

October 2003

Welcome to the first of a regular newsletter from the new Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector, which was established on 15 September 2003. This newsletter will be produced approximately every two months to keep you informed of Office activities and current issues.

New Office For Community And Voluntary Sector

The new Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector/Te Tari Mō te Rāngai ā Hapori, ā Tūao is a sign of the Government's ongoing commitment to improving its relationship with the sector.

Speaking at the recent launch, the Minister for the Community and Voluntary Sector, Hon Tariana Turia, said the Office acknowledged the "many thousands of people in our society who work tirelessly to make their communities better places in which to work and to enjoy life".

"An important agenda item for this Government has been a determination to improve the relationship between government agencies and community, voluntary and tangata whenua

organisations. We are putting a lot of energy into making things work better, and to building greater harmony and stronger, healthier relationships.

"The Statement of Government Intentions for an Improved Community-Government Relationship, signed by the Prime Minister and Minister Maharey in December 2001, was a significant marker of this commitment," she says. The Statement underpins the work of the Office.

The Office will work to raise the profile of the community and voluntary sector within government. It will investigate policy issues affecting the sector across all government agencies and by doing so, will offer leadership within



At the launch of the new Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector were from left to right: Establishment Director Sue Driver, MSD Chief Executive Peter Hughes and Minister for the Office Tariana Turia.

government. It will be a point of contact for community, voluntary and tangata whenua organisations on those shared issues that affect the sector as a whole.

The Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector is part of the Ministry of Social Development.

The Statement can be accessed at www.msd.govt.nz

Office Logo Symbolises Chiefliness

The image of feathers has been used by design students to develop a logo for the new Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector.

Design students from Toi Houkura, Tairāwhiti Polytechnic's Visual Art and Design School were given a brief to design a logo that symbolised the role of the Office.

They chose feathers, symbolising chiefliness, to convey the leadership role the new Office will play within government.

Describing their design the students said:



"Ma te huruhuru, ka rere te manu. Feathers are widely recognised as a symbol to represent chiefliness. The two feathers in this logo represent the Government and the community and voluntary sector – the space between the feathers is now filled by Te Tari Mō te Rāngai ā Hapori, ā Tūao."

The logo was presented to the Minister for the Community and Voluntary Sector, Hon Tariana Turia, at an event at Porirua's Pataka Museum, where students were opening an exhibition of their art work. The handover of the logo was accompanied by students presenting



Design students from Toi Houkura, Tairāwhiti Polytechnic's Visual Art and Design School perform a haka at the handover of the new logo.

waiata and a haka.

The kaupapa of the Toi Houkura Visual Arts programme is tikanga Māori and waiata and haka are an integral part of the school's cultural dimension.

Busy Work Programme Ahead

A busy work programme is planned for the new Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector. Key projects are transferring from the Ministry of Social Development's (MSD) Community Policy Unit. Four of these are detailed below:

Community sector relationship plans

Underpinning the work of the Office will be a focus on supporting government departments to develop relationship plans with the community, voluntary and tangata whenua organisations they work with. These plans will reinforce the Government's Statement of Government Intentions for an Improved Community-Government Relationship, signed in December 2001. Office staff will be available to help develop the plans, with an emphasis on good practice and identifying generic issues. The Office will also support the development of online resources to promote good practice.

Co-ordinating improvements to government funding arrangements

As recommended by the Community-Government Relationship Phase Two Steering Group in 2002, the Office is designing an online toolkit to help public servants when developing funding arrangements with community sector organisations. The Office will continue to work with other agencies to develop good models for collaborative funding arrangements.

Supporting sector-led initiatives to strengthen community and voluntary sector capability

The Phase Two Community-Government Relationship Steering Group recommended that two groups be set up to

pursue community-led initiatives: the Community Sector Taskforce; and Te Wero (Action Group Māori). These groups, funded by Government but sector-led, are currently developing projects that will contribute to a community and voluntary sector that is informed, connected and able to do its work.

Addressing barriers to volunteering in government policy

One aspect of this work is a project looking at risk management, liability and insurance issues for volunteers and their organisations. Early consultation with community organisations has given MSD a steer on priorities. A paper outlining the issues is being developed and this will form the basis for future work.

Website Encourages Participation

An online resource to assist public servants in engaging successfully with community, voluntary, iwi and Māori organisations was launched on 15 September 2003.

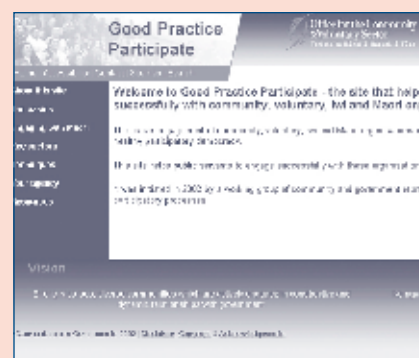
The website is the result of the work of the Phase Two Steering Group which recommended that government agencies be encouraged to improve the way they engage the community and voluntary sector in decision-making.

The website can be found at www.goodpracticeparticipate.govt.nz and includes:

- the basics of participation – active relationships, consultation, partnerships and community decision-making;
- engaging with Māori – planning and processes;
- involving key sectors – specific population groups, the community and voluntary sector and local government;

- techniques – core techniques and specialised methods for participation;
- building a participatory agency – communications, agency-wide policies, human resource strategies and monitoring;
- resources – case studies, literature and websites on participation.

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Establishment Director Appointed

Sue Driver has been appointed establishment director for the Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector. She has an extensive background in community and voluntary sector issues and was part of the team that established the Community Organisations' Grant Scheme. She is a former Wellington City and Wellington Regional councillor and was chief executive of the Mary Potter Hospice.

Most recently she was national project manager for the Community Sector Taskforce. She is contracted to the end of this year.

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