits in Australia are provided by the Australian Government under the Social Services Act, which is administered by the Australian Department of Social Security. Finance for the scheme is provided from the National Welfare Fund to which the Australian Government appropriates from general revenue an amount equal to the expenditure from the Fund.

Expenditure in Victoria from the National Welfare Fund for the years 1969-70 to 1973-74 is shown in the following table :

VICTORIA—NATIONAL WELFARE FUND : EXPENDITURE
(\$'000)

Service	1969-70	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74
Social services—					
Funeral benefits	382	440	418	409	416
Age and invalid pensions (a)	163,349	179,578	209,872	277,715	356,915
Widows' pensions	21,671	24,366	28,689	39,071	50,064
Maternity allowances	2,297	2,407	2,376	2,150	2,138
Child endowment (b)	62,419	55,924	60,891	71,683	63,094
Unemployment, sickness, and special benefits	4,824	5,817	11,799	21,007	28,512
Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service	725	1,012	1,299	1,632	2,358
Health services—					
Medical benefits	14,610	24,397	34,142	41,859	41,666
Medical benefits for pensioners	4,895	5,180	7,218	7,743	8,778
Hospital benefits (c)	24,496	25,227	33,797	43,319	52,992
Pharmaceutical benefits	26,863	32,715	34,410	31,125	42,786
Pharmaceutical benefits for pensioners	9,928	11,186	12,577	14,139	16,211
Nutrition of children	2,645	2,345	3,493	2,992	1,837
Handicapped childrens' benefits	83	89	87	77	114
Miscellaneous health services	461	609	709	1,167	2,767
Tuberculosis benefits	3,362	3,196	3,327	3,395	3,655
Home savings grants (d)	4,228	5,496	6,440	8,331	8,618
Other social services (e)	483	1,660	2,597	4,043	12,525
Total	347,721	381,643	454,141	571,857	695,444

(a) Includes allowances for wives and children of invalid pensioners.

(b) In 1969-70 and in 1972-73 there were five twelve-weekly payments instead of the usual four.

(c) Including nursing home benefits and hospital benefits for pensioners.

(d) Under the *Home Savings Grant Act* 1964.

(e) From 1973-74 includes \$9,071,000 payable under supporting mothers' benefits and orphans' pensions.

Social security benefits

The benefits now provided under the Social Services Act, with the date of introduction of each in brackets, are : age pensions (1909), invalid pensions (1910), widows' pensions (1942), unemployment, sickness, and special benefits (1945), sheltered employment allowances (1967), and supporting mothers' benefits (1973), all of which are subject to a means test ; and maternity allowances (1912), child endowment (1941), orphans'

pensions (1973), and handicapped child's allowances (1975) which are not subject to a means test. The Act also authorises the operation of the Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service (1948) and the payment of funeral benefits (1943). Assistance to State Governments and eligible organisations is provided under the following Acts: the *State Grants (Deserted Wives) Act* 1968, the *States Grants (Home Care) Act* 1969, the *Delivered Meals (Subsidy) Act* 1970, the *Handicapped Persons Assistance Act* 1974, and the *Aged or Disabled Persons Homes Act* 1974.

General eligibility

In addition to satisfying the means test, a claimant for pension is required to complete a qualifying period of residence in Australia. This varies from a requirement of ten years continuous residence to qualify for the age pension to no period of residence for a widow's pension where the woman and her husband were living permanently in Australia when he died. Widows' pensions are also paid to other categories of women who, for various reasons, no longer have a bread-winner.

Liberalisation of the means test from time to time has enabled pensions to be increased and greatly extended the upper limit of means which a person may have before being disqualified for a pension.

The first phase (see below) of the Australian Government's programme to abolish the means test on age pensions was introduced in 1973.

Age pensions

Age pensions, or old-age pensions as they were called from 1909 to 1947, were the first of the income security benefits to be introduced on an Australia-wide basis. The rates of pension and the qualifying conditions have changed over the years and additional benefits have become payable but, fundamentally, the provisions have not altered greatly. The main essentials now are that pensions are granted subject to age and residence requirements, and a means test on income and property.

Amendments to the Social Services Act in 1972 increased the pension rates, and the rate of supplementary assistance to pensioners who pay rent. Supplementary assistance was also extended to married pensioner couples subject to eligibility. In addition a new pension called wife's pension replaced the wife's allowance formerly payable to non-pensioner wives of certain age pensioners. The new wife's pension also became payable to the wife of an age pensioner ineligible for a pension in her own right. In 1973 the means test was abolished for residentially qualified people over 75 years of age. Rates of pension were increased again in 1973 and 1974, and supplementary assistance was increased in 1974.

On 30 June 1974 there were 1,027,582 age pensioners in Australia (the Victorian total being 277,502), of whom 69 per cent were women in both cases. The main reasons for the preponderance of women are that they may be granted age pensions five years earlier than men and that they generally live longer than men.

154,442 age pensioners in Australia (15 per cent of total age pensioners) were also receiving supplementary assistance. The proportion of age pensioners in the population of pensionable age has shown a long-term increase. At the 1911 Census the percentage was 32.0 and by the 1971 Census it had reached 61.0 per cent.

Invalid pensions

The original Commonwealth pensions legislation contained provisions for invalid as well as age pensions and, though some of the qualifying conditions necessarily differ, the two schemes have many common characteristics. This applied more particularly to the means test provisions. As with age pensions, the conditions have changed over the years, but there have always been the fundamental requirements connected with age, incapacity, residence, income, and property. Abolition of the means test in 1973 for residentially qualified people over 75 years of age does not apply to invalid pensioners. However, the amendments to the Social Services Act in 1972, 1973, and 1974 detailed under age pensions on page 798, also apply to invalid pensioners.

The wife of an age or invalid pensioner may receive a pension of an equivalent rate to her husband if she is residing with him and does not qualify for a pension in her own right.

On 30 June 1974 there were 156,783 people in Australia receiving invalid pensions of whom 92,140 were men. The Victorian component was 35,392 of whom 21,410 were men. 68,521 invalid pensioners in Australia (44 per cent of total invalid pensioners) were also receiving supplementary assistance. The percentage of invalid pensions in the population on 30 June 1974 was 1.18.

VICTORIA—AGE AND INVALID PENSIONS

Year	Pensioners			Total payments (a)
	Age	Invalid	Total	
				\$'000
1969-70	206,608	29,753	236,361	163,349
1970-71	213,852	31,342	245,194	179,578
1971-72	221,704	32,575	254,279	209,872
1972-73 (b)	250,982	34,244	285,226	277,715
1973-74	277,502	35,392	312,894	356,915

(a) Includes allowances for wives and children of invalid pensioners.

(b) Liberalisation of the means test resulted in a higher number of grants of pensions.

Sheltered employment allowances

These allowances were introduced in 1967 and are payable, in lieu of invalid pensions, to qualified disabled people engaged in approved sheltered employment, or to those likely to become qualified if not provided with sheltered employment. The means test is the same as for invalid pensions except that, in the computation of income, more lenient treatment is given to earnings from sheltered employment. The additional benefits associated with invalid pensions are also payable.

Widows' pensions

For widows' pensions purposes the term "widow" may include, in certain cases, a deserted wife, a divorcee, a woman whose husband has been imprisoned for at least six months, and a woman whose husband is in a mental hospital. Certain "dependent females" may also qualify. Amendments to the Social Services Act in 1972, 1973, and 1974 increased the pension rate for widows. The rate of supplementary assistance was increased in 1972. On 30 June 1974 there were 115,310 widow pensioners in Australia.

VICTORIA—WIDOWS' PENSIONS

Year	Number of widow pensioners	Total payments
		\$'000
1969-70	23,318	21,671
1970-71	24,509	24,366
1971-72	25,787	28,689
1972-73 (a)	29,744	39,071
1973-74	32,232	50,064

(a) Liberalisation of the means test resulted in a higher number of grants of pensions.

Additional benefits

In addition to the pension, age, invalid, and widow pensioners may be eligible for up to \$5.50 a week for each dependent child, up to \$6 a week guardian or mother's allowance, and up to \$5 a week if they pay rent or lodging.

Funeral benefits

Where a pensioner is responsible for the funeral expenses of another pensioner, a recipient of a wife's pension, a person receiving a tuberculosis allowance who is otherwise qualified for a pension, or his children or his non-pensioner spouse, he may qualify for a funeral benefit up to a maximum of \$40.

Where a person other than a pensioner is responsible for the funeral expenses of an age or invalid pensioner, or of a person receiving a tuberculosis allowance, a funeral benefit up to a maximum of \$20 may be granted.

Expenditure on funeral benefits during the year ended 1973-74 was \$1,577,564 for Australia, and \$415,804 for Victoria.

Maternity allowances

Except between July 1931 and June 1943, when a means test applied, maternity allowances have, since their introduction in 1912, been paid to mothers residing in Australia on the birth of a child. The one year's residence qualification is waived if the mother intends to remain permanently in Australia; in other cases, payment may be made when the mother has completed one year's residence. The amount of the allowance depends upon the number of other children under sixteen years of age in the mother's custody, care, and control. The maternity allowance is additional to any Australian Government health benefits.

The number of allowances paid annually in Australia increased steadily in the post-war years, reflecting the influence of the immigration programme and the increased number of births, until a peak of 240,841 was reached in the year ended 30 June 1962. During the next four years the number fell away gradually to 224,311 for 1966, then rose during the next six years to 272,006 for 1972. However, during the next two years the number of maternity allowances paid decreased to 245,902 for 1974, involving expenditure of \$7,782,412.

The following table shows the number of maternity allowances granted, and payments involved, in Victoria for the years 1969-70 to 1973-74 :

VICTORIA—MATERNITY ALLOWANCES

Year	Number granted	Total payments
		\$'000
1969-70	72,259	2,297
1970-71	75,824	2,407
1971-72	75,082	2,376
1972-73	68,190	2,150
1973-74	67,252	2,138

Child endowment

Child endowment is a continuing payment made to each person (usually the mother) who has the care of one or more children under sixteen years of age, or one or more qualified full-time students sixteen to twenty-one years of age. The rate of endowment for each child under sixteen depends upon the child's position in the family in relation to the other children under sixteen; a flat rate is paid for each qualified full-time student sixteen to twenty-one years of age. One year's residence in Australia is required if the mother and the child were not born here but this qualification is waived if the Department is satisfied that they intend to remain permanently in Australia. In certain circumstances a woman who gives birth to a child while temporarily absent from Australia may be paid a maternity allowance.

When it was introduced in 1941 this scheme provided for child endowment to be paid at the rate of 50 cents a week for each child under sixteen years, other than the first, in a family. The rates and conditions have changed over the years, and in October 1967 a cumulative increase was made for the fourth and subsequent children under sixteen years in families, so that for each such child the rate is 25 cents a week more than for the next immediate older child. In October 1971 endowment was increased 50 cents for the third and later children. This rate was also applicable at October 1973.

In relation to children under the age of sixteen years the total number of endowed families in Australia and abroad on 30 June 1974 was 1,889,070, and the number of endowed children in families was 4,020,299. There were also 19,937 endowed children under sixteen years and 591 students aged sixteen but less than twenty-one years in institutions. Expenditure for all endowed children for the year 1973-74 was \$225,392,029.

VICTORIA—CHILD ENDOWMENT

Year	Number of endowed families	Number of endowed children in families (a)	Number of endowed children in institutions (a)	Number of endowed student children	Total endowed children	Total payments
						\$'000
1969-70	487,592	1,069,440	5,526	72,987	1,147,953	(b) 62,419
1970-71	500,385	1,090,447	5,439	74,634	1,170,520	55,924
1971-72	511,947	1,106,485	5,673	78,354	1,190,512	60,891
1972-73	517,152	1,105,834	5,756	72,191	1,183,781	(b) 71,683
1973-74	520,542	1,104,434	5,617	78,641	1,188,692	63,094

(a) Excludes endowed student children.

(b) There were five twelve-weekly payments made to the credit of bank accounts instead of the usual four during these years.

Orphans' pensions

An orphan's pension is payable to any person having the custody, care, and control of a child under sixteen years of age or a full-time student child

under twenty-one years of age if both parents (including adoptive parents) of the child are dead or one parent is dead and the whereabouts of the other is unknown.

Handicapped child's allowances

A handicapped child's allowance of \$10 a week is payable to any person caring for a severely physically or mentally handicapped child in the family home. The purpose of the allowance, which was introduced in January 1975, is to ease the burden which handicapped children can place on a family because of the constant care and attention they have to be given.

Unemployment, sickness, and special benefits

Legislation for these benefits was enacted in 1944 and the programme came into operation the following year. Rates of benefit were increased in 1952, 1957, 1961, and 1962, and permissible income was raised in 1957. In March 1962 the additional benefit for one dependent child was extended to all dependent children under the age of sixteen years in the family of the beneficiary.

Unemployment and sickness benefits are essentially short-term benefits. They are available to persons who are unemployed or who are temporarily incapacitated for work and thereby suffer loss of income. There is a means test on income, but none on property. The one year's residence qualification is waived where the Department is satisfied that the claimant intends to remain in Australia permanently. Liberalisation of the means test in 1969 provided for the recovery of sickness benefits from compensation in certain circumstances, and the waiting period of seven days for unemployment and sickness benefits was changed so that it is now only necessary to be served once in any period of thirteen weeks. Though qualifying conditions differ to some extent between unemployment and sickness benefits, both benefits have many common characteristics. From March 1973 the rates of pensions and benefits were brought into parity and this resulted in the abolition of the long-term rate of sickness benefit. A married rate was also introduced whereby each of a married couple was entitled to \$18.75 a week. This has since been increased to \$25.75 a week. Also in March 1973 additional benefit was extended to include student children over the age of sixteen years.

The number of unemployment benefits granted varies from one year to another according to the general employment situation and to dislocations in industry caused by industrial stoppages. During 1973-74 a total of 229,231 unemployment benefits were granted in Australia, and on 30 June 1974 there were 32,009 persons receiving benefits. Comparable figures for Victoria were 54,213 and 8,761, respectively.

Altogether 118,190 grants of sickness benefits were made in Australia during 1973-74 (29,180 in Victoria), and there were 22,036 persons on benefits at the end of the year (6,720 in Victoria). Total expenditure in Australia on unemployment, sickness, and special benefits in 1973-74 was \$106,491,599, expenditure in Victoria during the same period being \$28,511,750.

The following table shows details of unemployment, sickness, and special benefits in Victoria for the years 1969-70 to 1973-74 :

VICTORIA—SOCIAL SERVICES : UNEMPLOYMENT, SICKNESS,
AND SPECIAL BENEFITS

Year	Number admitted to benefit during year			Number receiving benefit at end of year			Amount paid in benefits during year		
	Un-employment	Sickness	Special (a)	Un-employment	Sickness	Special (a)	Un-employment	Sickness	Special (b)
							\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
1969-70	20,038	15,682	8,180	3,093	2,458	1,216	1,795	1,956	1,074
1970-71	29,271	17,273	5,369	5,499	2,997	1,026	2,345	2,877	594
1971-72	62,890	21,333	3,239	10,914	3,744	1,039	6,721	4,435	643
1972-73	67,401	26,013	2,706	11,182	5,835	1,116 (c)	12,074	7,923 (c)	1,010
1973-74	54,213	29,180	2,679	8,761	6,720	1,365	14,635	12,271	1,606

(a) Includes migrants in reception and training centres.

(b) Includes amounts paid to migrants in reception and training centres.

(c) Rise due mainly to increase in benefits granted and current during the year together with very substantial increases in the rates.

Miscellaneous benefits and services

In addition to the normal benefits there are a number of other concessions and services available to pensioners, such as the pensioner medical service, hearing aids for pensioners, telephone rental concessions, and transport concessions on Victorian Government trams, trains, and buses, and on buses operated by private companies, rate rebates, etc.

Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service

Rehabilitation is provided free to (1) those receiving or eligible for an invalid or widow's pension; (2) those receiving or eligible for a sickness, unemployment, or special benefit; (3) those receiving a tuberculosis allowance; (4) discharged regular servicemen who are disabled but ineligible for repatriation assistance; (5) boys and girls of fourteen or fifteen years who, without treatment or training, would be likely to qualify for an invalid pension at sixteen; and (6) those who become disabled while working for the Australian Government and who are covered by the Compensation (Australian Government Employees) Act.

Persons are chosen from these groups if the disability is a substantial handicap for employment but is remedial, except in the case of the blind, and if there are reasonable prospects of the person going to work on the completion of treatment or training.

Training and living-away-from-home allowances may be paid, and artificial aids and appliances are supplied free.

During 1973-74, 2,036 persons were accepted for rehabilitation, 592 of them being in Victoria; 1,473 were placed in employment, 386 of them being in Victoria. Expenditure on rehabilitation in Victoria during this year was \$2,358,000.

Assistance for organisations

The Australian Government also provides financial assistance to eligible organisations such as religious, charitable, or benevolent organisations, Australia-wide ex-servicemen's organisations, and municipal councils for approved activities. These include homes for the aged, personal care subsidies, delivered meals subsidies, handicapped children's subsidies, and sheltered workshop assistance.

Aged or Disabled Persons Homes Act

The Aged or Disabled Persons Homes Act was introduced in 1974 and replaced the *Aged Persons Homes Act 1954-1973*. The Act allows for Australian Government grants to eligible charitable and benevolent organisations, or organisations of a similar nature, towards the capital cost of approved homes for aged people, including the cost of the land. The grants were originally on a \$1 for \$1 basis but were increased to \$2 for \$1 in 1957, and further increased to \$4 for \$1 effective from 3 December 1974. In 1967 local governing bodies were included as eligible organisations and grants became available for nursing accommodation. On 1 April 1974 a separate subsidy for land was introduced. This is calculated on the basis of four fifths of a government valuation of the land up to a maximum subsidy of \$1,920 per unit or per person housed in hostel or nursing home accommodation. An important requirement for a grant of subsidy is that the conditions of the home approach as nearly as possible ordinary domestic life for the aged residents.

Since the commencement of the Aged Persons Homes Act, 2,910 grants amounting to \$188m had been approved to 30 June 1974. The projects gave accommodation to 52,224 aged persons. In Victoria, 715 grants had been approved amounting to \$44m. These grants involved subsidised accommodation for 12,379 aged persons. An amending Act passed during 1969 provided for payment of a Personal Care Subsidy to approved homes. Homes where residents are provided with all meals and where staff is employed to assist those who need help with bathing, dressing, personal laundry, and the cleaning of their rooms, and those who need help with medication, may be approved for subsidy. A staff member is required to be available at all times to give assistance in the case of emergency. The amount of subsidy paid is \$15 a week payable at four-weekly intervals on the basis of the number of persons residing in approved accommodation who are (i) aged 80 and over, and (ii) under 80 years of age who are receiving personal care services because they are permanently unable to perform those tasks themselves. Up to 30 June 1974, 421 premises had been approved for subsidy in Australia and the subsidy paid was \$12,775,836. In Victoria the number of homes was 124 and the subsidy paid \$3,730,240.

Aged Persons Hostels Act

The Aged Persons Hostels Act was introduced in September 1972 to stimulate the provision of more hostel-type accommodation for needy aged people. Under the scheme the Australian Government meets the full cost of providing new hostel accommodation for two aged people for every one at present in an eligible unsubsidised home, or for one additional person (for every two in a home previously subsidised on a \$1 for \$1 basis) between 1954 and 1957. The organisation will not be required to make any contribution from its own resources unless the capital cost exceeds \$11,700 per person accommodated, or the bed capacity of the new home exceeds the number of free beds to which the organisation is entitled. A further grant of up to \$250 for each person accommodated is available for furnishing the new hostels.

Land purchased after the passing of the Act is eligible for subsidy to the extent of the government valuation or purchase price, up to a maximum of \$2,400 per person accommodated.

The new scheme is limited to a period of three years expiring in September 1975 to encourage organisations to move quickly in taking advantage of the benefits the scheme offers, and eligible organisations seeking a grant must first enter into an agreement with the Australian Department of Social Security which stipulates in part, that accommodation in the new home must be allocated without any donation being required from the applicant and strictly on the basis of need.

Since the commencement of the Act, 67 grants totalling \$19,862,226 had been approved in Australia to 30 June 1974. In Victoria the number of grants was fifteen, totalling \$3,338,564.

Home nursing subsidy scheme

Under the *Home Nursing Subsidy Act 1956*, non-profit organisations which operate home nursing services employing registered nurses and which receive State or local government assistance are eligible for subsidies according to the number of nurses employed full-time on home nursing duties.

The number of organisations in Victoria receiving subsidy under the Act increased by three during 1973-74 to a total of 46 while subsidy payments increased by \$243,605 to \$1,024,640. These services, which enable people who might otherwise need institutional care to remain in their own homes, are provided by organisations such as public hospitals, municipal bodies, and religious, charitable, and voluntary community groups.

Home nursing organisations established prior to the commencement of the scheme are eligible for subsidy at the rate of \$6,200 per annum in respect of each nurse employed over and above the number employed at 30 September 1956. Services established since 1956 are eligible for subsidy at the rate of \$3,100 per annum for each nurse.

Domiciliary nursing care benefit

A domiciliary nursing care benefit was introduced from 1 March 1973 by the Australian Government to help meet the cost of home nursing and other professional care for aged people who are chronically ill but being cared for in their own homes.

A person who provides continuous care for a patient in a private home may be eligible to receive the benefit of \$2 a day provided the home is the usual residence of both the person and the patient.

Patients must be 65 years of age or more and must have an official certificate from their doctor stating that because of infirmity, illness, or incapacity they have a continuing need for nursing care by a registered nurse. The benefit is not subject to a means test and is not considered as taxable income. There are over 2,000 current beneficiaries in Victoria.

Delivered Meals Subsidy Act

The Delivered Meals Subsidy Act assented to in April 1970 assists organisations to establish, maintain, expand, and improve approved meals-on-wheels services.

The subsidy is paid on the basis of 25 cents for every meal provided by an eligible organisation and is paid quarterly. Also an additional subsidy of 5 cents per meal was introduced in October 1972 for those eligible meals-on-wheels services which undertook to provide an approved Vitamin C supplement for each delivered meal.

Non-profit religious, charitable, benevolent, and welfare bodies not controlled by the Australian or State Governments may apply for the subsidy. Local government bodies may also apply. At 30 June 1974 the number of approved organisations in Australia was 401, the number of meals served 4,782,807 during the year, and the amount granted \$1,372,944. The Victorian totals were 122 approved organisations, 1,590,881 meals, and the amount granted \$439,767.

Handicapped Persons Assistance Act

This Act came into operation in December 1974 when both the Handicapped Children (Assistance) Act and the Sheltered Employment (Assistance) Act were repealed. The existing provisions were incorporated in the new Act and at the same time the scope of the assistance already provided was greatly expanded.

As in the past, the new Act permits grants to be made in favour of eligible organisations who are concerned with the welfare of handicapped persons. However, the grants are now calculated on a \$4 for \$1 basis and may be made in respect of the capital cost, or rental, of premises used to provide prescribed services. The services may include approved training, activity therapy, sheltered employment, residential accommodation, and holiday accommodation, together with ancillary recreational and rehabilitational facilities and necessary equipment.

In addition, assistance may be made available towards the maintenance of premises used in the provision of any of the services and towards the salary of supervisory staff who may be employed at the centres concerned.

A benefit of \$3.50 per day is paid in respect of children under the age of sixteen years who may be residing in approved residential accommodation. At 30 June 1974, the benefit was being paid for 1,560 children accommodated at 55 approved homes throughout Australia. The total amount of benefit paid was \$565,833. The Victorian components were 310 children at 12 approved homes totalling \$113,662 benefits paid.

A training fee of \$500 may be paid to organisations in respect of handicapped workshop employees who graduate to normal employment.

Special assistance to State Governments

State Governments may be reimbursed up to two thirds of the amount they spend on approved home care service schemes and senior citizens centres. A scheme may be initiated and conducted by the State Government, local councils, community organisations, or any two, or all of these acting conjointly. Assistance may also be given to the States under the States Grants (Deserted Wives) Act in respect of aid for mothers with children where they are not eligible for normal benefits.

States Grants (Home Care) Act

This Act introduced in 1969 provides financial assistance for States developing home care services mainly for the aged, and for the States developing senior citizens centres. It also enables the Australian Government to pay two thirds of the salary of a welfare officer co-ordinating home care services run by, or in association with, senior citizens centres. During the year 1973-74 payments of \$1,942,898 were made to States under the Act, \$568,114 coming to Victoria.

State Grants (Deserted Wives) Act and Supporting Mother's Benefit

The State Grants (Deserted Wives) Act came into operation from 1 January 1968. It provides for assistance to be given by the Australian Government to the States in respect of aid for mothers with children where the mothers are not eligible for benefits under the Social Services Act. Broadly, these include deserted wives during the first six months of desertion, wives during the first six months of the husband's imprisonment, deserted *de facto* wives and *de facto* wives of prisoners, and other separated wives and unmarried mothers who are ineligible for the Australian Government widow's pension.

Deserted wives and wives of prisoners may now qualify for a widow's pension after the first six months of their husband's desertion or imprisonment, and from 3 July 1973 when a new benefit called a supporting mother's benefit was introduced, mothers in the remaining categories (i.e., unmarried mothers, deserted *de facto* wives, women whose *de facto* husbands are in prison and other wives separated from their husbands for various reasons who are ineligible for a widow's pension) may qualify for a supporting mother's benefit, six months after the date of the event which gives rise to eligibility, e.g., the birth of a child or separation. Entitlement to this form of assistance is subject to a means test and other qualifications.

During the year ended 30 June 1974, payments to the States under the State Grants (Deserted Wives) Act totalled \$7,653,841. The Victorian total was \$1,574,000. Payments to the States under the supporting mother's benefit totalled \$40,585,582, the Victorian total being \$8,964,000.

Reciprocal agreements

The Social Services Act provides for the Australian Government to enter into reciprocal agreements with the government of any other country in matters concerning pensions and benefits under the Act. Arrangements of this kind were operating with New Zealand and Britain at 30 June 1974.

The general basis of these agreements is that residence in New Zealand or Britain may be treated as residence in Australia. In return, Australians who go to those countries for permanent residence receive concessions enabling them to qualify for equivalent benefits there.

Portability of pensions

Age and invalid pensioners and their wives, widow pensioners, and women receiving a supporting mother's benefit may continue to receive their pensions overseas whether their absence is temporary or permanent. Age, invalid, and widow's pensions for people living overseas who are in special need of assistance and who satisfy certain requirements were introduced in March 1974.

History of social services, 1962; Sheltered employment assistance, 1969

National health benefits

During the year ended 30 June 1974 the administration of the National Health Act by the Health Benefits and Services Branch continued as an important activity of the Department of Social Security. Pending approval by Parliament of new health insurance proposals the current scheme continues to provide benefits.

At 30 June 1974, 86 per cent of the population were covered under varying rates of hospital benefits, and 83 per cent for medical benefits. These figures are based on details supplied by registered organisations to the Department of Social Security and exclude pensioners of various types, persons covered by repatriation provisions, the indigent, and others of non-insurable nature.

Subsidised health benefits plan

The subsidised health benefits plan, introduced in 1970, provides assistance towards the cost of health insurance for low income families, persons receiving unemployment, sickness, or special benefits, and newly arrived migrants.

From 10 February 1975 the following benefits were available for low income families: families whose weekly income does not exceed \$76.50 can receive free medical benefits and public ward hospital coverage; families with an income above \$76.50 but not exceeding \$82.50 need to pay only one third of the normal contribution rates of health insurance for free medical benefits and public ward hospital coverage; and families with an income above \$82.50 but not exceeding \$88.50 need to pay two thirds of the normal contribution rates for this coverage.

To 30 June 1974 the cumulative total of Australian Government fund benefit reimbursements for the subsidised health benefits plan amounted to \$34,033,418 in Australia (\$6,838,000 in Victoria) for hospital benefits, and \$7,452,397 in Australia (\$1,659,000 in Victoria) for medical benefits.

Hospital benefits

During the year 1971-72 the complete re-structuring of charges and benefits occurred, and by July 1972 three tables relating to standard, intermediate, and private ward charges in public hospitals had been introduced. Contributors were automatically upgraded to tables which provided a corresponding level of cover to that which they had previously enjoyed and benefits payable were geared to meet increases in public hospital fees. At the same time, as part of the re-structuring, the combined Australian Government benefit and fund benefit were limited to the actual charges made by hospitals. Public hospital charges in Victoria increased as follows from 1 September 1973: public ward \$20 per day, intermediate ward \$30 per day, and private ward \$40 per day. At 30 June 1974 the weekly family contribution rates for the major funds in Victoria were: public ward \$1.13, intermediate ward \$1.75, and private ward (in public hospital) \$2.38. To June 1974 Victoria had not introduced a private hospital table.

VICTORIA—HOSPITAL BENEFITS

Particulars	1969-70	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74
Hospital benefits—					
Number of registered organisations	37	24	23	22	21
Number of members ('000)	1,208	1,231	1,213	1,238	1,286
Benefits paid (\$'000)—					
From registered organisations' funds (a)	31,643	35,003	56,482	66,234	79,073
Australian Government benefits (b)	11,136	11,998	13,607	14,167	14,513

(a) Includes ancillary benefits.

(b) Excludes special account deficits and management expenses and includes Subsidised Medical Services Scheme fund benefit reimbursements up to 1970-71 and Subsidised Health Benefits Plan Scheme fund reimbursements from 1971-72.

Nursing home benefits

Benefits for patients in approved nursing homes were introduced in January 1963. The original benefit was for all nursing home patients. Later the idea of a supplementary benefit for patients who need and receive intensive nursing home care was introduced. At 30 June 1974 the rate of benefit for patients requiring ordinary nursing home care was \$3.50 per day and the rate of the supplementary benefit was \$3 per day. These benefits are payable by the Australian Government irrespective of whether a patient is a qualified pensioner or is insured with a hospital benefits organisation.

New nursing home benefits were introduced on 1 January 1973. The new arrangements provided for a nursing benefit of up to \$3.20 per day in addition to existing benefits, a statutory patient contribution of at least \$2.55 per day, and for control by the Australian Government over the admission of patients, and for the control of fees charged by participating nursing homes.

The new benefit is payable for pensioner patients who are eligible for benefits under the Pensioner Medical Service and for non-pensioner patients provided that such patients insure with a registered hospital benefits organisation.

The standard fees per week in Victoria and the appropriate levels of benefits payable for such fees at 30 June 1974 were as follows: patients requiring ordinary nursing home care—basic benefit \$24.50, patient contribution \$17.85, additional benefit \$22.40; patients requiring intensive nursing home care—basic benefit \$45.50, patient contribution \$17.85, additional benefit \$22.40; total standard fees were \$64.75 for ordinary care, and \$85.75 for intensive care.

Where the approved fee charged by a nursing home is higher than the standard fee the difference is met by an increase in patient contribution. On the other hand where the nursing home fee is less than the standard fee the patient contribution will, except in certain special circumstances, remain at \$17.85 per week (\$2.55 per day) and the rate of additional nursing home benefit that would otherwise be payable is reduced accordingly.

Together with this substantial increase in the Australian Government's financial commitment, the new nursing home benefits arrangements provide for closer supervision over certain aspects of nursing homes operations.

As a condition of approval under the National Health Act, for the purposes of the payment of nursing home benefits, participating nursing homes (i.e., approved nursing homes excluding those which are conducted by or on behalf of the State Government and prescribed in the National Health Regulations) cannot charge fees in excess of those determined by the Department of Social Security. The control of nursing home fees by the Department is designed to ensure that the fees for such nursing homes are not increased beyond the level justified by rises in operating costs.

The fixing of fees does not apply to nursing homes operated by the State Government because the fee charging policies of such nursing homes is considered to be the responsibility of the State Government.

Under the new arrangements, prior approval for the admission of a patient to a participating nursing home must be obtained from the Depart-

ment. In addition, the National Health Act, as amended in 1972, now makes specific provisions under which applications for approval of premises, or extension of existing approved premises, may be refused when located in areas in which adequate provision for nursing home care already exists.

VICTORIA—NURSING HOME BENEFITS
(\$'000)

Particulars	1969-70	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74
Australian Government benefits	10,052	9,350	13,168	19,152	26,677

Medical benefits

Australian Government medical benefits, which were introduced in 1953, are paid for medical expenses incurred by persons who are contributors to registered medical benefits organisations, or by the dependants of such contributors.

During the year ended 30 June 1974 the level of medical benefits underwent three major changes. On 1 September 1973 Australian and fund benefits payable for medical practitioner consultations were increased. On 12 November 1973 benefits for medical practitioner consultations and home visits were revised to introduce a tiered structure of benefits based on the principle of differential charges according to the length of time spent in consultation with the doctor. A third and major revision to the level of benefits was made effective from 22 April 1974. All parts of the Australian Government Schedule of Medical Benefits were revised in accordance with the findings of the Medical Fees Tribunal, a body created by the Australian Government to determine fees on which benefits could be based. These findings have been accepted by the Australian Government and benefits have been set accordingly.

Under the medical benefits scheme, higher benefits are paid for recognised specialist consultations if the patient is referred by another practitioner. Medical benefits are payable for certain services by oral surgeons and are payable at the higher specialist rate on referral to an ophthalmologist by an optometrist. The higher specialist rate of benefits is also payable on referral to a medical specialist by a dentist.

A contributor to a registered medical benefits organisation has to pay no more than \$5 of the common fee of an operation performed by a general practitioner or by a specialist where the patient is referred by another practitioner. Differential rates of benefits are paid for over 300 services which are customarily performed by either a general practitioner or a specialist. Where an operation involves other directly associated services, including the administration of an anaesthetic, the contributor has to pay no more than \$5 of the combined common fees.

To ensure that all contributors are adequately covered against the cost of medical treatment, to eliminate confusion as to the level of care provided, and to simplify administration, only one table of medical benefits operates in each State. All Victorian medical funds pay medical benefits at the same rate but contribution rates may vary between funds depending on their financial position.

The following table shows particulars of medical benefits in Victoria for the years 1969-70 to 1973-74 :

VICTORIA—MEDICAL BENEFITS

Particulars	1969-70	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74
Medical benefits—					
Number of registered organisations	19	19	19	19	19
Number of members ('000)	1,128	1,168	1,155	1,179	1,231
Number of services received ('000)	10,095	10,633	11,475	12,757	12,016
Benefits paid (\$'000)—					
From registered organisations' funds (a)	17,288	22,982	28,980	33,735	34,716
Australian Government benefits (b)	14,404	24,036	33,464	40,632	40,424
Total benefits	31,692	47,018	62,444	74,367	75,140

- (a) Includes ancillary benefits.
 (b) Excludes special account deficits and management expenses and includes Subsidised Medical Services Scheme fund benefit reimbursements up to 1970-71 and Subsidised Health Benefits Plan Scheme fund reimbursements from 1971-72.

Pharmaceutical benefits

A Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme consisting of a limited number of life-saving drugs was introduced in 1948 and all prescriptions for these benefits, written in accordance with the regulations, were supplied free of charge. In March 1960 the Scheme was considerably expanded and a patient contribution fee of 50 cents was introduced for prescriptions written for the general public. From 1 November 1971 the fee was increased to \$1. For persons enrolled under the Subsidised Health Benefits Plan, the fee is still 50 cents. Pensioners who are enrolled in the Pensioner Medical Service (see page 812), and their eligible dependants, receive these prescriptions free of charge. Pharmaceutical benefits are supplied by approved pharmaceutical chemists on prescriptions of medical practitioners, but in areas where there is no approved chemist, a medical practitioner may be approved to supply pharmaceutical benefits.

Provision is made to approve hospitals to supply pharmaceutical benefits and most public hospitals are thus approved. A few of the larger private hospitals having diagnostic facilities are similarly approved.

The drugs and medicinal preparations available as pharmaceutical benefits are determined by the Australian Minister for Health on the advice of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee. Within the list of benefits so determined, a doctor may prescribe, subject to any restriction on its use as a benefit, the drug of his choice in the treatment of his patient.

VICTORIA—PHARMACEUTICAL BENEFITS

Particulars	1969-70	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74
Number of prescriptions ('000)	17,301	19,157	19,081	19,967	23,426
Cost of prescriptions (\$'000)—					
Australian Government contribution—					
Pensioners	9,928	11,186	12,577	14,139	16,212
Other persons	20,744	25,361	25,391	24,743	30,532
Payments to hospitals and miscellaneous services	6,000	7,229	8,874	6,218	12,047
Patients' contributions	6,089	6,833	9,883	13,737	16,665

Pensioner Medical Service

The Pensioner Medical Service, which commenced in 1951, is a general practitioner medical service provided free of charge to eligible pensioners and their dependants. Under this service the participating doctors provide, to enrolled pensioners and their dependants, medical attention of a general practitioner nature, such as ordinarily rendered by a general practitioner in his surgery or at the patient's home. In addition to the general practitioner service given to enrolled pensioners, the full range of medicines of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme is available free of cost from a chemist on presentation of a doctor's prescription. The new nursing home benefits are also available (see pages 809-10). Persons eligible for the Pensioner Medical Service are persons receiving an age, invalid, or widow's pension under the Australian Social Services Act, or a service pension under the Repatriation Act, subject to a means test, and persons receiving a tuberculosis allowance under the Tuberculosis Act. Wives, children under sixteen years of age, and children who have attained the age of sixteen years but who are under the age of twenty-one years and are receiving full-time education at a school, college, or university, who are dependants of persons who are eligible, may also receive the benefits of the Pensioner Medical Service.

VICTORIA—PENSIONER MEDICAL SERVICE

Particulars	1969-70	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74
Number of pensioners and dependants enrolled ('000)	303	313	325	350	359
Number of participating doctors	1,740	1,766	1,738	1,760	1,740
Number of services—					
Surgery ('000)	1,594	1,723	1,823	1,972	1,966
Domiciliary ('000)	814	838	815	778	702
Payments to participating doctors for medical services (\$'000)	4,895	5,180	7,218	7,743	8,778

Australian Department of Repatriation and Compensation

The Department of Repatriation and Compensation is responsible, subject to the control of the Minister for Repatriation and Compensation, for the administration of the Repatriation and Compensation Act and associated legislation designed for the care and welfare of veterans, and the dependants of those who have died as a result of their service. The main responsibilities of the Department concern pensions and medical treatment; other functions include the education and training of children of certain veterans, the provision of gift cars for some severely disabled veterans, the payment of funeral grants for specified classes of veterans and their dependants, and various other forms of assistance.

National Compensation and Rehabilitation Scheme

In January 1973 the Prime Minister of Australia announced the establishment of a committee to report upon the feasibility of establishing a National Rehabilitation and Compensation Scheme. The terms of reference as originally defined directed the committee "To inquire into and report on the scope and form of, and the manner of instituting and administering, a

National Rehabilitation and Compensation Scheme appropriate to Australia, and which in principle the Australian Government has decided to establish, for the purpose of rehabilitating and compensating every person who at any time or in any place suffers a personal injury (including pre-natal injury) and whether the injury be sustained on the road, at work, in the home, in the school, or elsewhere or is an industrial disease with particular reference to :

- (a) the circumstances in which an injury should be covered ;
- (b) the application of the scheme where death results from the injury ;
- (c) the nature and extent of the benefits that should be provided ;
- (d) how the scheme should be financed ;
- (e) the relationship between benefits under the scheme and other social service benefits ;
- (f) whether rights under the scheme should be in substitution for all or any rights now existing ;
- (g) the encouragement of precautions against accident ;
- (h) the provision of rehabilitation facilities ; and
- (i) the manner of administering the scheme."

However, in February 1974, the Acting Prime Minister announced that the terms of reference already before the committee were to be extended to include sickness. The matter was arranged by the addition of a major paragraph which reads "And further to inquire into and report on an extension of the scheme for the purpose of rehabilitating and compensating every person who suffers a physical or mental incapacity or deformity by reason of sickness or congenital defect, together with the application of the scheme where death results from such sickness or defect."

A bill drafted by the committee to establish such a scheme was referred to the Senate Standing Committee on Constitutional and Legal Affairs in October 1974.

Disability pensions

Disability pensions, introduced under the *War Pensions Act* 1914, are intended to provide compensation for veterans who have suffered incapacity as a result of their service, for their eligible dependants, and also for the dependants of those who have died as a result of service. Disability pensions for incapacity are paid in accordance with the assessed degree of disablement suffered by the veteran ; they are not subject to any means test or to income tax. The term "disablement" includes such factors as physical or mental incapacity, pain and discomfort, a lowered standard of health, and inability to participate in normal recreations.

Pensions are payable to the wife of a disability pensioner and for each child under sixteen years of age or a student child who is not receiving an Australian Government education living allowance or an invalid pension. The rate payable varies according to the veteran's assessed degree of incapacity.

If a veteran's death is accepted as being related to his service, or if, at the time of his death, he was receiving the special rate of disability pension, or the equivalent rate payable to certain double amputees, a war widow's (or defence widow's) pension is paid to his widow, and pensions are also paid for each child under sixteen years of age. Eligible war widows (and defence widows) also receive an additional payment known as a domestic allowance. There were 531,855 disability pensions payable to veterans,

miscellaneous personnel, and their dependants at 30 June 1974, and the annual expenditure including allowances was \$252,176,888. Of these pensions, 140,798 were payable in Victoria and the annual expenditure was \$67,458,444.

Service pensions

In addition to compensatory payments for war caused incapacity and death, service pensions were introduced in 1936. This type of pension is paid to a veteran who has served in a theatre of war, and has either attained the age of 60 years (55 years in the case of a female veteran) or who is permanently unemployable. It is subject to a means test unless the pensioner has attained 75 years of age. A service pension may also be paid to a veteran suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis, irrespective of the area in which he served, and to a veteran of the Boer War. The wife of a service pensioner may also be eligible if she is not in receipt of a means test pension from the Australian Department of Social Security. The same means test is applied to service pensions as to social security age or invalid pensions. Most service pensioners are also eligible to receive a wide range of medical and other fringe benefits for disabilities not related to their service.

VICTORIA—WAR AND SERVICE PENSIONS

Year	Members of forces					Dependants			Amount paid during year	
	South African war veterans	First World War	Second World War, incl. native members and interim forces	Korea-Malaya	Other (a)	Total	Of incapacitated members	Of deceased members		Total
WAR PENSIONS									\$'000	
1969-70	..	8,903	49,152	717	774	59,546	82,671	17,051	99,722	51,297
1970-71	..	7,997	48,660	715	971	58,343	78,018	16,908	94,926	52,636
1971-72	..	7,029	48,127	713	1,187	57,056	73,676	16,868	90,544	57,464
1972-73	..	6,216	47,446	716	1,257	55,635	73,199	16,560	89,759	60,863
1973-74	..	5,408	46,517	703	1,195	53,823	70,647	16,328	86,975	67,458
SERVICE PENSIONS										
1969-70	12	8,409	5,710	12	15	14,158	3,538	611	4,149	9,767
1970-71	9	7,832	6,673	19	16	14,549	3,650	648	4,298	10,696
1971-72	8	7,053	7,725	19	17	14,822	3,685	687	4,372	12,075
1972-73	4	6,736	10,405	24	28	17,197	6,302	755	7,057	18,033
1973-74	3	7,172	12,645	34	20	19,874	7,707	743	8,450	26,532

(a) Includes Far East Strategic Reserve, Special Overseas Service, Seamen's War Pensions, and Act of Grace Pensions, but figures for 1973-74 do not include Seamen's War Pensions or Act of Grace Pensions.

Medical care

Medical treatment is provided for repatriation beneficiaries for all disabilities which have been accepted as related to service. In addition, and subject to certain conditions, treatment is also provided for disabilities not related to service.

An extensive range of treatment is provided for outpatients through some 6,500 general practitioners under the Department's Local Medical Officer Scheme, and at the repatriation outpatient clinics, and by specialists in the various branches of medicine who have been appointed to departmental panels. In addition, the Local Dental Officer Scheme, involving some 3,000

dentists throughout Australia and dental units located at departmental institutions, provides a full range of dental services for those eligible.

Nursing home care is also provided for service related disabilities which require long-term care. For certain other beneficiaries, nursing home care is provided for chronic conditions not related to service subject to a patient contribution.

Under arrangements with State Governments, psychiatric patients requiring custodial care are admitted at departmental expense to separate repatriation psychiatric wards administered by State authorities.

In each State of Australia there is a Repatriation Artificial Limb and Appliance Centre, also a sub-centre located at Darwin in the Northern Territory, where artificial limbs and surgical aids are provided for those eligible. The services of these centres are also extended to other Australian Government departments and agencies, and to the extent that production can be made available, to State Government departments and philanthropic organisations. Artificial limbs are supplied free of charge to all persons in the community who need them.

The Department also provides an extensive rehabilitation service for both inpatients and outpatients including physiotherapy, chiropody, speech therapy, and social worker services.

Institutions

The largest of the Department's institutions in Victoria is the Repatriation General Hospital at Heidelberg. The hospital is a teaching hospital for medical students affiliated with the University of Melbourne and is recognised for postgraduate training in surgery, medicine, anaesthetics, pathology, psychiatry, and radiology. Postgraduate studies are encouraged and clinical meetings and tutorials are held regularly. The hospital is registered by the Victorian Nursing Council as a training school for male and female student nurses and trainee nursing aides. At 30 June 1974 the number of staff employed full-time at the hospital was 1,403 and during 1973-74, 10,871 patients were treated at the hospital with an average stay of 17.8 days per patient.

The other institutions conducted by the Department in Victoria are the Outpatient Clinic, St Kilda Road, Melbourne; Anzac Hostel, North Road, Brighton; Repatriation Artificial Limb and Appliance Centre, South Melbourne; and Macleod Hospital, Mont Park.

Education and training

Soldiers' Children Education Scheme

With the assistance of a voluntary Education Board in each State, the Department administers the Soldiers' Children Education Scheme introduced in 1921. The object of this scheme is to encourage and assist eligible children to acquire standards of education compatible with their aptitudes and abilities and to prepare them for suitable vocations in life. Assistance is provided under the scheme for the children of veterans whose deaths have been accepted as related to service, or who, as a result of service, are blinded or totally and permanently incapacitated, or receive a special rate disability pension for pulmonary tuberculosis and are likely to receive that rate of pension for a period of three years.

Disabled Members', War Widows', and Defence Widows' Training Schemes

Previously administered by the Department, all training schemes are now conducted by the Victorian Department of Labour and Industry under the National Employment and Training Scheme.

Re-establishment benefits for National Servicemen and former Regular Servicemen

Re-establishment loans may be granted to former National Servicemen who, prior to call-up, were engaged in business practice or agricultural occupations, or who, because of their call-up, were prevented from engaging in these occupations, or to former Regular Servicemen who have completed three years full-time effective service and were discharged on or after 7 December 1972, and who need financial assistance for their re-establishment in civil life. The maximum amounts of the loans are : business and professional \$5,000, and agricultural \$6,000.

General assistance

The Department also provides various other forms of assistance for certain classes of veterans and their eligible dependants. These benefits include gift cars and driving devices for some seriously disabled veterans, funeral benefits, immediate assistance, and recreation transport allowances.

VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Victorian Ministry of Social Welfare

The *Social Welfare Act* 1970 established a separate Ministry of Social Welfare under a newly appointed Minister. The Social Welfare Department (previously a branch of the Chief Secretary's Department) is administered by a Director-General.

In addition to a central administration which is primarily responsible for the whole Ministry there are the following divisions : Family Welfare, Youth Welfare, Prisons, Probation and Parole, Training, Research and Statistics, and Regional Services.

Family Welfare Division

This Division is administered by the Director of Family Welfare. It is responsible for providing family welfare, child care, and associated services. These services include preventive services and family counselling.

The Family Counselling Section provides an advisory service for the benefit of persons with family problems. Its prime aim is to prevent the disruption of the family unit and to lessen the effects of any breakdown that may take place.

A parent or other person who has the custody of a child under fifteen years of age can apply for family assistance payments and associated benefits. The age limit can be extended if the child continues at school full-time. Those who are eligible for a pension from the Australian Department of Social Security, or who have readily realisable assets exceeding \$500 plus \$100 for each dependent child, are not eligible to apply. The following categories of persons are eligible for assistance.

Deserted wives and prisoners' wives are eligible for a widow's pension from the Australian Department of Social Security after they have been deserted for six months or if their husbands have been in prison six months.

Unmarried mothers, deserted *de facto* wives, and the *de facto* wives of prisoners—irrespective of age—receive the same assistance in the form of a supporting mother's benefit six months after the event that led to eligibility (e.g., birth of a child or desertion by or imprisonment of a *de facto* husband). In the meantime, if eligible, they receive assistance through the Family Welfare Division. A mother with one child receives \$27.75 a week plus \$4.00 if she pays rent or board. For each additional child she receives \$4.50 a week.

In the above cases the Australian Government reimburses the State for half the expenditure. The State bears the entire cost for the following benefits :

1. Where a child without sufficient means of support is cared for by a person other than a parent, \$12 a week family assistance payment is made.
2. Emergency grants, not exceeding \$50 per family in one year, can be made to those eligible for family assistance. These grants are primarily intended to provide food during the period between lodging an application for family assistance and the first payment.
3. All children for whom family assistance is being paid are eligible to receive medical, dental, pharmaceutical, and optical services free of cost from the Health Department. An allowance is also made for school books up to a set scale determined by the Education Department. The cost of the secondary school books is borne by the Social Welfare Department.

VICTORIA—FAMILY ASSISTANCE

Year	Number of applications		Number of children involved at end of period	Cost of assistance (a)
	Received	Approved		
1969-70(b)	4,724	3,162	7,337	\$'000 1,081
1970-71	5,555	3,643	4,911	2,062
1971-72	6,133	4,150	7,191	2,709
1972-73	6,212	4,706	8,128	3,383
1973-74	5,481	4,241	3,057	793

(a) Excludes medical, dental, pharmaceutical, and optical benefits, and school book payments.

(b) From 2 April 1970 the family assistance system was altered and statistics from 1969-70 are not comparable with previous years.

VICTORIA—FAMILY ASSISTANCE (a) : ANALYSIS OF FAMILIES RECEIVING ASSISTANCE AT 30 JUNE 1974

Type of case	Families receiving assistance	Children involved
Cases where the Australian Government reimburses half of the expenditure—		
Deserted wives	661	1,503
Wives of prisoners	50	126
Single mothers	367	381
Deserted <i>de facto</i> wives	182	324
<i>De facto</i> wives of prisoners	11	33
Mothers with child (or children) not of marriage	12	17
Cases not subject to Australian Government reimbursement—		
Assistance to people who care for children whose parents—		
Are deceased	369	422
Have deserted the child	64	187
Are in gaol	26	64
Total (b)	1,742	3,057

(a) In 1974, supplementary payments to families with fathers on unemployment benefits or compensation payments ceased.

(b) During 1973-74 there were 1,219 cases of families receiving emergency grants to assist them during the period between lodging the application for assistance and the first payment.

The Division operates four reception centres for the initial reception of children admitted to its care. It also operates seven children's homes, each for about thirty children, and forty-two family group homes, twelve each for eight children and thirty each for four children. The reception centres are for short-term care while the Division is planning for the children's future, whereas children's homes are for longer-term care.

Wards of the Social Welfare Department are children and young persons placed under the legal guardianship of the Director-General to the exclusion of their parents. They may remain wards until they are eighteen years of age, and in exceptional cases even longer, but generally they are discharged earlier.

The control, supervision, and after-care of those who are admitted as wards before they reach their fifteenth birthday is the responsibility of the Family Welfare Division. Those who are older when they are admitted as wards become the responsibility of the Youth Welfare Division. Those in the first group are referred to as "children" and those in the second group as "young persons".

There are two ways by which a child, or young person, is made a ward of the Department. One is by an order from the Children's Court. It may be either because a police officer has successfully applied to the Court that the child be deemed in "need of care and protection", or because the child has committed an offence, or because a person who has the care and custody of the child has successfully applied to the Court that the child be deemed "uncontrollable". The other way is by application to the Director-General of Social Welfare. No grounds for the application are specified, but the Director-General must be satisfied that it is in the best interests of the child.

Apart from caring for wards in its own reception centres and children's homes, the Division arranges their placement in approved children's homes conducted by churches and other charitable agencies, with foster parents, in adoptive placements, and with relatives.

The Division pays private foster parents \$14 a week for the care of wards, and pays approved children's homes, of which there are about seventy, amounts of up to \$28 a week for each child. In addition, medical, dental, and hospital services are available without charge, and allowances are made towards school books and school uniforms. It endeavours to recover from parents the cost of maintaining the wards, but usually it is possible to recover only a portion of this cost.

VICTORIA—DISCHARGES OF WARDS FROM FAMILY WELFARE DIVISION (a)

Type of discharge	1972-73			1973-74		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
Legal adoption	18	27	45	24	23	47
By direction of Director-General	334	293	627	344	268	612
Death	3	2	5	5	4	9
Time expired at 18 years	47	51	98	82	62	144
Discharged after time expired (b)	3	7	10	4	5	9
Court appeal	2	1	3	4	..	4
Total	407	381	788	463	362	825

(a) See also tables on young persons—that is, those fifteen years and over—made wards and admitted to, and discharged from, the Youth Welfare Division on pages 823-4.

(b) Time cannot be extended beyond the twenty-first birthday.

VICTORIA—REASONS FOR CHILDREN BEING ADMITTED AS
WARDS OF STATE

Reason for admission to Family Welfare Division	1972-73			1973-74		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
Children's Court orders—						
Care and protection application—						
Found wandering or abandoned	24	17	41	17	18	35
No means of support, or no settled place of abode	115	85	200	107	98	205
In a brothel, associating with known thieves, etc.	1	1	2	..	..	..
Not provided with proper food, etc., ill-treated, or exposed	63	65	128	49	57	106
Unfit guardianship	120	142	262	109	102	211
Lapsing or likely to lapse into a career of vice or crime	92	12	104	103	21	124
Exposed to moral danger	1	27	28	1	22	23
Truancy	6	..	6	2	3	5
Total	422	349	771	388	321	709
Offences—						
Breaking	55	2	57	62	2	64
Larceny	48	2	50	42	3	45
Other offences	5	..	5	6	1	7
Total	108	4	112	110	6	116
Applications for uncontrollable children	37	12	49	22	4	26
Total made wards by Children's Court	567	365	932	520	331	851
By Director-General of Social Welfare	69	55	124	78	48	126
Total	636	420	1,056	598	379	977

The following table shows the location of wards placed with the Family Welfare Division at 30 June 1970 to 1974:

VICTORIA—LOCATION OF WARDS PLACED WITH THE FAMILY
WELFARE DIVISION AT 30 JUNE

Details	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974
In Social Welfare Department institutions—					
Reception centres	363	347	423	401	325
Children's homes	169	206	211	193	197
Family group homes	101	137	146	195	209
Total	633	690	780	789	731
In approved children's homes	2,487	2,496	2,488	2,253	2,020
On home release with parents or relatives	1,794	1,842	1,710	1,899	2,121
In foster homes	608	634	601	536	510
Placed pending adoption	90	64	28	60	76
In Mental Health Authority institutions	172	165	150	146	102
Whereabouts unknown	12	8	10	5	1
Other	..	..	6	13	4
Total	5,796	5,899	5,773	5,701	5,565

Adoption service

When a parent or guardian signs a consent to adoption, he has the right to nominate either one of the sixteen approved private adoption agencies or the Director-General to arrange the adoption. The Director-General also arranges the adoption of wards who are available and suitable for adoption.

During the year ended 30 June 1974, 1,165 adoptions were legally finalised in Victoria. Of these, 250 were arranged by the Division—47 were wards and 203 non-wards.

Other services

The Division, through the Protection of Infants Provisions of the Social Welfare Act, safeguards the welfare of children under five years of age who are placed for payment away from their parents.

The following is a statement of operations under these provisions for the years 1969-70 to 1973-74:

VICTORIA—CHILDREN UNDER PROTECTION OF INFANTS PROVISIONS

Particulars	1969-70	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74
Children placed during year	518	404	315	314	285
Children discharged during year	540	434	364	286	269
Total children on placement at end of year	174	144	95	123	139

The Division also regulates street trading and employment of children under fifteen years in the entertainment field and is the legal guardian of children and young persons under twenty-one years who come from abroad without parents or relatives to live in Victoria. It maintains offices in the suburbs of Melbourne to make its services available locally to those in need of them. The suburban offices are in Dandenong, Frankston, Ringwood, and Sunshine. (For other suburban and country offices, see Regional Services Division, referred to on pages 834-5.)

Family Welfare Advisory Council

The Family Welfare Advisory Council is a body appointed by the Minister. Its twelve members, appointed for terms not exceeding three years, include representatives of family welfare and child welfare agencies. The functions of the Council are set out in the *Social Welfare Act 1970* as follows :

1. to advise the Minister on any alterations in practice and procedure considered desirable from time to time for the welfare, protection and care of children and young persons under the care of the Family Welfare Division ; and
2. to report on any matter of a like or allied nature referred to it by the Minister or on any matter on which it is authorised by this Act to report.

Youth Welfare Division

The Youth Welfare Division was established in July 1961 to deal with the social welfare of young persons. The initial emphasis was on the management of trainees aged 15 to 18 in youth training centres and the social work supervision of State wards in community placements. Youth training centres detain and treat young persons charged with or convicted of an offence

punishable by imprisonment or, where appropriate, those admitted as State wards to the care of the Social Welfare Department.

The Division maintains institutions and services for the care and treatment of some 1,500 young persons, about 25 per cent of whom are serving a sentence of detention in a youth training centre at any one time. The remainder, State wards, are placed in youth training centres, youth welfare services, hostels, residential employment, private board, or in their parents' homes.

Under Section 476A of the Crimes Act, an offender under 21 liable to imprisonment for an indictable offence may instead be sentenced to a youth training centre for up to three years. Young persons may also be transferred between prisons and youth training centres. As an increasing number of boys below the age of 15 are being sentenced by the Children's Courts for offences, the effective age span of youth trainees is now 14 to 21 years.

Initially, the Division concentrated on the problems of trainees in youth training centres and most efforts were directed towards the institutional setting. Later, the emphasis in management of youth training centres changed from the custodial aspect to the development of a more therapeutic environment including approaches in various community settings.

Trainees now participate in many community service projects and the introduction of community-based treatment centres known as youth welfare services has increased opportunities for meaningful contacts with the community.

Treatment facilities available are as follows:

Turana Youth Training Centre

Turana is the initial point of intake for male wards and trainees. Situated in Parkville, the Centre combines remand, classification and training facilities and is geared to the needs of boys from 14 to 21 years of age. It has a staffing establishment of professional executive personnel, youth officers, trade instructors, administrative, artisan and general staff. In the eleven sections at Turana the average weekly number of boys is 250. Security depends upon particular cases and about half of the boys are located in open minimum security accommodation.

The treatment programme incorporates remedial, primary, and secondary education, trade training, and socialisation by individual and group method.

Boys of 14 to 16 on a sentence are generally transferred to either Morning Star or Bayswater Youth Training Centre. However, some are classified to remain in one of the sections of Turana.

Winlaton Youth Training Centre

Situated at Nunawading, the Centre caters for female wards of State and for girls sentenced to a youth training centre. Winlaton functions as a remand centre; a facility where diagnosis and treatment are provided; and a starting point for continuing care provided by the Division's social workers and community treatment facilities.

There is an educational programme similar to a girls secondary school covering educational courses, trade and vocational training.

Usually there are about 80 girls at Winlaton. Part of the Centre is Winbirra, a remand centre for girls awaiting a court appearance. The remaining four sections of Winlaton vary according to the treatment needs of the girls. The staff numbers 78 persons.

Langi Kal Kal Youth Training Centre

This is a centre for male offenders aged 17 to 21 years. In addition to the normal treatment programme, including community service projects and weekend camps, the Centre operates a general purpose farm on the 1,093 hectare property and supplies farm produce to other institutions. Group discussions and individual counselling are being used. There is accommodation for 112 trainees.

Malmsbury Youth Training Centre

On a 33 hectare property on the Calder Highway, Malmsbury is the newest of the major youth welfare institutions and one specifically planned and built as a youth training centre. Accommodation is available for 152 trainees in the 17 to 21 years age group. The Centre has achieved excellent relationships with the local community and there are many examples of involvement of trainees in community service projects and sporting events.

Acheron Youth Training Centre

Near Buxton, the Centre is administered from Turana as an adventure camp for up to 45 trainees (boys or girls). Acheron provides an ideal environment for relaxed communication between staff and trainees.

Hawthorn Youth Welfare Service

Established in 1970 as an experiment in short-term, non-residential care for 14 to 17 year old boys, the Service has now shown that many young offenders who would otherwise be detained in a youth training centre may be helped successfully in a community setting.

The boys, referred by the Children's Court as needing specialised assistance, take part in group discussions, individual counselling, and community service projects. The treatment programme of the Service is organised on a group work approach by which groups of ten boys are assisted by the process of guided group interaction to resolve their own problems with the assistance of a skilled group therapist. The object of this treatment technique is to use peer-group pressures in a positive manner to assist participants to accept a more socially acceptable lifestyle. The Service is able to operate three groups of ten boys at a time and about 110 boys attend each year.

Brunswick Youth Welfare Service

Brunswick differs from Hawthorn in that it combines residential accommodation for ten boys with a treatment programme aimed at helping State wards with problems relating to school attendance, employment, and the home situation.

Its Youth Officers establish contact with school teachers, employers, and parents in the hope of solving the boys' problems. The number of boys who pass through the Service annually is about 100.

Windsor Youth Welfare Service

This is the first community-based facility for girls to be established in Victoria. It provides residential accommodation for wards from Winlaton Youth Training Centre and a combination of the treatment methods used at Hawthorn and Brunswick.

Western Youth Welfare Service

A site for a fourth youth welfare service has been acquired in Ascot Vale. When in operation, it will function as a hostel-community treatment complex for both boys and girls.

Non-Government youth training centres

The Bayswater and Morning Star Youth Training Centres are conducted by the Salvation Army and the Franciscan Fathers, respectively. Varied educational and trade training programmes are provided for boys who have been classified from Turana Youth Training Centre.

St Margaret's Youth Training Centre for girls is conducted in association with the Oakleigh Convent by the Sisters of the Good Shepherd.

Hostels

Twenty-five hostels, for the most part conducted by voluntary organisations with the assistance of government subsidies, provide care and accommodation for wards who require a period in a supportive environment before they are ready to cope with the full pressures of community living. The statutory hostels, one at Sunshine for boys and the other at Ivanhoe for girls, provide for wards requiring more intensive supervision and assistance.

Social Work Section

The Division is responsible for approximately 1,000 wards not under sentence. They are supervised and guided by a team of social workers. Wards remain under the guardianship of the Director-General until their eighteenth birthday; however, some are discharged at an earlier age, and a few may have their wardship extended until they are twenty-one.

VICTORIA—REASONS FOR YOUNG PERSONS BEING ADMITTED AS WARDS OF STATE

Reason for admission to Youth Welfare Division	1972-73			1973-74		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
Children's Court orders—						
Care and protection application—						
Found wandering or abandoned	13	37	50	10	27	37
No means of support, or no settled place of abode	4	10	14	15	1	16
Not provided with proper food, nursing, clothing, or medical aid	..	..	..	8	8	16
Unfit guardianship	4	4	8	2	3	5
Lapsing or likely to lapse into a career of vice or crime	77	31	108	94	45	139
Exposed to moral danger	1	130	131	3	99	102
Total	99	212	311	132	183	315
Offences—						
Assault	4	1	5	2	..	2
Robbery	1	1	2	1	..	1
Sex offences	4	..	4	2	..	2
Breaking	118	6	124	28	3	31
Larceny	55	17	72	24	2	26
Motor vehicles, larceny, etc.	66	4	70	15	..	15
Other offences	27	5	32	5	1	6
Total	275	34	309	77	6	83
Applications for uncontrollable children	13	8	21	3	4	7
Total	387	254	641	212	193	405

**VICTORIA—DISCHARGES OF WARDS FROM
YOUTH WELFARE DIVISION (a)**

Type of discharge	1972-73			1973-74		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
By direction of Director-General	258	162	420	110	131	241
Court appeals	2	8	10	6	25	31
Time expired at 18 years	496	245	741	346	198	544
Discharge after time extended beyond 18 years (b)	4	14	18	12	8	20
Total	760	429	1,189	474	362	836

(a) See also tables on children under fifteen years of age made wards and admitted to, and discharged from, the Family Welfare Division on pages 818-9.

(b) Time cannot be extended beyond the twenty-first birthday.

**VICTORIA—LOCATION OF YOUNG PERSONS UNDER THE CONTROL OF
THE YOUTH WELFARE DIVISION**

Location	Wards not under sentence		Young persons under sentence			
			Wards		Non-wards	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
AT 30 JUNE 1973						
Youth training centres—						
Government	81	76	37	..	296	15
Non-government	..	7	27	..	68	..
On home release	293	145	..	..	..	..
Residing with employer, in hostel, or in private board	256	221	..	..	..	..
On parole (a)	..	..	12	..	220	..
In prison (b)	..	..	8	..	11	..
Other institutions	14	11	..	..	3	..
Absconded	..	..	..	..	22	..
Appeal bail	..	..	5	1	5	4
Whereabouts not known	28	33	..	..	..	..
Total	672	493	89	1	625	19
AT 30 JUNE 1974						
Youth training centres—						
Government	94	58	57	..	244	20
Non-government	1	5	25	..	57	..
On home release	212	109	..	..	..	..
Residing with employer, in hostel, or in private board	255	207	..	..	..	..
On parole (a)	..	..	..	..	..	..
In prison (b)	6	..	..	..	4	..
Other institutions	16	23	..	..	2	..
Absconded	..	..	..	..	18	..
Appeal bail	..	..	..	..	..	4
Whereabouts not known	19	25	..	..	..	..
Total	603	427	82	..	325	24

(a) For 1973, wards on parole, although under the control of the Youth Parole Board, were still under the legal guardianship of the Director-General of Social Welfare. From 1973-74, non-wards on parole are not shown in this table.

(b) Wards and youth trainees in prison are either on remand or serving short-term sentences.

VICTORIA—OFFENCES FOR WHICH SENTENCES TO YOUTH TRAINING CENTRES WERE IMPOSED

Offence	1972-73			1973-74		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
Homicide	..	..	..	2	..	2
Assault	79	..	79	95	2	97
Robbery	84	1	85	62	1	63
Sex offences	38	..	38	45	..	45
Breaking	964	25	989	814	11	825
Larceny	565	28	593	403	15	418
Motor vehicles, larceny, etc.	779	2	781	911	2	913
False pretences	34	..	34	46	3	49
Other offences	396	2	398	496	5	501
Total offences for which sentences imposed	2,939	58	2,997	2,874	39	2,913
Persons sentenced	794	14	808	756	15	771

VICTORIA—LENGTH OF SENTENCES TO YOUTH TRAINING CENTRES

Length of sentence	Number of sentences					
	1972-73			1973-74		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
Under 14 days	16	..	16	29	1	30
14 days and under 1 month	37	1	38	39	1	40
1 month and under 2 months	80	..	80	80	1	81
2 months and under 3 months	51	2	53	53	1	54
3 months and under 6 months	100	2	102	117	5	122
6 months and under 9 months	178	3	181	190	3	193
9 months and under 1 year	92	1	93	66	1	67
1 year and under 1½ years	268	4	272	255	1	256
1½ years and under 2 years	77	1	78	67	..	67
2 years and under 3 years	50	..	50	57	2	59
3 years	12	..	12	21	..	21
Total sentences	961	14	975	974	16	990
Persons sentenced	(a)794	(a)14	808	(b)756	(b)15	771

(a) Of the 794 males sentenced 602 were sentenced for the first time and of the 14 females sentenced 13 were sentenced for the first time.

(b) Of the 756 males sentenced 520 were sentenced for the first time and of the 15 females sentenced 13 were sentenced for the first time.

Prisons Division

This Division is administered by the Director of Prisons. It is responsible for the custody of all persons in prisons and is required to assist in the rehabilitation of prisoners and their subsequent readjustment in the community. The Prisons Division maintains twelve prisons for males and one prison for females.

Pentridge, the main central prison, holds about half of all the prisoners in Victoria, and is the site of the Classification Centre. Prisoners serving sentences of at least one year (or of at least six months if they are under twenty-one years of age) and those who are eligible for parole, after

having been put through a selection and testing procedure, appear before the Classification Committee, which endeavours to place them in the most appropriate institution to assist their rehabilitation.

Pentridge has nine divisions—each accommodating a different type of prisoner. One division is for trial and remand cases, the second is for short-term and vagrant prisoners, the third is a psychiatric and medical clinic. In what is known as Pentridge proper there are four divisions for longer-term prisoners, one being for youths under twenty-one years of age and, finally, there is one division with accommodation for thirty-nine holding prisoners who are either regarded as security risks or who have been sent from other divisions or prisons for disciplinary purposes. Pentridge also has an industrial complex. There are fourteen kinds of industries producing goods valued at over \$250,000 annually.

In the training prisons technical instruction is provided in a number of industries. The Dhurringile Rehabilitation Centre is intended for alcoholics and provides employment in the farm and orchard. McLeod Prison Farm on French Island concentrates on general farming. At Coorimungle the prisoners undertake farming, large scale land clearing, and timber-milling. Prisoners in the reforestation prisons at Morwell River and Won Wron are engaged in forestry work. At Ararat there is forestry work, mat-making, and tubular steel furniture manufacture. Sale Prison is a local reception prison where prisoners are occupied in forestry work, mat-making, or gardening. Castlemaine Prison is used as a semi-hospital prison. It has a large vegetable garden and a mat-making industry. At Fairlea—Victoria's only female prison—instruction is given in arts and crafts, domestic economy, and sewing, and by volunteer instructors in academic work.

In all the prisons correspondence courses are encouraged and facilitated. The Education Department provides teachers for seven registered schools within prisons. The main one is at Pentridge with five teachers; the other schools are at Ararat, Beechworth, Bendigo, Geelong, McLeod, and Fairlea. They provide general education up to the Higher School Certificate level. In their leisure hours prisoners can pursue hobbies, watch television, or play sports. There are opportunities to take part in cultural activities.

Prisoners earn up to 50 cents a day. They are allowed to spend \$1.30 a week on cigarettes, chocolate, hobby materials, and so on. The rest is saved and handed to them when they leave prison. Each convicted prisoner is allowed two visits each month but the governor may grant extra visits. Temporary leave may be given by the Director-General when appropriate. Often prisoners are allowed out unescorted. Chaplains are nominated by the major denominations and appointed by the Government to the various prisons, either on a full-time or a part-time basis. Voluntary organisations also assist prisoners.

Where a minimum term is set by the court the Parole Board has the power to release the prisoner on parole at any time after the minimum term has expired. A prisoner may earn a generous remission of his sentence. Those serving three months or less may have their sentences reduced by one third, while those serving a longer sentence (or sentences) may earn remissions amounting to fifteen days or pro rata for each calendar month served. Remissions apply equally to full sentences and to minimum terms.

On the other hand, the governor of a prison may postpone discharge or release on parole by up to seven days for each breach of prison regulations.

Details of offences for which prisoners were sentenced, prison accommodation, and the numbers of prisoners received at and discharged from gaols are given in the following tables:

VICTORIA—OFFENCES FOR WHICH PRISONERS WERE SENTENCED,
1973-74 (a)

Offence	Males	Females	Total	Percentage
Homicide	36	3	39	0.3
Assault	1,004	16	1,020	7.8
Robbery with violence	127	4	131	1.0
Sex—Natural	270	(b)53	323	2.5
Unnatural	122	..	122	0.9
Breaking	1,127	14	1,141	8.8
Larceny	2,204	51	2,255	17.3
Motor vehicles, larceny, etc.	35	..	35	0.3
False pretences	1,210	6	1,216	9.3
Drunk and disorderly	1,205	22	1,227	9.4
Vagrancy	327	23	350	2.7
Indecent, riotous, and offensive or insulting behavior	449	58	507	3.9
Breach of bond or probation	86	12	98	0.7
Breach of parole	49	..	49	0.4
Other	4,415	105	4,520	34.7
Total offences	12,666	367	13,033	100.0
Convicted persons received	5,133	198	5,331	

(a) Many individuals are convicted for more than one offence and are received in prison more than once during a year.

(b) Comprises 53 prostitution offences.

VICTORIA—PRISON ACCOMMODATION AND PRISONERS
(Exclusive of police lock-ups)

Institution	Accommodation available at 30 June—		Prisoners			
	1973	1974	Daily average		In custody at 30 June—	
			1972-73	1973-74	1973(a)	1974(b)
Pentridge Prison	1,235	1,235	1,070	950	1,074	929
Ararat Prison	200	200	182	165	180	154
Beechworth Training Prison	115	115	103	88	98	89
Bendigo Training Prison	120	120	87	81	89	63
Castlemaine Prison	112	112	98	83	96	90
Cooriemungle Prison	60	60	51	48	45	39
Dhurringile Rehabilitation Centre	75	75	58	46	60	37
Geelong Training Prison	130	130	132	121	128	115
McLeod Prison Farm (French Island)	127	127	92	102	103	87
Morwell River Reforestation Prison	80	80	60	48	60	39
Sale Prison	75	75	71	55	69	44
Won Wron Reforestation Prison	85	85	71	54	61	55
Total males	2,414	2,414	2,075	1,841	2,063	1,741
Fairlea Female Prison	100	100	32	29	33	30
Total	2,514	2,514	2,107	1,870	2,096	1,771

(a) Including 204 males and 12 females awaiting trial.

(b) Including 191 males and 9 females awaiting trial, and 3 males awaiting deportation.

VICTORIA—PRISONS: PRISONERS RECEIVED AND DISCHARGED, 1973-74
(Exclusive of police lock-ups)

Particulars	Awaiting court hearing	Awaiting deportation	Convicted	Total
At 1 July 1973	216	..	1,880	2,096
Reception—				
Received during year	5,605	19	5,331	10,955
Returned on Parole Board warrants	..	..	52	52
Transferred from youth training centres	..	..	8	8
New prisoners received	5,605	19	5,391	11,015
Returned from hospital	4	..	161	165
Returned from mental hospital	2	..	6	8
Returned escapees	..	..	41	41
Other	..	..	16	16
Total	5,611	19	5,615	11,245
Discharges—				
Sentence expired or fine paid	..	..	4,656	4,656
Released on parole	..	..	767	767
Transferred to youth training centres	..	..	18	18
Bailed and bailed to appeal	1,304	..	130	1,434
Left for court	4,303	..	..	4,303
Released by court on appeal	..	..	83	83
Released to special authority	..	..	8	8
Released to immigration	..	16	12	28
Transferred to hospital	7	..	162	169
Transferred to mental hospital	12	..	14	26
Escaped	..	..	52	52
Died	..	..	8	8
Other	1	..	17	18
Total	5,627	16	5,927	11,570
At 30 June 1974	200	3	1,568	1,771

NOTE. Transfers within the prisons system during 1973-74 were 2,487 persons. Under sentence out of order during 1973-74 were 1,270 males and 91 females.

Probation and Parole Division

This Division is administered by the Director of Probation and Parole. It supervises and provides case work services for persons released on probation from Victorian courts; assists in the rehabilitation into the community of persons released on parole from youth training centres or prisons; and provides, when requested by a court, reports and information on any person who has been found guilty—whether convicted or not.

Pre-court reports are also provided for Children's Courts in the cases of young persons who are charged with offences or are the subject of care and protection applications.

To fulfil its functions the Division is divided into: Adult Probation and Parole (Male) Section, Probation and Parole (Female) Section, Youth Parole (Male) Section, and Children's Court Probation (Male) Section.

The officers of the Adult Probation and Parole (Male) Section are responsible for the supervision of all males admitted to probation from adult courts—that is, of those who have committed the offence after their seventeenth birthday, and of all males paroled by the Adult Parole Board. They are also responsible for submitting pre-sentence reports to adult courts and various types of reports to the Adult Parole Board. The latter include reports on all persons being detained at the Governor's pleasure.

The officers of the Probation and Parole (Female) Section supervise all female probation and parole cases irrespective of age. They also prepare reports on females for courts or parole boards.

The officers of the Youth Parole (Male) Section are responsible for the supervision of male trainees paroled from a youth training centre—that is, of young persons who were between their fifteenth and twenty-first birthday at the time of the offence. They prepare case histories and other reports for the Youth Parole Boards and courts.

The Children's Court Probation (Male) Section is located in Batman Avenue, Melbourne. The officers of this Section supervise all male offenders placed on probation by Children's Courts—that is, those who have committed the offence before their seventeenth birthday. They provide reports on most children and young persons who are required to appear before the Children's Court.

While officers of each Section serve their own particular range of clients, they are not excluded from supervising persons not falling into their particular category. For instance, Children's Court probation officers can supervise any adult male parolee or probationer, or a youth parolee.

In addition to the above-mentioned locations, probation and parole officers are located in various regional and suburban offices.

The Division uses the services of male and female stipendiary and honorary officers. All stipendiary probation and parole officers are required to be qualified social workers, while some 800 honorary probation officers are selected citizens who supervise less difficult cases (usually first offenders) who live in their neighbourhood. Honorary probation officers discuss problems and treatment methods with stipendiary officers and are encouraged to attend a course of training at the Institute of Social Welfare.

Probation

Probation in Victoria is an alternative to custodial care. When an offender is admitted to probation—which may be for a period of between one and five years—he consents to comply with certain conditions: to abstain from violation of the law, to report to the Director of Probation within forty-eight hours, to carry out the lawful instructions of the Probation Officer, to report and receive visits as directed by the Probation Officer, and to notify the Probation Officer within forty-eight hours of any change of address or change of employment during the period of probation. Special conditions may be added by the court requiring abstinence from liquor, attendance at a medical or psychiatric clinic, avoidance of specified company or place, and so on.

The probation order states that the probationer will be "supervised" by a Probation Officer and it is the first responsibility of the officer to see that the conditions of the order are adhered to. At the same time, however, every attempt is made to assist the offender in developing his personal relationships and abilities to be able to live constructively within the framework of society. Contact between the probationer and the Probation Officer varies in intensity. Initially it tends to be more frequent and then gradually decreases. It depends on the seriousness of the offence committed, the individual's adjustment and progress, and the length of the probation period.

A breach of the conditions of probation is reported by the supervising Probation Officer to the Director of Probation who decides whether any action to instigate breach proceedings will be taken. Court action may result in adjournment, fine, bond, admission to a new period of probation, or sentence to detention in either youth training centres or prisons. On the other hand, the court may also decide to take no action.

VICTORIA—PERSONS ON PROBATION

Year	Placed on probation during year		Children on probation at end of year	Adults on probation at end of year
	By children's courts	By adult courts		
1969-70	2,375	1,514	3,049	2,153
1970-71	2,865	1,458	3,536	2,181
1971-72	3,131	1,561	4,049	2,326
1972-73	3,273	1,678	4,385	2,392
1973-74	3,135	1,502	4,172	2,224

VICTORIA—SUMMARY OF PERSONS ON PROBATION

Particulars	On children's courts probation orders			On adult courts probation orders			Total
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	
1972-73							
On probation at beginning of year	3,108	941	4,049	1,918	408	2,326	6,375
Placed on probation during year	2,554	719	3,273	1,492	186	1,678	4,951
Completed probation during year	2,175	569	2,744	1,249	134	1,383	4,127
Probation cancelled due to—							
Further conviction	93	49	142	202	6	208	350
Breach of other conditions	42	9	51	20	1	21	72
On probation at end of year	3,352	1,033	4,385	1,939	453	2,392	6,777
1973-74							
On probation at beginning of year	3,352	1,033	4,385	1,939	453	2,392	6,777
Placed on probation during year	2,448	687	3,135	1,323	179	1,502	4,637
Completed probation during year	2,492	697	3,189	1,279	144	1,423	4,612
Probation cancelled due to—							
Further conviction	87	18	105	214	10	224	329
Breach of other conditions	41	13	54	19	4	23	77
On probation at end of year	3,180	992	4,172	1,750	474	2,224	6,396

VICTORIA—AGES OF PERSONS PLACED ON PROBATION

Age of probationers	1972-73			1973-74		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
By children's courts—						
Under 8 years	9	15	24	16	5	21
8 years and under 9 years	9	1	10	8	1	9
9 years and under 10 years	32	2	34	41	..	41
10 years and under 11 years	67	10	77	50	8	58
11 years and under 12 years	110	5	115	96	5	101
12 years and under 13 years	198	36	234	193	32	225
13 years and under 14 years	395	119	514	365	127	492
14 years and under 15 years	551	180	731	544	184	728
15 years and under 16 years	579	194	773	521	183	704
16 years and under 17 years	517	147	664	545	134	679
17 years and over (a)	87	10	97	69	8	77
Total	2,554	719	3,273	2,448	687	3,135

VICTORIA—AGES OF PERSONS PLACED ON PROBATION—*continued*

Age of probationers	1972-73			1973-74		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
By adult courts—						
17 years and under 21 years	790	87	877	712	70	782
21 years and under 25 years	232	35	267	216	24	240
25 years and under 30 years	139	21	160	123	21	144
30 years and under 35 years	70	8	78	56	14	70
35 years and under 40 years	37	8	45	24	7	31
40 years and over	83	17	100	48	23	71
Not known	141	10	151	144	20	164
Total	1,492	186	1,678	1,323	179	1,502
Total probationers	4,046	905	4,951	3,771	866	4,637

(a) Those 17 years and over admitted to probation by Children's Courts committed the offence before their seventeenth birthday.

Parole

Victoria has an Adult Parole Board and a Youth Parole Board. They have power to release on parole those who have been sentenced to detention but are eligible to be released on parole before the full sentence is served. The Youth Parole Board can release on parole young persons sentenced to detention in a youth training centre at any time during the currency of the sentence, while the Adult Parole Board is required to consider every adult case in which what is known as a "minimum term" prison sentence is set by the court.

When a Parole Board considers a case its main concern is whether the person is a good risk on parole. It bases its decision on the report it receives from the parole service and the prison authorities. Medical and psychological reports are also submitted when necessary. The person's criminal history is a major consideration. The Board can either grant parole, defer consideration to a later date, or deny parole.

The Youth Parole Board considers each case soon after the admission of the young person to a youth training centre, and generally sets a review date. Those trainees who are sentenced to detention for six months or less are, as a rule, not regarded as suitable for parole. The earliest date the Adult Parole Board can release a prisoner on parole depends not only on the minimum term set by the court but also on the remissions the prisoner has earned while in prison for good conduct, industry, and diligence, his response to the treatment programme, and his performance and application. On the other hand, release may be postponed either because the governor of the prison, or a visiting justice, has imposed punishment following a breach of prison regulations or because the prisoner is required to serve time in lieu of unpaid fines.

By and large parole procedures are similar to probation procedures. On the day of release the parolee is handed a Parole Order which contains conditions similar to those on Probation Orders. The Parole Officer helps the parolee to carry out these conditions and also assists with some of his problems such as finding employment.

If the parolee is sentenced to another term of imprisonment for more than three months his parole is automatically cancelled. In addition the Boards can cancel parole at any time should the parolee breach a condition or should his behaviour be unsatisfactory. However, most parolees complete parole successfully. The date of completion is when the full sentence set by the court expires.

The following table gives a detailed analysis of persons on parole in Victoria during the years 1972-73 and 1973-74 :

VICTORIA—ANALYSIS OF PERSONS ON PAROLE							
Particulars	Youth parole			Adult parole			Total
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	
1972-73 (a)							
On parole at beginning of year	219	4	223	799	22	821	1,044
Released on parole during year	430	..	430	794	17	811	1,241
Completed parole during year	330	3	333	623	16	639	972
Parole cancelled due to—							
Further conviction	73	..	73	143	1	144	217
Breach of other conditions	14	1	15	91	1	92	107
On parole at end of year	232	..	232	736	21	757	989
1973-74							
On parole at beginning of year	232	..	232	736	21	757	989
Released on parole during year	444	5	449	770	5	775	1,224
Completed parole during year	355	4	359	423	13	436	795
Parole cancelled due to—							
Further conviction	75	1	76	112	..	112	188
Breach of other conditions	19	..	19	92	..	92	111
On parole at end of year	227	..	227	879	13	892	1,119

(a) Revised figures.

The probation service prepares "pre-court" reports in the case of Children's Courts and, when requested, "pre-sentence" reports in the case of adult courts. The following table gives the number of pre-sentence reports required by the various adult courts during the years 1969-70 to 1973-74:

VICTORIA—ADULT PRE-SENTENCE REPORTS							
Year	Supreme Court		County Court		Magistrates' Courts		Total
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	
1969-70	12	..	155	9	267	28	471
1970-71	7	..	121	1	259	29	417
1971-72	5	..	122	6	234	28	395
1972-73	5	..	114	2	247	40	408
1973-74	9	2	86	1	198	26	322

The parole service prepares reports for the Youth Parole Board on most youths admitted to youth training centres. In the case of adult prisoners eligible for parole, a parole officer interviews the prisoner about eight weeks before the date on which he will be eligible. He investigates the prisoner's background, prospects for work and lodging, and other matters. In the case of female prisoners, of whom there are relatively few, relatives and friends are nearly always interviewed. A report is then submitted to the Adult Parole Board.

Training Division, Institute of Social Welfare

This Division—located at Bungay Street, Watsonia—is administered by the Director of Training. Its main function is to provide training courses covering the major aspects of welfare work undertaken by government and non-government agencies.

In addition, the Division is responsible for the educational and trade training programmes in all Social Welfare Department institutions. It administers tests to determine the suitability for training of those sentenced to detention in a youth training centre or prison, and is represented on their respective classification committees. It is the liaison authority between the Department and the Education Department, which provides teachers for school programmes within the various institutions and arranges technical correspondence courses for inmates in the government and non-government institutions. It also supervises Social Studies Cadets of the Department of Social Welfare who attend the University of Melbourne. Finally, it supervises the testing of new staff for departmental institutions.

Social Welfare Training Council

The Social Welfare Training Council has twelve members including the Director of Training and the Directors of the Family Welfare, Youth Welfare, and Prisons Divisions. The other members are appointed by the Minister for terms not exceeding three years. The functions of the Council are set out in the *Social Welfare Act 1970* as follows :

1. to exercise a general supervision over theoretical and practical training prescribed by the Council ;
2. to prescribe courses of instruction and training in social welfare ;
3. to conduct written, practical, and oral examinations ;
4. to issue certificates of qualification to persons who have passed examinations at the prescribed standards of proficiency ; and
5. to maintain a register of persons who have passed examinations at the prescribed standards of proficiency.

Training courses

Tuition for all courses at the Institute of Social Welfare is free. Each year the Victorian Government makes available bursaries for the Youth Leadership Diploma Course, the full-time Child Care Workers Course, and the Welfare Officers Course. The value of these bursaries is \$1,000 and students are not required to enter into an agreement to work for the Victorian Government after graduating.

Courses offered by the Institute include the following:

(a) Child Care Workers Course

This course provides basic training for persons employed or interested in being employed in the residential care of children separated from their parents. Applicants must be at least eighteen years of age and should have attained Leaving standard or its equivalent.

(b) Youth Workers Course

This course is designed to train persons employed or interested in employment in the care of young people who are committed to youth training centres. The qualifications required are the same as those for the Child Care Workers Course.

(c) *Prison Officers Course*

Part I provides training for newly recruited prison officers before they take up their positions in prison. It involves twelve weeks theoretical and twelve weeks practical training. Part II and Part III are conducted by correspondence. Part II is required for promotion to Senior Prison Officer, and Part III is required for promotion to Chief Prison Officer and all higher prison positions.

(d) *Youth Leadership Diploma Course*

This is a three year full-time course designed to train adult men and women to work with young people. Applicants must be eighteen years of age and have attained Higher School Certificate standard or its equivalent. Preference is given to applicants who have had an additional year of study or some work experience.

(e) *Welfare Officers Course*

This course provides training, as well as an opportunity for discussion, for those who plan to make a career helping people who have special problems. Students learn about the structure of society, and the various methods of helping people and the community resources available for the purpose. They also gain skills in interviewing. This course is not an alternative to the university course for social workers. It is expected that welfare officers will work in welfare organisations and hospitals under the direction of social workers or in conjunction with a committee. Applicants must have four Leaving subjects, including English.

(f) *Honorary Probation Officers Course*

This course provides training, as well as an opportunity for discussion, for honorary probation officers and those who intend to volunteer for probation work. The course involves two evenings a week for a period of ten weeks.

(g) *Supervisors Courses*

These courses are for those who have the task of supervising students from this Institute while they are on practical work placements.

(h) *Adoption Workers Course*

This course is for staff from adoption agencies. They gain an understanding of the *Adoption of Children Act 1964* and have an opportunity to discuss the various aspects of adoption work. One aim of this course is to encourage uniform standards of work in adoption agencies.

Research and Statistics Division

This Division is administered by the Director of Research and Statistics and conducts research into social welfare problems. It co-operates in non-governmental research projects and supervises any investigations made in relation to such projects within the departmental organisation or institutions. It also supervises the preparation of statistics for all Divisions, the collation of all material for issue from the Department, and the dissemination of information to the public with regard to social welfare.

Regional Services Division

Regional Services is a relatively new Division, administered by a Director.

The aims of this Division are to co-ordinate the services of the Department with those of other organisations, encourage the development of local welfare programmes, and generally to improve the welfare services available to people in outer metropolitan and country areas.

Regional centres now operating in Ballarat, Bendigo, Geelong, Glenroy, Horsham, Morwell, Preston, and Wodonga cover a wide field of services now being performed by the Department, for example, family counselling, family assistance, and probation and parole services. Further regional centres are planned for Ringwood, Shepparton, and Warrnambool. At present, smaller regional offices operate at Bairnsdale, Hamilton, Mildura, Shepparton, Swan Hill, and Warrnambool.

Finance

The following table shows the financial operations of the Ministry of Social Welfare from 1969-70 to 1973-74 :

VICTORIA—MINISTRY OF SOCIAL WELFARE: REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE (\$'000)

Particulars	1969-70	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74
Revenue—					
Sale of goods produced in—					
Prisons	358	419	409	358	392
Youth training centres	27	25	28	58	109
Child endowment	64	74	90	93	113
Maintenance collection	82	96	117	125	130
Quarters, rations, and rents	68	73	85	91	129
Other revenue	16	17	24	43	67
Total revenue	615	704	753	768	940
Expenditure—					
Central Administration and Research and Statistics Division—					
Salaries and general expenses	358	446	531	(a)1,079	825
Grants to approved welfare organisations	..	..	250	401	530
Fare concessions for pensioners	..	..	..	1,611	2,467
Municipal rate concessions for pensioners	..	..	..	..	140
Regional Services Division—					
Salaries and general expenses	..	..	..	(a)	850
Family Welfare Division—					
Salaries and general expenses	565	646	776	832	936
Maintenance of reception centres and departmental children's homes	1,542	1,869	2,503	2,939	3,717
Payments for wards in—					
Approved children's homes	1,316	1,443	2,594	2,809	3,022
Foster homes	286	322	292	363	407
Family assistance	1,081	2,062	2,709	3,383	793
Other expenditure	46	57	126	101	83
Youth Welfare Division—					
Salaries and general expenses	177	214	263	253	316
Maintenance of remand and depart- mental youth training centres	1,660	1,882	2,246	2,525	3,179
Payments to non-departmental youth training centres	207	202	232	294	293
Other expenditure	133	142	176	218	271
Grants to youth organisations	310	303	340	(b)	(b)

VICTORIA—MINISTRY OF SOCIAL WELFARE : REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE—*continued*
(\$'000)

Particulars	1969-70	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74
Expenditure—<i>continued</i>					
Prisons Division—					
Salaries and general expenses	3,884	4,239	4,954	5,485	6,617
Probation and Parole Division—					
Salaries and general expenses	398	462	540	504	543
Parole boards' expenses	9	9	9	8	12
Training Division—					
Salaries and general expenses	159	169	201	277	313
Total expenditure	12,131	14,467	18,742	23,082	25,314
Net expenditure	11,516	13,763	17,989	22,314	24,374

(a) For 1972-73, the Regional Services Division was accounted for under central administration expenditures.
(b) Vote fund contributions and works and services grants to youth organisations assistance fund were transferred to the Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation from 1972-73.

Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation

The Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation came into existence with the proclamation of the Youth, Sport and Recreation Act on 19 December 1972. Broadly, the objects of the Department are :

- (a) to assist in the growth of the individuality and character of the youth of Victoria by encouraging involvement of youth in community life and assisting and co-ordinating youth services and activities affecting youth ;
- (b) to promote the fitness and general health of the people of Victoria by encouraging participation in sport and assisting and co-ordinating the activities of government agencies, municipalities, and any other persons or bodies concerned with sport ; and
- (c) to improve the facilities available to the people of Victoria for leisure time pursuits by encouraging and assisting with the provision of additional opportunities for recreation for individuals and family units.

The Act to establish a Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation recognised the significant changes occurring in our society. Increased affluence and leisure time are leading to growing demands for active and passive recreational opportunities and facilities. Changing life styles have revealed a need for government to take action to assist with the health and fitness of the community. Families desire the means to participate in recreational activities together.

The most important provisions of the Act relate to youth and the family. A primary objective is to restore communication among young people, their families, and the community. Governments have been prone to think of youth work in terms of crime prevention. The philosophy behind this Act acknowledges the positive potential of youth and the opportunities for the development of that potential.

The legislation provides for the appointment of a State Youth Council and a Sports and Recreation Council.

State Youth Council

The State Youth Council replaces the former Youth Advisory Council. The Council is responsible for advising the Minister on the formulation and regular review of policy including financial policy relating to grants and subsidies from the Youth Fund.

Sports and Recreation Council

The Sports and Recreation Council is responsible for advising the Minister on all aspects of sport and recreation in Victoria, with the exception of horse racing, trotting, and greyhound racing, for which advisory machinery exists under the provisions of the Racing Act. However, there is provision for consultation between the Racing Boards and the Sports and Recreation Council where joint use or development of facilities is desirable. The Council also provides a liaison between sports and recreational interests and the Minister.

Youth Fund

Prior to the establishment of the Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation, the Social Welfare Department administered the Youth Organisations Assistance Fund. Grants were made from this Fund, on the recommendation of the former Youth Advisory Council, for building works and general purposes of youth organisations. This Fund operated until December 1972, when a new trust fund known as the Youth Fund was established in accordance with the *Youth, Sport and Recreation Act 1972*.

Allocations may be approved by the Minister from the Youth Fund to voluntary organisations for the provision or maintenance of services, the promotion of activities, the training of or maintenance of facilities or equipment to assist in the growth of the individuality and character of youth.

The Fund provides capital subsidies on a dollar for dollar basis for the construction, extension, remodelling, repair, and renovation of buildings and property used for youth work. Financial assistance is available for youth groups towards costs of general expenses, the training of youth workers, and for the employment of youth workers to conduct after hours recreational activities in schools. The Fund is designed to ensure that the contribution of voluntary youth organisations to youth work is further developed.

Sports and Recreation Fund

Prior to the establishment of the Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation, the Local Government Department administered a Swimming Pools Fund and a Country Sports Centres Fund. At 30 June 1973 the administration of these funds was transferred to this Department under the Sports and Recreation Fund. Subsidies are available for multi-purpose sporting and recreational facilities, swimming pools, and joint community/school projects. All projects must be supported by the local municipal council.

Australian Rules Football Fund

The Australian Rules Football Fund has been established to promote junior football. The Fund is used to finance programmes recommended by the Junior Football Council.

Racing

The Department is responsible for the administration of the *Racing Act 1958*. All matters affecting racing, trotting, greyhound racing, or the conduct of any sports gathering with betting facilities are handled by the Racing Division. The supervision of totalisator operations both on course and through the Totalisator Agency Board system is a key function of this Division. The Racecourses Licences Board and the Greyhound Racing Grounds Development Board, both statutory bodies established under the Racing Act, provide financial assistance to race clubs for permanent improvements at racecourses and greyhound tracks.

VOLUNTARY AGENCIES

Australian Red Cross Society

The Victorian Division of the Australian Red Cross Society is responsible for all the activities of the Society in Victoria. Red Cross is a voluntary organisation maintained by donations and subscriptions; it conducts an annual appeal for funds. The primary objects of the Society are: furnishing of aid to the sick and wounded, irrespective of nationality; rendering of assistance in the case of great public disaster, calamity, or need; improvement of health; prevention of disease; and the mitigation of suffering in Australia and elsewhere. The services include:

Blood transfusion service. Whole blood and blood derivatives are provided free of charge to all in need of them. 151,901 donations were collected in 1973-74.

Transport. Red Cross volunteer drivers cover more than 1.6 million kilometres each year taking handicapped children and adults to special schools, clinics, and hospitals, or elderly people on outings, etc.

Social work service. A family counselling agency is available in both city and country areas to advise individuals and families with personal or social problems. Approximately 2,000 families are assisted annually.

Handcrafts. All types of craftwork are taught at Red Cross centres, hospitals, and homes throughout Victoria to handicapped people.

Enquiry and Tracing Bureau. This is a link in the international tracing service of the Red Cross. The Bureau handles hundreds of inquiries annually on behalf of people in this State, for news of relatives displaced by war, political disturbances, or large-scale disasters.

Home nursing equipment. Items required for nursing patients at home, including wheelchairs and walking aids, are available on loan free of charge. Approximately 6,500 loans are made annually.

Community services. Trained personnel carry out a wide range of services in hospitals, baby health centres, and geriatric homes, and for the aged and sick in their own homes, and assist with such services as the delivery of meals-on-wheels.

Hospital services. Libraries have been established in 122 hospitals and homes, and more than 47,368 magazines are distributed annually. Hospital visiting services are carried out throughout the State and provide patients with a wide range of extra services which are not within the scope of the nursing staff. A picture library has been established in 64 hospitals and homes. From a selection of 2,327 prints, pictures are on loan and can be changed regularly. Specialised services are carried out in psychiatric hospitals and clinics, the major one being music therapy. From a record library of 19,356 titles, programmes are compiled and annotations provided for music groups among patients. At hospitals and clinics near Melbourne, the music therapists present annotated and special programmes, including percussion groups, and in some cases live recitals are arranged.

Disaster relief services

Under its Royal Charter, Red Cross has a responsibility to be prepared at all times to act immediately in natural disasters or other emergencies. Red Cross has a specific role to play under the State Disaster Plan working under the Medical and Welfare Divisions. Through a special agreement with the Country Fire Authority, Red Cross is called to provide emergency

centres and all necessary supportive services to fire-fighters and evacuees. Similar services are given to the Forests Commission. The civic authorities concerned with floods, searches, and major accidents recognise Red Cross as a body geared to provide immediate practical assistance.

When a major emergency arises, Red Cross centres are set up in a local hall, or if necessary, under canvas. These are equipped to provide a variety of services such as large-scale catering, first aid and general care, sleeping accommodation, issue of clothing, or any other necessary item. To facilitate the immediate setting up of these centres, Red Cross has a number of "packaged posts" always ready to despatch. Each of these consists of large cartons containing emergency cooking equipment, lighting, tinned and packaged food, first aid supplies, blankets, mattresses, pillows, and clothing. A complete "packaged post" fits onto a 3 tonne truck and, therefore, can be transported quickly. Specially trained teams accompany a "packaged post" to work with the local Red Cross members.

Overall co-ordination of Red Cross activities during a disaster is handled from Red Cross Headquarters, Melbourne, where a controller and other staff are available on a 24 hour basis. To ensure efficiency, training sessions and seminars are held regularly in country areas and at headquarters.

In addition to major disasters, Red Cross is called on to give help to victims of house fires and in Melbourne, by agreement with the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, Red Cross is notified when help is required. In country areas the police or local fire officers liaise with the local Red Cross units. The aid is given to meet the immediate needs before statutory assistance takes over and includes complete sets of clothing, toilet requisites, babies layettes, blankets, and some household essentials.

Red Cross bears the cost of its disaster relief and emergency services. Some examples of costs involved are the ten available "packaged posts", each valued at more than \$2,000, which over the period 1969 to 1973 contributed to Red Cross spending more than \$90,000 on these services. This figure does not include large quantities of donated goods.

VICTORIA—RED CROSS SOCIETY

Particulars	Unit	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74
Income (a)	\$'000	1,742	1,974	2,175	2,636
Expenditure (b)	\$'000	1,829	2,046	2,251	2,724
Accumulation account	\$'000	1,295	1,297	1,320	1,325
Expenditure on—					
Blood transfusion service	\$'000	867	1,067	1,222	1,497
Convalescent homes and hostels	\$'000	203	210	233	305
Handcraft and curative training	\$'000	73	82	85	105
Social service and welfare	\$'000	117	114	114	139
Service and repatriation hospitals, including recreation centres, civilian hospital, and civilian relief	\$'000	162	162	165	160
Red Cross branches and companies	number	601	586	577	588
Junior Red Cross Circles	number	519	540	617	642
Blood donations	number	125,409	132,404	149,924	151,901
Blood distributed	half litres	86,261	88,323	99,829	103,367
Serum distributed	litres	570	601	838	1,147
Transport distance	'000 kilometres	1,693	1,685	1,629	1,674

(a) Excludes legacies.

(b) Excludes stock adjustments and depreciation.

Blood Transfusion Service, 1971; Youth activities, 1972; Red Cross service corps, 1972; Music Therapy Service, 1974

Brotherhood of St Laurence

The Brotherhood of St Laurence, whose head office is in Fitzroy, is an independent social welfare organisation, which was founded by The Reverend Father G. K. Tucker as an Anglican Religious Order at Adamstown, Newcastle, New South Wales in 1930. The Brotherhood came to Melbourne in 1933 by invitation of the Archbishop of Melbourne to undertake social welfare work with the poor and unemployed in the inner areas of Melbourne.

In 1971 the Brotherhood became a Body Corporate by Act of the Victorian Parliament. It is now governed both by The Brotherhood of St Laurence (Incorporation) Act and by a constitution. The members of the Brotherhood consist of five Clerks in Holy Orders of the Church of England, five laymen, and five senior officers or employees of the organisation. The board of directors is elected by the membership, each director retiring and being eligible for re-election every five years. The Brotherhood is currently a participating member agency of both the Victorian Council of Social Service and the Melbourne Diocesan Social Services Co-ordinating Committee.

The Brotherhood is involved in programmes concerned with family, youth, children's, and elderly people's welfare. Its central concern is for the poorer, most disadvantaged, and rejected among these groups. The Brotherhood believes their situations are to a large extent created and affected by broader social and economic issues. Where these issues affect people it works with, the Brotherhood tries to make a contribution to knowledge, debate, and decision-making. This participation is expressed through research and social action which are regarded as essential as the direct provision of services. The Brotherhood also sees an obligation to help change government or public attitudes and policies as well as meeting the needs which largely result from inadequate government provision or public indifference. The Brotherhood aims to share with the community knowledge gained and the interpretation of social issues. It sets aside resources for communication and education. Some staff within the Brotherhood are available for community consultation. The Brotherhood makes available to the public reports and papers that have been compiled from its research and service projects. In an attempt to bring about changes in values and priorities, the Brotherhood's social action programmes include developing and communicating policies, planning, participating with other agencies, and community development.

The Brotherhood considers one of the most important aspects of its work is in experimental projects. Knowledge gained from these projects is valuable to governments and community bodies in framing future social policy. Some charitable trusts have recognised the value of these experiments and have provided funds for them and support is also given by the Australian and Victorian Governments. At present the Brotherhood has two major pilot projects under way. They are the innovative Family Centre Project and Family Day Care. The Family Centre helps poor and socially disadvantaged families to become self-supporting and able to use community services. Family Day Care utilises local housewives in conjunction with the agency in providing a day care service in their own homes for neighbouring children whose parents both work. A group care programme is

also being run in a renovated house in an attempt to emulate home conditions in day care. These are valuable alternatives to traditional day nursery programmes.

Care of the aged has always played a major part in the work of the Brotherhood. By 31 December 1973 the Brotherhood was providing accommodation for 600 elderly people. There are large village settlements at Carrum Downs and Lara. Carrum Downs is a 17 hectare estate between Dandenong and Frankston. Lara is a 25 hectare estate near Geelong. They both have more than 100 single units, hostel accommodation, and small hospitals. On the settlements, community life is encouraged. Industries offer activities for residents who also run general stores and libraries. There are 45 Brotherhood flats at Keble Court in North Fitzroy and St Laurence Court in Bendigo. The flats are for elderly people who do not own a home or flat and have not enough capital to meet the requirements of other agencies. Carinya at Box Hill is the Brotherhood's 40 bed nursing home for elderly women in need of constant nursing care.

Each scheme, except for the nursing home at Box Hill, aims to provide accommodation for elderly people who want independence, companionship, security, and opportunities for useful creative activities. Each year there are increases in the numbers catered for, together with hundreds of inquiries and applications that cannot be satisfied. Applicants must be of pensionable age and in good health. The accommodation is for both single and married people.

The Coolibah Centre in Brunswick Street, Fitzroy, has a membership of 160 elderly men and women. Most of them live alone in sub-standard conditions in the surrounding area and are entirely dependent on the pension. The centre provides free chiropody, a two-course midday meal for 25 cents, home delivery of meals, bathing facilities, clothing, and recreation. Home care is provided for housebound members. Until recently, finances did not permit the Brotherhood to provide adequate housing for centre members. It is planned that by early 1975 a hostel will be built in Fitzroy Street, Fitzroy.

Another service that has always been provided by the Brotherhood but which has recently been extended is material aid in the form of clothing and furniture. Since November 1972, material aid has been operating from a new shop at 75 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy. People with established needs can select clothing and furniture free of charge. The shop is staffed by a welfare officer and a group of voluntary helpers who sort, iron, and mend stock.

The Brotherhood's sheltered workshop at West Heidelberg provides opportunities for rehabilitation of patients from Larundel, Mont Park, Jane-field, and St Nicholas hospitals, Clarendon and Ernest Jones clinics, Turana Youth Training Centre, and the Brunswick Intervention Unit. During 1973 over 100 patients attended the workshop and, of these, 22 were able to proceed to full-time employment. Newsprint is collected by schools and youth groups for the sheltered workshop where it is processed.

Publications by the Brotherhood and by Brotherhood staff have helped create public interest in areas of social concern. The Brotherhood's Social Issues Department is responsible for the publication of books, pamphlets, and papers.

In 1973-74 the Brotherhood was financed by Brotherhood services (42.1 per cent), donations (13.5 per cent), legacies (11.1 per cent), the Brotherhood's two salvage divisions (the collection and selling of goods and clothes on the secondhand market—10.5 per cent), investments (9.0 per cent), auxiliaries (4.9 per cent), and government (4.5 per cent).

Lord Mayor's Children's Camp, Portsea

The Lord Mayor's Children's Camp is situated on the Nepean Highway, Portsea, 96 kilometres from Melbourne, on high ground overlooking the entrance to Port Phillip Bay. Its object is to give selected children from country and metropolitan areas a holiday, to have each child medically and dentally examined, and to provide the services of qualified optometrists, physiotherapists, audiometrists, and radiographers. Ten camps are held annually, each camp accommodating 150 girls and 150 boys.

Friendly societies

The *Friendly Societies Act* 1958 regulates the operations of friendly societies in Victoria. The societies eligible for registration are those which provide one or more of the benefits set out in section 5 of the Act, and those which provide such other benefits as a law officer of the Crown certifies to be of mutual benefit to members and to which the facilities afforded by the Act should be extended. The latter are known as Specially Authorised Societies. Those societies which periodically close their funds, discharge their liabilities, and divide their assets, are known as Dividing Societies.

The benefits referred to include periodical payments during sickness, old age, and infirmity, as well as lump sum payments on death or on the attainment of a specified age (endowment benefits). They also include payments for hospital, medical, medicinal, and dental expenses.

VICTORIA—FRIENDLY SOCIETIES: MEMBERSHIP, ETC.

Particulars	1967-68	1968-69	1969-70	1970-71	1971-72
ORDINARY FRIENDLY SOCIETIES (a)					
Number of societies	20	20	20	21	21
Number of branches	1,112	1,091	1,086	1,075	1,046
Number of members contributing for—					
Sick and funeral benefits (b)	103,077	102,250	100,629	100,124	99,155
Medical services (b)	252,679	260,344	266,074	272,999	278,251
Hospital benefits (b)	268,090	276,241	287,034	292,596	288,847
Number of widows registered for funeral benefits	8,643	8,688	8,216	8,888	9,515
Number of whole of life and endowment assurance benefits in force	20,148	22,924	26,799	29,954	34,148
DIVIDING AND OTHER SOCIETIES					
Number of societies	106	104	102	102	94
Number of members	50,906	51,341	50,558	48,699	47,960
ALL SOCIETIES					
Number of members who received sick pay	23,625	24,183	24,069	(c)	(c)
Number of weeks for which sick pay was allowed	396,635	388,113	364,766	370,555	354,374
Number of deaths of sick and funeral benefit members	2,481	2,586	2,405	2,439	2,328
Number of deaths of wives and widows	783	615	654	753	647

(a) Societies which provide the customary benefits, namely, sick pay, funeral, medicinal, medical, and hospital benefits.

(b) A member may contribute for any number or all of these benefits and is entered in the table in each benefit for which he contributes.

(c) No longer tabulated.

VICTORIA—FRIENDLY SOCIETIES: FUNDS
(\$'000)

Particulars	1967-68	1968-69	1969-70	1970-71	1971-72
Ordinary societies (a)—					
Sick, funeral, and non-contributory endowment funds	18,182	18,689	19,173	19,429	19,984
Whole of life, endowment, and other assurance funds	4,049	5,306	6,705	8,444	10,722
Medical services funds	3,461	4,049	4,617	3,735	1,571
Hospital benefit funds	5,442	6,388	7,430	8,370	8,781
Medicine, management, and other funds	5,666	5,941	6,378	6,883	7,651
Dividing and other societies	1,355	1,480	1,534	1,786	1,926
Total funds	38,155	41,853	45,837	48,647	50,635

(a) Societies which provide the customary benefits, namely, sick pay, funeral, medicinal, medical, and hospital benefits.

VICTORIA—FRIENDLY SOCIETIES: RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE
(\$'000)

Particulars	1967-68	1968-69	1969-70	1970-71(a)	1971-72(a)
RECEIPTS					
Ordinary societies (b)—					
Sick, funeral, and non-contributory endowment funds	1,416	1,405	1,440	1,427	1,554
Whole of life, endowment, and other assurance funds	1,256	1,859	2,212	2,580	3,572
Medical services funds	7,786	8,253	9,152	11,301	15,147
Hospital benefit funds	8,207	9,427	10,728	10,592	16,740
Medicine, management, and other funds	1,324	1,531	1,866	1,857	2,761
Dividing and other societies	614	695	779	822	903
Less inter-fund transfers	254	238	287	429	288
Total receipts	20,349	22,932	25,890	28,150	40,389
EXPENDITURE					
Ordinary societies (b)—					
Sick, funeral, and non-contributory endowment funds	816	899	955	1,165	998
Whole of life, endowment, and other assurance funds	373	601	813	896	1,350
Medical services funds	7,141	7,664	8,584	12,550	16,770
Hospital benefit funds	7,259	8,480	9,685	10,270	15,829
Medicine, management, and other funds	1,310	1,256	1,429	1,498	2,031
Dividing and other societies	474	570	725	641	748
Less inter-fund transfers	254	238	287	429	288
Total expenditure	17,119	19,232	21,904	26,591	37,438
Excess of receipts over expenditure	3,230	3,700	3,986	1,559	2,951

(a) Figures since 1970-71 have been compiled on a "revenue" basis of "income and expenditure" whereas previous years were compiled on a "cash" basis of "receipts and expenditure (payments)".

(b) Societies which provide the customary benefits, namely, sick pay, funeral, medicinal, medical, and hospital benefits.

The following table shows the amounts disbursed by societies (excluding specially authorised societies) in sick pay, funeral and mortuary benefits, endowments, medical services, medicinal, and hospital benefits during the years 1967-68 to 1971-72:

VICTORIA—FRIENDLY SOCIETIES: AMOUNTS DISBURSED IN BENEFITS
(\$'000)

Nature of benefit	1967-68	1968-69	1969-70	1970-71	1971-72
Sick pay	544	570	590	580	567
Funeral benefits	248	266	248	262	270
Non-contributory endowment benefits	93	83	109	233	254
Whole of life, endowment, and other assurance benefits	238	394	641	596	863
Medical services—					
Society benefit	3,355	3,658	4,178	6,230	7,743
Government subsidy	3,041	3,229	3,537	5,390	7,921
Hospital benefits—					
Society benefit	5,249	6,259	7,270	8,093	13,191
Government subsidy	1,070	1,126	1,192	1,169	1,335
Medicine	215	229	246	(a) 44	(a) 34

(a) Represents society benefits only, exclusive of medicine assessments paid to dispensaries, which had been included in previous years' figures for "Medicine".

Dispensaries

At the end of 1971-72, 30 United Friendly Societies' Dispensaries were registered under the Friendly Societies Act as separate friendly societies. The chief object for which the dispensaries are established is to provide the societies with a supply of medicine and medical and surgical appliances for members and for persons claiming through members. The number of members connected with dispensaries at the end of 1971-72 was 76,268. During 1971-72 the income of the dispensaries was \$4,359,303 and their expenditure was \$4,182,713. The assets and liabilities of dispensaries at the end of 1971-72 amounted to \$3,701,694 and \$684,843, respectively.

Specially authorised societies

At the end of 1971-72 there were four societies registered under the Friendly Societies Act which did not provide any of the customary benefits of friendly societies. Their registration was specially authorised under section 6 of the Friendly Societies Act. These four societies are known as Total Abstinence Societies. Their membership at the end of 1971-72 was 162 and their funds amounted to \$290,831.

Co-operative societies

In December 1953 the Victorian Parliament passed the Co-operation Act, now the *Co-operation Act 1958*. The Act provides for the formation, registration, and management of co-operative societies which are classified into various kinds according to their objects.

The Act permits the Treasurer of Victoria to guarantee the repayment of any loan raised by a society for the implementation of its object. At 30 June 1974, 602 guarantees were in force, the amount involved being \$6,807,802.

Under the direction of the Treasurer, the Act is administered by the Registrar of Co-operative Societies, who is also Registrar of Co-operative Housing Societies. He is assisted by an advisory council constituted under the Act.

Details of the activities of co-operative societies registered under the Co-operation Act are shown in the following tables :

VICTORIA—REGISTERED CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES AT 30 JUNE (a)

Type	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974
Producer	70	65	64	65	65
Trading	59	60	67	72	73
Community settlement	6	7	6	5	7
Community advancement	573	650	710	756	798
Credit	182	190	205	211	211
Associations	2	2	2	2	2
Total	892	974	1,054	1,111	1,156

(a) Further information regarding co-operative organisations is given on pages 604-7 of this Year Book.

VICTORIA—SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS OF SOCIETIES WHICH SUBMITTED RETURNS (a), 1973-74

Type	Number of societies	Number of members	Liabilities		Assets
			Members' funds	External	
			\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Producer	63	44,662	7,929	16,287	24,216
Trading	58	39,188	2,463	4,054	6,517
Community settlement	7	340	105	851	956
Community advancement	670	50,454	2,214	6,463	8,677
Credit	197	121,582	928	79,793	80,721
Associations	2	279	-50	3,389	3,339
Total	997	256,505	13,589	110,837	124,426

(a) Further information regarding co-operative organisations is given on pages 604-7 of this Year Book.

Charitable trusts in Victoria, 1972

Consumer participation in voluntary social welfare

Recent government initiatives at Australian, State, and local government levels can stimulate consumer participation in welfare, by making services more accessible to those in need. The Australian Social Welfare Commission's Australian Assistance Plan is explicitly committed to the principle of self-development and the encouragement of participation of local residents and welfare consumer groups in the planning of welfare services. While administrators and welfare practitioners are genuinely concerned with their clients' interests, the solutions they implement may not always be seen by clients to be the most effective methods of overcoming problems. Services planned and provided by governments and professionals have often excluded consumers from decision-making processes affecting their lives. Participation is seen as an attempt to overcome the difficulties characteristic of the separation of consumers from providers in the traditional welfare system.

"Consumerism" has recently become a significant influence in many aspects of communal life. Its impact is now becoming evident in the voluntary welfare field. A major new development in voluntary social welfare is that of consultation with consumers on the way in which services are provided and the extension of opportunities for direct participation. Voluntary social welfare is defined here in its broadest sense to include all non-statutory welfare activities. Consumer participation has developed in very many facets of social

life and a wide variety of consumer action groups have developed, ranging from women's groups and family day care, to credit unions and citizen action groups.

Although well-organised groups have been making representations to governments for many years, on-going participation was not considered a necessary part of the process of providing welfare services. Recently, there has been a marked increase in consumer participation in Australia. Consumer groups see their activities as providing a qualitatively different and better service to that offered by professionals. The rapid growth and recognition of consumer participation has provided a viable alternative to functions previously confined to professional welfare agencies.

Consumer participation often questions the policies and the services provided by professional persons. If consumers are directly involved in the decision-making processes which affect them, they are given a sense of responsibility and self-respect which may be lacking if they are only involved at the receiving end of welfare services.

The Brotherhood of St Laurence's Family Centre Project represents an attempt to overcome the social problems of the poor through consumer participation. The Project aims to provide opportunities for a small group of low-income families to learn the processes and methods of decision-making and change through a participatory activities programme. The Family Centre is providing resources over a period of three years to sixty disadvantaged families. Families are provided with a guaranteed minimum income to free them from economic pressures and the anxiety of "making ends meet". Each week research workers assess incomes and pay an income supplement according to a set formula known to the families. (See also page 840.)

The involvement of families in all aspects of the Family Centre's operations aims to develop the social skills of participants. The Centre's objective is to enable families to become active participants in community life, with the potential of changing themselves or the community to meet their real needs. A multi-disciplinary team including social workers, teachers, welfare officers, and volunteers works with the families to bring people together and enlarge their opportunities to establish relationships with others in the Centre. The Centre represents a change from the traditional casework methods of many voluntary agencies, with staff acting as resource experts and members of a team. Open files have replaced conventional casework files, and all research information is shared with the families.

To stimulate participation and cohesiveness, the Centre runs family camps and outings, children's programmes, meetings, and an open coffee lounge. Families co-operate in the preparation of meals, bulk buying of food, and the publication of a Family Centre Bulletin. The families have elected a Committee of Management to help run the Centre by meeting weekly and making decisions about all aspects of the Centre's activities programme. This programme includes such activities as cooking, sewing, woodwork, art and craft, sport, yoga, and educational classes.

There are many forms of consumer participation in welfare today. Consumer groups have developed for a wide variety of reasons, performing many different functions. All, however, are self-organised around a common issue or problem. Consumer groups are made up of people who come

together to solve or adjust to a central problem, and to communicate this to others by increasing public awareness and changing the attitudes of the rest of society. Self-help groups include the Combined Pensioners' Association, Alcoholics Anonymous, Link-Up, the Medical Consumers' Association, and Community Child Care.

Many self-help groups have developed for the under-privileged or handicapped, either socially or physically. These groups combine the dual approaches of helping their members and educating the wider society, with varying degrees of emphasis. Within the group, members concentrate on mutual support, practical help, and the sharing of experiences. This kind of group therapy aims to help individuals adjust or overcome problems and thus contribute to the social rehabilitation of those involved. As well as rehabilitating themselves, self-help groups also aim to influence the rest of society by encouraging people to accept those it previously regarded as abnormal or foreign. Action in this sphere includes political lobbying, public education, and public relations. The Council for the Single Mother and her Child has combined the functions of mutual help and social action. The group works on many different levels. Members run neighbourhood groups and an accommodation service, distribute emergency relief, and provide information on benefits, legal matters, and day care. They run political campaigns and research projects and use the media to promote the acceptance of single mothers.

Consumer participation at a local level is represented in the current growth of citizen action groups. In Melbourne, residents' associations developed in the inner suburbs in the late 1960s to challenge planning decisions about slum clearance, and, at a later date, proposals for new freeways. Residents' associations are characteristically controlled by the socially competent and confident. More recently, however, the Housing Commission Tenants' Union has been established to represent the claims of the socially-deprived, low-income Housing Commission tenants in an attempt to improve housing standards and general welfare provisions on government housing estates. Residents' associations like the Carlton Association, the North Melbourne Association, and the Emerald Hill Association, have formed interest groups which have put the residents' views to the relevant statutory authorities. These groups use public meetings and the media to publicise complaints and offer alternative proposals.

A problem for consumer groups is how to maintain or establish participation in a non-crisis or non-threatening situation. The Fitzroy Ecumenical Centre is attempting to develop an answer to this question through a neighbourhood citizens' advice network, based on, and encouraging, participation. The service aims to utilise "natural" channels of communication in the neighbourhood to overcome the inaccessibility of more formal services to the less competent.

Voluntary social services, 1965; Old People's Welfare Council, 1966; Voluntary child welfare, 1967; Voluntary social welfare work for the physically handicapped, 1968; Care of the elderly, 1969; Rehabilitation, 1970; Employment of the handicapped, 1970; Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind, 1970; Victorian School for Deaf Children, 1971; Volunteer services for the mentally handicapped, 1972; Social welfare activities in local government, 1974