

SOCIAL WELFARE

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.

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

Service	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75
Social services—					
Funeral benefits	440	418	409	416	417
Age and invalid pensions (a)	179,578	209,872	277,715	356,915	500,745
Widows' pensions	24,366	28,689	39,071	50,064	66,474
Maternity allowances	2,407	2,376	2,150	2,138	1,978
Child endowment	55,924	60,891	71,683	63,094	62,885
Unemployment, sickness, and special benefits	5,817	11,799	21,007	28,512	87,114
Australian Government Rehabilitation Service	1,012	1,299	1,632	2,358	3,487
Health services—					
Medical benefits	24,397	34,142	41,859	41,666	48,861
Medical benefits for pensioners	5,180	7,218	7,743	8,778	11,487
Hospital benefits (b)	25,227	33,797	43,319	52,992	72,522
Pharmaceutical benefits	32,715	34,410	31,125	42,786	49,337
Pharmaceutical benefits for pensioners	11,186	12,577	14,139	16,211	18,983
Nutrition of children	2,345	3,493	2,992	1,837	13
Handicapped children's benefits	89	87	77	114	444
Miscellaneous health services	609	709	1,167	2,767	3,267
Tuberculosis benefits	3,196	3,327	3,395	3,655	4,128
Home savings grants (c)	5,496	6,440	8,331	8,618	3,954
Other social services	1,660	2,597	4,043	12,525	20,096
Total	381,643	454,141	571,857	695,444	956,194

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

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

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

Social Welfare Commission

The Social Welfare Commission is a social welfare policy development and review body set up by Act of the Australian Parliament in 1973. It is 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 is required to keep the whole field of social welfare under constant review. Its reports are tabled in Parliament, published, and widely distributed.

The Commission has a wide range of research projects in progress; these include a permanent working party on social welfare manpower planning, studies into aged persons' housing, the need 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 assists 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, Regional Councils for Social Development were created upon boundaries based on groups of local government areas. Each Regional Council allows 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 is 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 30 June 1975. 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 regions known as the Melbourne, Central Highlands, Barwon, Loddon-Campaspe, Western Port, Southern, Outer-Eastern, North-West, and Western Regions. Four of these regions received the following capitation grants to support local welfare projects for 1974-75—Barwon (\$166,000), Loddon-Campaspe (\$132,000), Western (\$705,000), and Outer-Eastern (\$377,000).

It is intended that on the basis of the successful completion of the pilot schemes, legislation will be passed 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 assist thereby in the early creation of additional Regional Councils.

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 mother's benefits (1973), all of which are subject to a means test; and maternity allowances (1912), child endowment (1941), domiciliary nursing care benefit (1973), orphan's pension (1973), and handicapped child's allowances (1975), which are not subject to a

means test. The Act also authorises the operation of the Australian Government 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 *Aged or Disabled Persons Homes Act* 1974, the *State Grants (Home Care) Act* 1969, the *Handicapped Persons (Assistance) Act* 1974, and the *Delivered Meals (Subsidy) Act* 1970.

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. Widow's 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 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. In 1975 it was abolished for people aged 70 years and over. Rates of pension were increased again in 1973, 1974, and 1975, and supplementary assistance was increased in 1974.

On 30 June 1975, there were 1,097,225 age pensioners in Australia (the Victorian total being 300,839), of whom 68 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.

163,631 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.

Some people of pensionable age are receiving invalid or widow's pensions, or service pensions from the Australian Department of Repatriation and Compensation.

Invalid pensions

The original Australian Government pensions legislation contained provisions for invalid as well as age pensions and, although 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, 1974, and 1975 detailed under age pensions, 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 1975 there were 168,784 people in Australia receiving invalid pensions of whom 102,817 were men. The Victorian component was 38,257 of whom 23,863 were men. 72,919 invalid pensioners in Australia (43 per cent of total invalid pensioners) were also receiving supplementary assistance. The percentage of invalid pensioners in the Australian population on 30 June 1975 was 1.25.

VICTORIA—AGE AND INVALID PENSIONS

Year	Pensioners			Total payments (a)
	Age	Invalid	Total	
				\$'000
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
1974-75	300,839	38,257	339,096	500,745

(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.

Widow's pensions

For widow's 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 from 1972 to 1975 increased the pension rate for widows. The rate of supplementary assistance was also increased in 1972. On 30 June 1975 there were 120,791 widow pensioners in Australia.

VICTORIA—WIDOW'S PENSIONS

Year	Number of widow pensioners	Total payments
		\$'000
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
1974-75	34,056	66,474

(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 \$7.50 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 1974-75 was \$1,638,916 for Australia, and \$417,410 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. In certain circumstances a woman who gives birth to a child while temporarily absent from Australia may be paid a maternity allowance. 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 three years the number of maternity allowances paid decreased to 238,538 for 1975, involving expenditure of \$7,506,374.

VICTORIA—MATERNITY ALLOWANCES

Year	Number granted	Total payments
		\$'000
1970-71	75,824	2,407
1971-72	75,082	2,376
1972-73	68,190	2,150
1973-74	67,252	2,138
1974-75	62,955	1,978

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.

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 previous child. This rate was also applicable at November 1975.

In relation to children under the age of sixteen years the total number of endowed families in Australia and abroad on 30 June 1975 was 1,915,818, and the number of endowed children in families was 4,024,741. There were also 18,194 endowed children under sixteen years and 673 students aged sixteen but less than twenty-one years in institutions. Expenditure for all endowed children for the year 1974-75 was \$224,850,360.

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
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
1974-75	525,211	1,100,830	4,651	85,685	1,191,166	62,885

(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 1972-73.

Orphan's pension

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. An orphan's pension is free of any means test and is payable in addition to child endowment.

Handicapped child's allowances

A handicapped child's allowance is payable to parents or guardians of a severely physically or mentally handicapped child who is being cared for in the family home. The allowance is designed specifically to assist parents and guardians who have a handicapped child under the age of sixteen years requiring constant attention and who prefer to provide this attention at home rather than place the child in an institution. The allowance is free of any means test and is paid in addition to child endowment.

Unemployment, sickness, and special benefits

Legislation for these benefits was enacted in 1944 and the programme came into operation in the following year. Rates of benefits 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. From 13 January 1975 for unemployment benefits and from 24 May 1975 for sickness benefits, benefit payments were made one week in advance rather than one week in arrears as previously. 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 and additional benefit was extended to include student children over the age of sixteen years. The rate of benefit was increased again in 1973, 1974, and 1975.

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 1974-75 a total of 701,302 unemployment benefits were granted in Australia, and on 30 June 1975 there were 160,748 persons receiving benefit. Comparable figures for Victoria were 175,596 and 45,624, respectively.

Altogether 131,377 grants of sickness benefits were made in Australia during 1974-75 (31,569 in Victoria), and there were 25,478 persons on benefit at the end of the year (7,897 in Victoria). Total expenditure in Australia on unemployment, sickness, and special benefits in 1974-75 was \$325,251,971, expenditure in Victoria during the same period being \$87,113,782.

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
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	(c) 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
1974-75	175,596	31,569	3,470	45,624	7,897	1,497	66,361	18,193	2,560

(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 hearing aids for pensioners, telephone rental concessions, municipal rate rebates, and transport concessions on Victorian Government trams, trains, and buses, and on buses operated by private companies. A reciprocal arrangement with the Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales, and South Australia permits Victorian pensioners to obtain transport concessions when visiting those States or Territory.

Community welfare

The Australian Department of Social Security, through its Community and Social Welfare Branch, is responsible for developing and evaluating projects and studies relating to social welfare, administration of the Australian Assistance Plan, the Department's professional social work service, the welfare rights and homeless persons programmes, dissemination of social security information, and providing welfare services for migrants.

Migrant services

On 24 March 1975 the Immigration Group, Integration Branch of the Australian Department of Labor and Immigration was transferred to the

Australian Department of Social Security as the Migrant Services Section. The purpose of the section is to provide a direct service to individual migrants, particularly when language skills and ethnic-cultural knowledge are relevant, to liaise and consult with other government and private agencies, and to work with migrant groups to encourage their participation in the community and to develop their own resources. In addition, a 24-hour Telephone Interpreter Service enables non-English speaking migrants to obtain information in their own language on a wide range of matters.

Welfare rights

The welfare rights programme is designed to identify the most effective way of breaking down the communication barrier between disadvantaged people and government departments and other authorities. Five experimental projects have been undertaken in Victoria, commencing in September 1974, to test differing approaches to a welfare rights service to help people experiencing difficulty with the social security and welfare systems.

The Australian Department of Social Security is subsidising, for a period of one year, five welfare organisations to employ welfare rights officers. These organisations are the Council for the Single Mother and her Child, the Australian-Greek Welfare Society, the Australian-Turkish Cultural Association, CO.AS.IT (Comitato Assistenza Italiani) and F.I.L.E.F. (Federaazione Italiane Lavoratori Emigranti Famiglia). On the completion of the projects an evaluation will be made involving the participating organisations to determine how the objectives of the programme have been met and whether the programme is to continue.

The function of a welfare rights officer is to disseminate information on rights and entitlements and to act as an advocate and representative of people unaware of their rights or unable to exercise them adequately. They will be expected to confront government, councils, employers and unions as well as any other body or person believed to be the source of a grievance held by a member of the client organisation. The welfare rights officers selected by the organisations themselves are accountable to these organisations.

Social work service

Through its State headquarters and twenty-four regional offices throughout Victoria, the Department of Social Security provides expert and responsive social work assistance. The Service advocates on behalf of individuals and provides required counselling. As well as supervising the practical work of social work students from universities and other tertiary institutions, the Social Work Service is increasingly involved in working alongside community groups in identifying community needs and in helping to devise programmes for meeting these needs.

Information services

Through its information services section, the Australian Department of Social Security attempts to meet three objectives: servicing the planning and operating information needs within the Department itself; ensuring that the community at large is aware of its rights and entitlements to the various social security pensions, benefits and allowances; and creating a dialogue which will enable the community to participate in welfare programmes.

To achieve these objectives, use is made of advertisements and articles in the press, radio programmes, the organisation of seminars and talks, films and personal contact. In addition, over 5,000 organisations and individuals are on the Department's mailing list and regularly receive printed information brochures, the Department's quarterly journal, its annual report, and other documents.

Australian Government 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, 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 1974-75, 2,284 persons were accepted for rehabilitation, 648 of them being in Victoria; 1,224 were placed in employment, 339 of them being in Victoria. Expenditure on rehabilitation in Victoria during this year was \$3,487,000.

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 persons 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. 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 dollar for dollar 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, 3,138 grants amounting to \$225m had been approved to 30 June 1975. The projects gave accommodation to 56,134 aged persons. In Victoria, 760 grants had been approved amounting to \$51m. These grants involved subsidised accommodation for 13,125 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 1975, 456 premises had been approved for subsidy in Australia and the subsidy paid was \$20,426,734. In Victoria the number of homes was 128 and the subsidy paid \$6,013,482.

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 met the full cost of providing new hostel accommodation for two aged people for every one present in an eligible unsubsidised home, or for one additional person (for every two in a home previously subsidised on a dollar-for-dollar basis) between 1954 and 1957. The organisation was not required to make any contribution from its own resources unless the capital cost exceeded \$11,700 per person accommodated, or the bed capacity of the new home exceeded the number of free beds to which the organisation was entitled. A further grant of up to \$250 for each person accommodated was available for furnishing the new hostels.

Land purchased after the passing of the Act was 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 was 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 offered, and eligible organisations seeking a grant had to first enter into an agreement with the Australian Department of Social Security which stipulated 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.

Eighty-one grants totalling \$38,879,940 were approved in Australia in the year 1974-75. In Victoria the number of grants was 21, totalling \$6,696,851.

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. During 1973-74 the number of organisations in Victoria receiving subsidy under the Act increased by three 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.

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 1975 the number of approved organisations in Australia was 450, the number of meals served 5,334,363 during the year, and the amount granted \$1,490,292. The Victorian totals were 131 approved organisations, 1,702,035 meals, and the amount granted \$479,862.

Homeless Persons Assistance Act

The Homeless Persons Assistance Act, which came into operation on 13 December 1974, makes provision for eligible organisations to be assisted in the provision of accommodation and food, and social welfare worker services to homeless men or women and, in one parent family situations, their children. Additionally, the Act provides for the establishment of advisory committees to help develop a co-ordinated programme of assistance in close association with all involved in the welfare of the homeless population.

The Act provides organisations with an opportunity to improve and upgrade existing facilities, to replace them or to establish new facilities. Grants of up to 100 per cent may be made to meet the cost of purchasing a building or land and the erection of a building for use as a homeless persons centre. Where the centre is in rented premises, the grant may cover the cost of the rental. Fixtures, furniture, furnishings and equipment purchased for use in a homeless persons centre may also qualify for a grant.

Subsidies of up to 50 per cent of the salary of a social welfare worker employed at a homeless persons centre may be paid and, in special circumstances, to more than one such worker at a centre. Where an eligible organisation provides accommodation and food at a homeless persons centre, or meals for non-resident homeless people, a subsidy may be paid of 75 cents per person per day so accommodated and 25 cents per meal served or meal ticket issued.

It is anticipated that a minimum of 100 organisations in Victoria, either existing or newly formed, will benefit from the various provisions of the Act which is to operate for a period of three years (in respect of capital grants only). During that period an evaluation of the effects of the programme based on the Act will be made continuously.

Handicapped Persons Assistance Act

The Handicapped Persons Assistance Act came into being in December 1974 following the repeal of the *Sheltered Employment (Assistance) Act 1967* and the *Handicapped Children (Assistance) Act 1970*. The former provisions of the repealed legislation were incorporated in the new Act which at the same time was broadened in scope to permit a wider range of assistance than previously provided. The Act now provides assistance to eligible organisations for the following prescribed services relating to handicapped or disabled persons: training, activity therapy, sheltered employment, residential accommodation, holiday accommodation, recreational facilities, and rehabilitational facilities.

In respect of each of these prescribed services, \$4 for \$1 subsidies may be paid towards the capital cost of approved projects, the cost of approved building maintenance, the rental of approved premises, and the cost of approved equipment. Salary subsidies of up to 50 per cent (or 100 per cent for the first two years after an organisation has commenced to provide a prescribed service) may also be paid.

Additional payments that may be made are a handicapped children's benefit of \$3.50 per child for each day that accommodation is provided by eligible organisations to a handicapped child and training fees of \$500 for each disabled person who completes twelve months normal employment after six months sheltered employment.

Special assistance to State Governments

State Governments may be reimbursed up to 50 per cent 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 half the salary of a welfare officer co-ordinating home care services run by, or in association with, senior citizens centres. During the year 1974-75 payments of \$4,615,790 were made to States under the Act, \$642,377 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 1975, payments to the States under the State Grants (Deserted Wives) Act totalled \$6,932,168. The Victorian total was \$1,256,000. Payments to the States under the supporting mother's benefit totalled \$75,979,118, the Victorian total being \$15,786,494.

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 1975.

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.

Further reference, 1975; History of social services, 1962; Sheltered employment assistance, 1969

National health benefits

The administration of the Nursing Homes Assistance Act, the Health Insurance Act, and relevant parts of the National Health Act is undertaken by the Health Benefits and Services Branch of the Australian Department of Social Security.

Hospital benefits and Medibank

Up to 31 July 1975 approximately 86 per cent of Victoria's population were insured for varying table rates of hospital benefits through registered hospital insurance funds.

There were three standardised tables of hospital benefits in Victoria where the combined Australian Government Benefit and Fund Benefit were limited to the actual ward charges made by public hospitals. These were: public ward \$27.00 per day, intermediate ward \$41.00 per day, and private ward \$55.00 per day. The respective weekly family contribution rates for the major funds in Victoria were \$1.75, \$2.68, and \$3.62. The following table shows details of hospital benefits prior to the introduction of Medibank :

VICTORIA—HOSPITAL BENEFITS

Particulars	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75
Hospital benefits—					
Number of registered organisations	24	23	22	21	21
Number of members ('000)	1,231	1,213	1,238	1,286	1,313
Benefits paid (\$'000)—					
From registered organisations' funds (a)	35,003	56,482	66,234	79,073	117,425
Australian Government benefits (b)	11,998	13,607	14,167	14,513	16,745

(a) Includes ancillary benefits.

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

On 1 August 1975 the Victorian Government entered into the Medibank hospitals agreement with the Australian Government. From that date the three hospital insurance tables were restructured to complement the categorisation under the new scheme of patients seeking hospital treatment into either the hospital patient or private patient group.

Medibank provides for hospital patients to receive treatment in standard wards of recognised public hospitals free of charge. Payments from Medibank for such treatment are made in two ways. First, an amount of \$16.00 per bed day is paid to the individual hospital. Second, a further amount is paid direct to State authorities. (Under bilateral agreements with participating States, the Australian Government has agreed that the total of the above two payments plus the \$2.00 per day payable for insured private patients under the National Health Act should meet 50 per cent of the net operating costs of recognised hospitals.) As a result of these arrangements, the need for a standard (public) ward insurance table has been eliminated.

Medibank also provides for private patients to be accommodated in either intermediate or private wards of public hospitals or in private hospitals. Public hospital fees have been reduced to \$20.00 per day for intermediate ward and \$30.00 per day for private ward accommodation after the Medibank payment of \$16.00 per bed day per patient. Private hospitals, where fees are generally higher than for public hospitals, have continued to operate in the usual manner and patients accommodated therein receive the Medibank benefit of \$16.00 per day by way of a deduction on their accounts.

If a private patient is insured with a registered hospital benefits fund, an Australian Government insured benefit of \$2.00 per day is payable together with a fund benefit depending on the level of insurance, and the type of ward in which a patient is accommodated. Supplementary hospital fund benefits of \$15.00 and \$30.00 per day are available through hospital benefits organisations to offset the higher accommodation charges in semi-private and private wards of private hospitals. The following table shows the hospital insurance benefits available since the introduction of Medibank on 1 July 1975:

AUSTRALIA—MEDIBANK: HOSPITAL INSURANCE BENEFITS, 1 JULY 1975

(\$)

Hospital	Ward	Medibank hospital payment	Australian Government insured benefit	Fund benefit	Supplementary hospital fund benefit	Common weekly family contribution rate including 8 cent nursing home levy
Public	Standard	16.00				
	Intermediate	16.00	2.00	18.00		1.28
	Private	16.00	2.00	28.00		1.94
Private	Semi-private	16.00	2.00	28.00	15.00	3.40
	Private	16.00	2.00	28.00	30.00	4.64

Uninsured private patients, irrespective of the type of ward accommodation, are eligible for the \$16.00 per day Medibank payment and an Australian Government Uninsured Benefit of 80 cents per day. Both these benefits are deducted from the patient's account.

Nursing home benefits

At 13 November 1975, the rate of benefit for all patients in approved nursing homes requiring ordinary nursing home care was \$3.50 per day and the rate of supplementary benefit was \$3 per day for patients in need of, and who received, intensive nursing home care. An additional benefit of up to \$7.80 per day was available for pensioner patients entitled to fringe benefits and for patients insured with a registered hospital benefit organisation. Arrangements also provide for: (1) a statutory patient contribution towards the cost of nursing home accommodation of at least \$5.65 per day; (2) control by the Australian Government over the admission of patients; and (3) the approval of fees charged by participating nursing homes.

As a condition of approval under the National Health Act, participating nursing homes are not permitted to charge fees in excess of those determined by the Australian 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 Victorian Government because the fee charging policies of such nursing homes are considered to be the responsibility of the Victorian Government.

Under the current arrangements, prior approval for the admission of a patient to a participating nursing home must be obtained from the Department. In addition, the National Health Act 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.

The introduction of the Nursing Homes Assistance Act on 1 January 1975 provided for a deficit financing scheme for eligible organisations operating religious and charitable-type nursing homes. Instead of receiving the above nursing home benefits on behalf of their patients, the nursing homes participating in the scheme submit budgets for approval and have their approved operating deficits financed by the Australian Government. Patients accommodated in these nursing homes are required to contribute \$37 per week towards the cost of their accommodation. However, the patient contribution may be waived or reduced in cases of financial hardship.

VICTORIA—NURSING HOME BENEFITS

(\$'000)

Particulars	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75
Australian Government benefits	9,350	13,168	19,152	26,677	36,846

Domiciliary nursing care

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 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 \$2.00 per day provided the home is the usual residence of both the person and the patient.

Patients must be 65 years of age or older 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 and they must, in fact, be receiving care from a registered nurse on a regular basis involving multiple visits each week. The benefit is not subject to a means test and is not considered as taxable income. There were over 2,200 beneficiaries in Victoria in 1975.

The Department maintains a liaison with bodies such as the Royal District Nursing Service. In this way a feedback of information is obtained to help the Department constructively review the benefit.

Medical benefits and Medibank

On 1 July 1975 Medibank, a new health insurance programme, came into operation throughout Australia to provide everybody in Australia with automatic coverage against the cost of medical treatment (i.e., the fees charged for medical services). It replaced the voluntary medical insurance system through which approximately 83 per cent of Victoria's population were covered.

Through Medibank, medical benefits are provided in accordance with the general principle that the benefit for each service will be a minimum of 85 per cent of the schedule fee for that service. If a doctor charges the schedule fee for a service then the patient is liable for the remaining 15 per cent of the doctor's fee or \$5.00, whichever is the lesser.

There are three methods of billing and payment of Medibank benefits:

- (1) Billing of the patient, who pays the doctor and then claims benefits by sending a receipted account to the Health Insurance Commission;
- (2) billing of the patient, who forwards the unpaid account to the Commission and receives the appropriate benefits in the form of a cheque payable to the doctor. Under this method it is the patient's responsibility to forward the cheque to the doctor and the balance of the account is a matter between the doctor and the patient; and
- (3) assignment by the patient to the doctor of the benefit for a particular service where the doctor is prepared to accept the benefit as full payment for the service. The doctor then claims his payment from the Commission and the patient does not have to pay.

Since the introduction of Medibank, various health benefits organisations have offered coverage to persons wishing to insure for the 15 per cent (or \$5.00) gap between the schedule fee and the respective Medibank rebate and for ancillary and allied health services such as physiotherapy, spectacles, ambulance, and chiropractic treatment. The schedule fee was formerly known as the "most common" fee, that is, the fee agreed on in negotiations between the Australian Government and the Australian Medical Association, or determined by an independent inquiry as being the fair and reasonable fee for any particular service for medical benefits purposes, or determined by the Medical Benefits Advisory Committee which the Minister for Social Security may appoint under Medibank.

The following table shows details of registered organisations, members, and medical benefits paid for the financial years 1970-71 to 1974-75 prior to the introduction of Medibank:

VICTORIA—MEDICAL BENEFITS

Particulars	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75
Medical benefits—					
Number of registered organisations	19	19	19	19	20
Number of members ('000)	1,168	1,155	1,179	1,231	1,262
Number of services received ('000)	10,633	11,475	12,757	12,016	13,815
Benefits paid during year (\$'000)—					
From registered organisations' funds (a)	22,982	28,980	33,735	34,716	50,803
Australian Government benefits (b)	24,036	33,464	40,632	40,424	47,148
Total benefits	47,018	62,444	74,367	75,140	97,951

(a) Includes ancillary benefits.

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

Pensioner Medical Service

The Pensioner Medical Service, which commenced in 1951 and ceased to operate on 30 June 1975 was a general practitioner medical service provided free of charge to eligible pensioners and their dependants. Under this Service a participating doctor provided medical attention of a general practitioner nature, such as is ordinarily rendered in his surgery or in the patient's home. The Service did not, however, include those services which were available to pensioners at public hospitals such as operations, general anaesthetics, specialist treatment, or pathology examinations.

With the introduction of Medibank, all pensioners previously entitled to treatment under the Pensioner Medical Service qualified for benefits for the full range of general practitioner and specialist medical services. With the intention of ensuring free treatment for Pensioner Medical Service pensioners, the Australian Government's legislation setting up Medibank required the Minister for Social Security to invite each doctor to bill Medibank direct for services provided to pensioners.

Under the Pensioner Medical Service, eligible pensioners and their dependants were entitled to free public ward care in public hospitals. This entitlement has continued under the Medibank hospital arrangements with effect from 1 August 1975.

VICTORIA—PENSIONER MEDICAL SERVICE

Particulars	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75
Number of pensioners and dependants enrolled ('000)	313	325	350	359	382
Number of participating doctors	1,766	1,738	1,760	1,740	1,798
Number of services—					
Surgery ('000)	1,723	1,823	1,972	1,966	2,081
Domiciliary ('000)	838	815	778	702	694
Payments to participating doctors for medical services (\$'000)	5,180	7,218	7,743	8,778	11,487

Subsidised health benefits plan

The subsidised health benefits plan, introduced in 1970, provided assistance towards the cost of health insurance and certain pharmaceutical items for low income families, persons receiving unemployment, sickness, or special benefits and newly arrived migrants. Persons covered under the plan now only receive pharmaceutical benefits, as they are entitled to the medical and hospital benefits of Medibank.

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. From 1 September 1975 the fee increased to \$1.50. For persons enrolled under the Subsidised Health Benefits Plan, the fee was increased from 50 cents to 75 cents on 1 September 1975. Pensioners who were enrolled in the Pensioner Medical Service, 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	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75
Number of prescriptions ('000)	19,157	19,081	19,967	23,426	25,927
Cost of prescriptions (\$'000)—					
Australian Government contribution—					
Pensioners	11,186	12,577	14,139	16,212	18,983
Other population	25,361	25,391	24,743	30,532	35,981
Payments to hospitals and miscellaneous services	7,229	8,874	6,218	12,047	13,152
Patients' contributions	6,833	9,883	13,737	16,665	18,568

Darwin Assistance Centre—Darwin Resettlement Unit—Victoria

The emergency evacuation to Victoria of approximately 6,500 Darwin residents which followed the devastation of a substantial part of the city by Cyclone Tracy on 24-25 December 1974, required complementary emergency caring arrangements in Victoria.

The provision of immediate needs for money, accommodation, medical care, food, direct welfare, and material aid was co-ordinated from the Disaster Centre at D24 Police Headquarters. This emergency phase occurred during the Christmas/New Year holidays and volunteer welfare officers, social workers, members of service organisations, and students provided much of the manpower to augment the staff already provided. Informal co-operation between statutory and voluntary organisations characterised the emergency phase, which continued during January 1975.

From 30 December 1974 the Darwin Assistance Centre was established as a conjoint operation of the Australian Department of Social Security and the Victorian Social Welfare Department and both departments, together with other statutory and voluntary organisations, seconded staff to work with the Centre, which was guided by the Darwin Resettlement Co-ordinating Committee.

Further reference, 1975

Australian Department of Repatriation and Compensation

The Australian Department of Repatriation and Compensation is responsible, subject to the control of the Minister for Repatriation and Compensation, for the administration of the Repatriation Act and associated legislation designed for the care and welfare of veterans, and the dependants of those who have died or

are incapacitated as a result of their service. The main responsibilities of the Department are to pay pensions and to provide 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.

Disability pensions

Disability pensions, introduced under the *War Pensions Act 1914*, are intended to provide compensation for veterans who have suffered incapacity related to 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 veterans and 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 a 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 or receiving full-time education regardless of age. Eligible war widows (and defence widows) also receive an additional payment known as a domestic allowance. There were 514,367 disability pensions payable to veterans, miscellaneous personnel, and their dependants at 30 June 1975, and the annual expenditure including allowances was \$314,716,377. Of these pensions, 135,229 were payable in Victoria and the annual expenditure was \$83,837,184.

Service pensions

In addition to compensatory payments for service-related 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 70 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—DISABILITY AND SERVICE PENSIONS

Year	Veterans					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 veterans	Of deceased veterans		Total
DISABILITY PENSIONS									\$'000	
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
1974-75	..	4,699	45,485	695	1,234	52,113	67,251	15,865	83,116	83,837
SERVICE PENSIONS										
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
1974-75	2	6,590	14,928	46	27	21,593	9,244	738	9,982	40,181

(a) Includes Far East Strategic Reserve, Special Overseas Service, Seamen's War Pensions, Act of Grace Pensions, and serving members—for disability pensions only.

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 6,700 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 3,100 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 patients with 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 and at Darwin in the Northern Territory there is a Repatriation Artificial Limb and Appliance Centre, where artificial limbs and surgical aids are provided for those eligible. 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 1975 the number of staff employed full-time at the hospital

was 1,491 and during 1974-75, 10,593 patients were treated at the hospital with an average stay of 16.0 days per patient.

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

Education and training

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.

Re-establishment benefits for National Servicemen and former Regular Servicemen

Re-establishment loans may be granted, subject to certain conditions, to those 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, 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 \$10,000. Similar benefits are provided for former Regular Servicemen, subject to prescribed conditions.

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.

Further reference, 1975

VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT SOCIAL SERVICES

Ministry of Social Welfare

The *Social Welfare Act* 1970 established the Ministry of Social Welfare. The Social Welfare Department is administered by a Director-General. It comprises seven divisions each administered by a Director: Family Welfare, Youth Welfare, Regional Services, Prisons, Probation and Parole, Research and Statistics, and Training.

Family Welfare Division

The Family Welfare Division is responsible for the care of children needing to live apart from their parents, for family counselling, and for other services to prevent family breakdown.

Children may be admitted as wards of the Department by an order of the Children's Court. Grounds for such an order may be that a child is in need of care and protection, or that the Court accepts a guardian's plea that a child is uncontrollable, or that the child has broken the law. Children may also be made wards of the Department through application by a parent or custodian to the Director-General. He must be satisfied that wardship will be in the best interests of the child.

Children are usually received in one of the four departmental reception centres: Allambie and Baltara in Melbourne, Warrawee in Ballarat, and Miralee in Mildura. Normally the children are placed away from these centres after a

short stay. Many of them are released to their parents or relatives, either immediately or at a later date.

Children may be placed in one of seven children's homes run by the Department, each of which cares for about 30 children, or in one of the 48 Departmental family group homes, in which four to eight children live in a family situation, or in approved children's homes run by voluntary societies, or in foster care with private families. The development of foster care for wards has continued, with children going to foster homes for shorter periods while a family establishes itself and returning home when this has been achieved. The Department's homes give full attention to the individual needs of each child and try to avoid an institutional atmosphere.

While the children may be placed away from the Department, the Division carefully supervises the progress and interests of wards. Social workers gain a thorough knowledge of individual children and their families and can plan constructive programmes for them. After-care for children released to their own homes is a growing part of the work.

The Family Counselling Section deals with the many diverse problems facing families who approach the Department, either by close contact for varying periods of time or by referral to an appropriate welfare agency.

More than 60 families from disaster-stricken Darwin were among the many who approached the Section for help during 1975. Other trends included an increase in family accommodation difficulties, the problems faced by lone fathers caring for children, and a shortage of private placements for children.

The Family Assistance Section gives financial help to deserted wives, wives of prisoners, and unmarried mothers with dependent children in their care, who are waiting to become eligible for Australian Government benefits. The Department also pays a subsidy to non-parents caring for children.

The Department handles the adoption of children who are wards and of children whose parent or guardian nominates the Director-General to arrange the adoption or fails to nominate a private adoption agency. The number of couples seeking to become adoptive parents continues greatly to exceed the number of available children. Inter-country adoptions received attention when two airloads of Vietnamese children arrived in Melbourne in April 1975.

Other responsibilities of the Department include the protection of children under five years of age who are placed away from home by their parents; regulation of the employment of children under fifteen years of age in street trading and entertainment; and the recovery of maintenance payments from parents of wards.

During 1975 family supportive grants were introduced to prevent children from coming into care for economic reasons and to facilitate the return to parents of children already in the care of the Department. The Committee of Inquiry into Child Care Services in Victoria, set up by the Victorian Government in December 1974, is responsible for investigating all aspects of this subject.

Legal guardianship of all migrant children up to the age of eighteen years who enter Victoria not in the care of a parent or adult relative has been delegated by the Australian Minister of Social Security to the Victorian Director-General of Social Welfare.

The Division convenes several standing conferences for the general exchange of views between departmental staff and voluntary agencies concerned with child care, for example, an Adoption Agencies' Conference, a Conference of Approved Fostering Agencies, and a Conference on Scattered Family Group Homes. Officers of the Division are also members of a number of community liaison committees on welfare programmes.

Youth Welfare Division

The Youth Welfare Division deals with the social welfare problems of young people in the fifteen to twenty-one years age group. The Division provides care

and supervision for wards of the Department and for young people who have committed offences and were sentenced to detention in a youth training centre or directed to attend a youth welfare service.

The Division maintains five youth training centres: Turana, Langi Kal Kal, and Malmsbury for boys; Winlton for girls; and Acheron, which functions as a holiday camp. There are three other youth training centres conducted by non-government bodies: Morning Star, conducted by the Franciscan Order, and Bayswater, managed by the Salvation Army, for boys; while the Sisters of the Good Shepherd conduct a centre at the Oakleigh convent for girls.

There are about 550 young people in these youth training centres. They are classified into four categories: "wards not under sentence" are wards who require specialised care or are subject to some other special consideration; "wards under sentence" are wards who have committed an offence and are sentenced to a period of detention; "young persons on remand" are young people remanded to appear before a children's court; and "other young persons under sentence" are the non-wards sentenced to detention in a youth training centre.

The Social Work Section of the Division classifies State wards entering Turana and Winlton Youth Training Centres, assessing their individual problems and planning programmes in the institution and in the community which can help the ward concerned.

In each youth training centre there are a number of programmes to suit the needs of the individual. These programmes aim at bringing about a more satisfactory adjustment to community living by encouraging social growth and by providing opportunities for education and training which are geared to individual levels of ability, maturity, and interest. Special efforts are made to maintain family relations; visits by parents are encouraged and regular weekend and special leave is granted to the trainees.

The Division maintains two hostels at Sunshine and Ivanhoe for the accommodation of wards coming from Turana and Winlton. The boys and girls are encouraged to become self-reliant and to find suitable private accommodation when they leave the hostel. The Division also maintains five community-based youth welfare services. The Youth Welfare Service, Hawthorn, provides short-term non-residential care for youths between fourteen and seventeen years of age. These youths take part in group discussions and community service projects, and are individually assisted by counselling or in other ways to help them to make a more satisfactory adjustment to community living. The Youth Welfare Service, Brunswick, is similar to the Hawthorn Service in its basic philosophy, but also provides residential accommodation and caters for boys and girls who experience problems at home, at school, or in their employment. The staff from Brunswick work closely with parents, teachers, and employers. The Youth Welfare Service, Windsor, is for girls and also includes a residential section. The Western Youth Welfare Service, Ascot Vale, serves young people from the west and north-west of the Melbourne metropolitan area, including wards, probationers, and parolees. It runs special programmes for the younger and older age groups.

Regional Services Division

The aims of the Regional Services Division are to make the services of the Department more accessible to the community, to encourage the development of programmes suited to local needs, and to liaise with other government and private welfare agencies at regional level.

The Division provides a range of services in family welfare, youth welfare, probation and parole, and school attendance supervision on a local basis through regional centres at Ballarat, Bendigo, Geelong, Glenroy, Horsham, Morwell, Ringwood, Preston, Shepparton, Warrnambool, and Wodonga, and regional offices at Bairnsdale, Dandenong, Frankston, Mildura, Sunshine, and Swan Hill.

Prisons Division

The Prisons Division controls and supervises all persons detained in Victorian prisons. It aims to assist rehabilitation and provides training and welfare services for prisoners. Work release schemes and attendance centres are recent innovations in the Division.

The Prisons Division maintains eleven prisons for men and one for women. Pentridge, at Coburg, is the main prison and holds more than half the number of male prisoners in Victoria. The Classification Centre is located there. Prisoners serving sentences of at least one year (or of at least six months if they are under twenty-one years) and all those who are eligible to be released on parole undergo testing and selection procedures and then appear before the Classification Committee which places them in the most appropriate institution.

Pentridge is divided into three separate prisons (Southern, Central, and Northern) which share general administrative and supply services. The Southern Prison holds those awaiting court hearing, short-term prisoners, and those receiving medical and psychiatric attention. The Central Prison is mainly for longer term prisoners. The Northern Prison has a division holding youths under twenty-one years and a division for longer term prisoners who are interested in educational activities. The Northern Prison also contains the school and H Division which holds prisoners for security reasons.

Pentridge industries include the manufacture of number-plates for cars, brushes and brooms, a bakery, a woollen mill for blankets, tailoring of jackets and jeans, printing, carpentry, laundry, bootmaking, and repairs, and an engineering shop for maintenance work. Many of these trades supply outside customers as well as the prison itself.

Ararat is the largest prison in Victoria outside Melbourne. It has a tubular steel furniture and matmaking industry. Prisoners are also employed in farming and reforestation. Beechworth has a cabinet-making industry, a farm, and a large commercial pine plantation. Bendigo has a sheet-metal industry. Castlemaine has a large matmaking industry and a vegetable garden for the prison's own use. At Coorimungle the prisoners are employed in large scale land clearing and in farming. The prison has an accredited Guernsey cattle stud. At Dhurringile prisoners work on the farm and in the orchard. Geelong has a garment industry. Morwell River and Won Wron are reforestation prisons where prisoners engage in forestry work from seed-raising to tree-felling. Sale is a local reception centre and short-term prison where prisoners are occupied in forestry, matmaking, or gardening. At Fairlea the women prisoners participate in arts and crafts, cooking, and sewing.

The Victorian Education Department provides teachers for registered schools within the prison system; these provide general education up to Higher School Certificate level. The main school is at Pentridge with others at Ararat, Beechworth, Bendigo, Geelong, and Fairlea, while a teacher visits Castlemaine weekly. Prisoners are also encouraged to take correspondence courses.

Prisoners may be given temporary leave when family circumstances require it. Each convicted prisoner is allowed two visits each month, but the Governor may grant extra visits. Rail vouchers for members of prisoners' families to visit the prison may be supplied by the Division, which aims to help the prisoner and his family in co-operation with voluntary and government organisations concerned with the welfare and after-care of prisoners. Chaplains are nominated by the major religious denominations and are appointed by the Victorian Government to the various prisons on either a full-time or part-time basis.

Probation and Parole Division

The functions of the Probation and Parole Division are to supervise persons subject to probation or supervision orders from the courts, or released on parole from youth training centres and prisons; and to provide, when requested by a

court, reports and information on any person appearing before that court. The Division also reports annually on prisoners awaiting the Governor's pleasure.

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 report to the probation service within 48 hours of being sentenced, not to break the law, 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 48 hours of any change of address or change of employment during the period of probation. Special conditions may be added by the court, for example, requiring abstinence from liquor, attendance at a medical or psychiatric clinic, or avoidance of specified company or place. A Children's Court can also make supervision orders which may include conditions to be observed by parents or persons with whom the child is living.

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 an attempt is made to assist the offender in developing his personal relationships and abilities to be able to live fruitfully in society. Contact between the probationer and the probation officer varies in intensity. Initially it tends to be more frequent and then gradually decreases. The seriousness of the offence committed, the individual's adjustment and progress, and the length of the probation period all affect the degree of supervision.

A breach of the conditions of probation is reported by the supervising probation officer to the Director of Probation and Parole who decides whether any action will be taken. If a probationer is taken to court it may result in a fine, a bond, admission to a new period of probation, or sentence to detention in either a youth training centre or prison. On the other hand, the court may decide to take no action.

Victoria has a Youth Parole Board and an Adult Parole Board. These bodies 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 term of the sentence, while the Adult Parole Board is required to consider every adult case in which a "minimum term" prison sentence is set by the court.

The main concern of the Parole Board is whether the person is a good risk on parole. The Board 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.

In the main, 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.

Most parolees complete parole successfully. The date of completion is when the full sentence set by the court normally expires. If the parolee is sentenced to another term of imprisonment, his parole as a rule is cancelled. In addition, the Boards can cancel parole at any time should the parolee breach a condition or should his behaviour be unsatisfactory.

The Division employs the services of men and women officers—stipendiary and honorary. Stipendiary officers are required to have an appropriate university or welfare qualification, while the honorary probation officers are selected citizens who supervise less difficult cases, usually first offenders, 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.

Research and Statistics Division

The Research and Statistics Division conducts research into problems of social welfare and compiles statistics from all divisions of the Department. It co-operates in private research projects by qualified people and supplies information where appropriate.

Statistics are collected for divisional and departmental use and for publication in works of reference. The Division includes a research library holding material relevant to the work of the Department.

Training Division

The Training Division operates as the Institute of Social Welfare and provides training courses covering the major aspects of welfare work undertaken by government and non-government agencies. It offers courses for Diploma in Youth Leadership, Diploma and Certificate in Child Care, Certificate in Management of Child Care Facilities, Certificate in Youth Work, Certificate in Welfare Work, and Certificate in Penology. In addition, there are courses of training for honorary probation officers, welfare work supervisors, welfare volunteers, and courses on recreational activities and film projection for youth leaders and others concerned with the use of leisure time. Tuition in all courses offered by the Institute is free. Students undertaking a diploma or certificate course are eligible to apply for financial assistance under the Australian Government Tertiary Education Assistance Scheme. The Minister for Social Welfare also makes available some financial assistance to students in need who would not otherwise receive help.

The Division is also responsible for educational and trade training programmes and vocational guidance 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 the classification committees. It is the liaison authority between the Social Welfare Department and the Education Department, which provides teachers for school programmes within the various institutions, and arranges technical correspondence courses for inmates in government and non-government institutions. The Division also supervises social studies cadets of the Department who attend university. Finally, it assists in the selection of base-level staff for departmental institutions.

A Social Welfare Training Council, comprising twelve members, exercises general supervision. Among its members are the Directors of Training, Family Welfare, Youth Welfare, and Prisons. The other members are appointed by the Minister for terms not exceeding three years.

Ministry of Social Welfare statistics

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

Particulars	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75
Revenue	704	753	768	940	812
Expenditure—					
Central Administration and Research and Statistics Division	446	781	(a)3,091	3,962	(b)88,999
Regional Services Division			(a)	850	1,472
Family Welfare Division	6,399	9,000	10,427	8,958	13,886
Youth Welfare Division	2,743	3,257	3,290	4,059	5,281
Prisons Division	4,239	4,954	5,485	6,617	8,576
Probation and Parole Division	471	549	512	555	729
Training Division	169	201	277	313	425
Total expenditure	14,467	18,742	23,082	25,314	119,367
Net expenditure	13,763	17,989	22,314	24,374	118,555

(a) For 1972-73, the Regional Services Division was accounted for under Central Administration expenditures.

(b) 1974-75 figures include \$81,500,000 from the Hospital and Charities Fund and \$171,625 from the Anzac Day Proceeds Fund.

VICTORIA—FAMILY ASSISTANCE : FAMILIES
RECEIVING ASSISTANCE AT 30 JUNE 1975

Type of case	Families receiving assistance	Children involved
Cases where the Australian Government reimburses half of the expenditure—		
Deserted wives	1,065	2,363
Wives of prisoners	48	121
Single mothers	369	389
Deserted <i>de facto</i> wives	237	343
<i>De facto</i> wives of prisoners	19	31
Mothers with child (or children) not of marriage
Cases not subject to Australian Government reimbursement—		
Assistance to people who care for children whose parents—		
Are deceased	124	143
Have deserted the child	386	597
Are in prison	21	48
Special benefits (a)	1	3
Total	2,270	4,038

(a) A deserted father receiving special benefits on the grounds of hardship.

VICTORIA—ADOPTIONS

Organisation	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75
Social Welfare Department—					
Children placed during year	352	375	349	185	211
Legally finalised adoptions	312	445	302	250	209
Private agencies—					
Children placed during year	1,205	1,154	944	642	523
Legally finalised adoptions	1,373	1,043	1,101	915	537

**VICTORIA—FAMILY WELFARE DIVISION AND YOUTH WELFARE
DIVISION : ADMISSIONS AND DISCHARGES OF WARDS**

Particulars	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75
Admissions during year	1,601	1,623	1,697	1,382	1,396
Discharges during year	1,389	1,644	1,977	1,661	1,687
Total wards at end of year—					
Males	4,296	4,265	4,121	3,994	3,832
Females	2,961	2,971	2,835	2,683	2,554

**VICTORIA—PRISONS DIVISION : RECEPTIONS AND
DISCHARGES OF PRISONERS**

Particulars	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75
Receptions during year	15,254	16,695	17,508	11,245	9,857
Discharges during year	15,225	16,733	17,730	11,570	10,047
In prison at end of year—					
Males	2,312	2,287	2,063	1,741	1,561
Females	44	31	33	30	20
Number of prisons for—					
Males	12	12	12	12	12
Females	1	1	1	1	1

**VICTORIA—PROBATION AND PAROLE DIVISION : PERSONS
ON PROBATION AND PAROLE**

Particulars	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75
Placed on probation during year	4,323	4,692	4,951	4,637	4,278
Completed probation during year	3,356	3,499	4,127	4,612	4,320
Probation cancelled during year ^(a)	452	535	422	406	400
On probation at end of year—					
Males	4,467	5,026	5,291	4,930	4,607
Females	1,250	1,349	1,486	1,466	1,347
Released on parole during year	1,088	1,179	1,241	1,224	1,071
Completed parole during year	708	807	972	795	830
Parole cancelled during year (a)	320	323	324	299	233
On parole at end of year—					
Males	974	1,018	968	1,106	1,111
Females	21	26	21	13	16

(a) Cancellation of probation or parole because of further conviction or breach of conditions of probation or parole.

Further reference, 1975

Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation

The Victorian 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:

- (1) 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;
- (2) 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
- (3) to improve the facilities available to people for their leisure-time pursuits by encouraging and assisting with the provision of additional opportunities for recreation for individuals and family units.

Sports and Recreation Fund

Subsidies are available to municipal councils for the development of sporting and recreational facilities. Projects are subsidised on a \$1 for \$1 basis except for swimming pools which are subsidised on a \$3 for \$1 basis up to \$36,000 subsidy and thereafter \$1 for \$1. Councils are requested to determine the priorities for development of sporting and recreational facilities within their boundaries and the Department endeavours to assist each council with the first priority at the earliest opportunity.

Councils must show evidence that they have consulted the local community for which they are responsible and have planned their developments in accordance with the actual need for the facilities concerned. It is essential that applications for such subsidies show sound planning for the management and operation of the facilities proposed. Subsidies, once approved, are allocated over a period of years depending on the nature of the project and the amount of subsidy involved.

Subsidies are available to councils outside the normal priorities for walking tracks, fun and fitness trails, and cycling paths. A grant of \$7,500 per annum is also available to municipalities towards the employment of a municipal recreation officer.

Youth Fund

In addition to general grants available to recognised youth organisations, the Department also makes subsidies available for the construction, extension, remodelling, repair, and renovation of buildings and property used or to be used essentially for youth work. Subsidies are available on a \$1 for \$1 basis up to a maximum of \$10,000. It is an essential criteria for such subsidies that the facilities constructed are to be available for general community use where practicable and that they be utilised on a full-time basis in accordance with the needs of the local communities in which they are constructed.

Further reference, 1975

VOLUNTARY SOCIAL SERVICES

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. 163,840 donations were collected in 1974-75.

Transport. Red Cross volunteer drivers cover nearly 2 million kilometres each year taking handicapped children and adults to special schools, clinics, and hospitals, or elderly people on outings, etc.

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

Inquiry 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 Victoria, 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 to 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 124 hospitals and homes, and more than 42,000 magazines are distributed annually. Hospital visiting services are carried out throughout Victoria 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 19,000 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 prepared to provide immediate practical assistance and Red Cross is called regularly.

Social work service

Staffed by professionally trained social workers, the Service provides a general family casework service throughout Victoria. The only eligibility is a need for help with problems affecting family life. Approximately 2,000 families are assisted annually.

The main services offered are family counselling (including help with marital problems), adolescent and child behaviour, geriatric problems, advice on budgeting, community resources such as statutory benefits, general facilities in the community such as accommodation for the aged, diversional activities, and treatment centres.

Social workers and welfare representatives are located in some 50 areas and the majority are volunteers. There is a social worker or welfare representative at the Red Cross Centres at Ballarat, Bendigo, and Geelong. A metropolitan regional officer is maintained at Ringwood and in 1973-74 there were 646 registrations including 200 new cases.

Talking book machines are provided for ex-service personnel who have no useful vision for the printed word and whose condition was not caused by war. These are provided on long-term loan and on-going contact is maintained with readers. Users of these machines have access to the Australian Red Cross Talking Book Library.

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	2,725
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

VICTORIA—RED CROSS SOCIETY—*continued*

Particulars	Unit	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74
Expenditure on (<i>continued</i>)—					
Social service and welfare	\$'000	117	114	114	137
Service and repatriation hospitals, including recreation centres	\$'000	162	162	165	160
Civilian hospital and civilian relief					
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 litre	86,261	88,323	99,829	103,367
Serum distributed	litre	570	601	838	1,147
Transport distance	'000 kilometre	1,693	1,685	1,629	1,674

(a) Excludes legacies.

(b) Excludes stock adjustments and depreciation.

Further reference, 1975 ; Blood Transfusion Service, 1971 ; Youth activities, 1972 ; Red Cross service corps, 1972 ; Music Therapy Service, 1974 ; Disaster relief services, 1975

Life Line

Life Line originated in Sydney in 1963 as a project of the Central Methodist Mission in that city and became a model adapted for use by 22 Australian centres, with an International Association embracing 80 centres in eight different countries. Life Line Melbourne commenced operating on 19 April 1971, following twelve months research and evaluation into an alternative service to the Personal Emergency Advisory Service. The purpose of the service is to provide a 24 hour telephone counselling service readily available for the needs of the present-day community.

The general areas of Life Line work are:

- (1) telephone counselling—at any hour of the day or night a troubled person can call the Life Line phone number and expect to speak immediately to a trained and sympathetic person ;
- (2) crisis intervention—in a situation where life is at risk, initiatives may be taken to save life and protect property ;
- (3) to offer skilled face-to-face counselling ;
- (4) referral—by maintaining a comprehensive index of helping agencies of all kinds to be able to direct a troubled person to the agency best suited to his need ; and
- (5) research—to record and reflect on the experience of the work and make meaningful assessments of that section of society which uses the facilities, for the benefit of welfare agencies at large.

The Centre is operated by approximately 200 volunteers from different religions and occupations, who are trained by the organisation to listen and advise on a variety of problems.

Youth Line

Youth Line originated in Christchurch, New Zealand, in 1971 and was assessed as being a valid specialist extension to Life Line Melbourne, since half the callers to Life Line were aged less than 25 years. It was launched in Melbourne in October 1973, and is staffed by some of the younger age group telephone workers, operating from 5.00 p.m. until midnight and often later. The volunteers have additional training within the service, in relevant youth problem areas, with the aim of providing a service which is acceptable, available, and geared to the culture needs and problems of youth.

An emergency telephone service appears to have much to offer the needs of youth who seem unwilling to make use of other recognised helping agencies, and need the anonymity and control of the situation which such a telephone service offers.

Lord Mayor's Children's Camp, Portsea

The Lord Mayor's Children's Camp is situated beside the Nepean Highway, Portsea, 96 kilometres from Melbourne, on high ground overlooking the entrance to Port Phillip Bay. Its object is to give selected indigent 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, and audiometrists. 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: FUNDS
($\$'000$)

Particulars	1968-69	1969-70	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73
Ordinary societies (a)—					
Sick, funeral, and non-contributory endowment funds	18,689	19,173	19,429	19,984	20,719
Whole of life, endowment, and other assurance funds	5,306	6,705	8,444	10,722	13,095
Medical services funds	4,049	4,617	3,735	1,571	(b)15
Hospital benefit funds	6,388	7,430	8,370	8,781	9,539
Medicine, management, and other funds	5,941	6,378	6,883	7,651	8,059
Dividing and other societies	1,480	1,534	1,786	1,926	2,117
Total funds	41,853	45,837	48,647	50,635	53,544

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

(b) Medical funds substantially decreased in 1972-73.

VICTORIA—FRIENDLY SOCIETIES: MEMBERSHIP, ETC.

Particulars	1968-69	1969-70	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73
ORDINARY FRIENDLY SOCIETIES (a)					
Number of societies	20	20	21	21	20
Number of branches	1,091	1,086	1,075	1,046	1,034
Number of members contributing for—					
Sick and funeral benefits (b)	102,250	100,629	100,124	99,155	98,986
Medical services (b)	260,344	266,074	272,999	278,251	297,468
Hospital benefits (b)	276,241	287,034	292,596	288,847	305,824
Number of widows registered for funeral benefits	8,688	8,216	8,888	9,515	9,273
Number of whole of life and endowment assurance benefits in force	22,924	26,799	29,954	34,148	37,952
DIVIDING AND OTHER SOCIETIES					
Number of societies	104	102	102	94	89
Number of members	51,341	50,558	48,699	47,960	48,458

VICTORIA—FRIENDLY SOCIETIES : MEMBERSHIP, ETC.—*continued*

Particulars	1968-69	1969-70	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73
ALL SOCIETIES					
Number of weeks for which sick pay was allowed	388,113	364,766	370,555	354,374	343,533
Number of deaths of sick and funeral benefit members	2,586	2,405	2,439	2,328	2,340
Number of deaths of wives and widows	615	654	753	647	666

(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.

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

Particulars	1968-69	1969-70	1970-71(a)	1971-72(a)	1972-73(a)
RECEIPTS					
Ordinary societies (b)—					
Sick, funeral, and non-contributory endowment funds	1,405	1,440	1,427	1,554	1,619
Whole of life, endowment, and other assurance funds	1,859	2,212	2,580	3,572	4,102
Medical services funds	8,253	9,152	11,301	15,147	17,303
Hospital benefit funds	9,427	10,728	10,592	16,740	18,851
Medicine, management, and other funds	1,531	1,866	1,857	2,761	2,711
Dividing and other societies	695	779	822	903	759
Less inter-fund transfers	238	287	429	288	458
Total receipts	22,932	25,890	28,150	40,389	44,887
EXPENDITURE					
Ordinary societies (b)—					
Sick, funeral, and non-contributory endowment funds	899	955	1,165	998	884
Whole of life, endowment, and other assurance funds	601	813	896	1,350	1,747
Medical services funds	7,664	8,584	12,550	16,770	18,831
Hospital benefit funds	8,480	9,685	10,270	15,829	18,082
Medicine, management, and other funds	1,256	1,429	1,498	2,031	2,280
Dividing and other societies	570	725	641	748	725
Less inter-fund transfers	238	287	429	288	458
Total expenditure	19,232	21,904	26,591	37,438	42,091
Excess of receipts over expenditure	3,700	3,986	1,559	2,951	2,796

(a) Figures since the year 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.

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

Nature of benefit	1968-69	1969-70	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73
Sick pay	570	590	580	567	580
Funeral benefits	266	248	262	270	280
Non-contributory endowment benefits	83	109	233	254	95
Whole of life, endowment, and other assurance benefits	394	641	596	863	1,200
Medical services—					
Society benefit	3,658	4,178	6,230	7,743	8,348
Government subsidy	3,229	3,537	5,390	7,921	9,256

VICTORIA—FRIENDLY SOCIETIES : AMOUNTS DISBURSED IN BENEFITS (a)—*continued*
(S'000)

Nature of benefit	1968-69	1969-70	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73
Hospital benefits—					
Society benefit	6,259	7,270	8,093	13,191	15,270
Government subsidy	1,126	1,192	1,169	1,335	1,414
Medicine	229	246	(b)44	(b)34	(b)39

(a) Excludes specially authorised societies.

(b) 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 1972-73, thirty 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 1972-73 was 73,627. During 1972-73 the income of the dispensaries was \$4,579,903 and their expenditure was \$4,433,885. The assets and liabilities of dispensaries at the end of 1972-73 amounted to \$3,911,067 and \$677,900, respectively.

Specially authorised societies

At the end of 1972-73 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 1972-73 was 157 and their funds amounted to \$303,908.

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.

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 552-4 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	64	44,917	8,039	16,796	24,836
Trading	59	40,278	3,239	4,054	7,293
Community settlement	7	340	105	851	956
Community advancement	693	51,837	2,251	6,638	8,890
Credit	200	122,020	929	79,958	80,888
Associations	2	279	-50	3,389	3,339
Total	1,025	259,671	14,514	111,687	126,201

(a) Further information regarding co-operative organisations is given on pages 552-4 of this *Year Book*.

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 ; Brotherhood of St Laurence, 1975 ; Consumer participation in voluntary social welfare, 1975

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- 5.23 Public authority pension and superannuation schemes
- 5.37 Public authority finance : State Governments : social services
- 6.4 Employment and unemployment
- 6.7 Labour report
- 6.42 Survey of superannuation
- 16.1 Hospital and nursing home statistics
- 17.10 Persons covered by hospital and medical expenditure assistance schemes
- 17.2 Child care