

E AI KI TE TURE keeping it legal

Keeping it Legal Resource Evaluation Report 2009

This report outlines the results of the evaluation of the information kit and online resource [*Keeping it Legal E Ai Ki Te Ture*](#).

Launched in December 2005, *Keeping it Legal* was designed to inform community and voluntary sector organisations about their legal risks and responsibilities.

Keeping it Legal is a collaborative effort by the New Zealand Federation of Voluntary Welfare Organisations (NZFWVO) and the Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector (OCVS). The evaluation was conducted by the Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector.

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New Zealand Federation of
Voluntary Welfare Organisations 



Office for the Community
& Voluntary Sector

Tari mō te Rāngai ā-Hapori, ā-Tūao

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Keeping it Legal: Resource Evaluation Report 2009

Introduction

This paper outlines the results of the evaluation of [*Keeping it Legal E Ai Ki Te Ture*](#). Launched in December 2005, *Keeping it Legal* was designed to inform community and voluntary sector organisations about their legal risks and responsibilities. *Keeping it Legal* is a collaborative effort by the New Zealand Federation of Voluntary Welfare Organisations (NZFWVO) and the Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector (OCVS).

Three sources of data were used to evaluate the resource:

1. An on-line *Keeping it Legal* user survey (completed June/July 2008)
2. Website usage statistics from June 06 to July 08
3. Administrative records of postage for hard-copy report distribution from November 2005 to June 2008.

Highlights

Overall, *Keeping it Legal* has been overwhelmingly well received. It is widely recognised within the community and voluntary sector as a quality resource, as evidenced by the following outputs and outcomes:

Outputs (*what products were produced*)

- High quality hard-copy and website resources, both of which are very useful and easily navigable according to users.
- 12,000 hard-copies were printed and distributed in just over 3 years.
- The website has maintained an average of 1,130 visits per month.

Outcomes (*the results these products achieved*)

- 88% of survey respondents indicated increased knowledge in their organisation about their legal risks and responsibilities because of *Keeping it Legal*.
- 89% of survey respondents indicated that their organisation can better manage their legal risks and responsibilities because of *Keeping it Legal*.

Recommendations

1. That the OCVS and NZFVWO develop a plan to ensure *Keeping it Legal* can be maintained and distributed over the next 10 years.
2. Investigate the option of one more re-printing of *Keeping it Legal*, if it is cost-effective. There were many calls for the hard-copy to be kept. Currently the cost of printing is high, but the OCVS is investigating alternative formats to reduce costs.
3. Move *Keeping it Legal* completely online over time, as budget permits.
4. Any further significant investment in the *Keeping it Legal* website should focus on making it smarter and easier to use, and should implement the list of future upgrades already compiled by OCVS and NZFVWO, as budget permits.
5. Any re-design of the website needs to ensure volunteers are central to the design brief.

Introduction and Purpose

In 2004, the OCVS and the NZFVWO agreed to work together to develop a new resource for voluntary and community organisations about managing legal risk and liability. The collaboration brought together two existing projects – the revision of the NZFVWO *Risk Management: managing legal risks for voluntary organisations* and the OCVS *Risk and Liability* project. This resulted in *Keeping It Legal E Ai Ki Te Ture*, which was officially launched on 5 December 2005.

The purpose of this report is to evaluate the usefulness and effectiveness of *Keeping it Legal* as resource for community and voluntary sector organisations. This evaluation was conducted by NZFVWO and OCVS staff, and so is not an independent evaluation. However, the methodology was designed to reduce any bias as much as possible. This evaluation does not cover the process of working collaboratively to develop and role out *Keeping It Legal*. This was undertaken separately in 2007.

Methodology

Three sources of data were used to evaluate the resource:

1. An on-line *Keeping it Legal* user survey
2. Website usage statistics, compiled by *Google Analytics*TM.
3. Administrative records of hard-copy report distributions mailed by OCVS.

1. Online Survey

The on-line survey website www.surveymonkey.com was used to host the survey. The survey was took approximately 10 minutes to complete, and focussed on both the website and the hard-copy versions. Questions asked included current and historical usage; usability of the hard-copy and on-line versions; usefulness of

particular fact sheets; and improvements in knowledge of the law because of the resource (see Appendix for survey questions).

The survey was advertised in the July 2008 OCVS E-Newsletter and NZFVWO members newsletter, advertised on the website and e-mailed to all OCVS and NZFVWO *Keeping it Legal* contacts. It ran for 2 weeks from late June to early July 2008. The survey received 271 responses, with an overall margin of error of 6 percent at the 95 percent confidence level. Respondents were incentivised to fill in the survey by the use of three \$50 petrol vouchers as prizes, which were drawn at random.

2. Website statistics

As part of the design of the *Keeping it Legal* website (www.keepingitlegal.net.nz) Google Analytics was used to monitor website usage. Data analysed in this report is from 30 June 2006 to 30 July 2008, or 24 months of usage. Hits on the initial website (which was live from December 2005 until June 2006) that simply housed the PDF versions of the resource were not monitored.

3. Postal administration records

As of January 2009, almost all of the 12,000 copies printed have been distributed. Data on the number of hard copy versions of *Keeping it Legal* distributed was available from December 2005 to May 2008. However not all distributions were recorded. The OCVS only recorded *Keeping it Legal* packs it sent out directly, and not those distributed by NZFVWO or during conferences and events. As a result, 8,403 packs were recorded as being posted out by the OCVS. Also, 915 packs were distributed during the initial 2006 road show, but this data is not analysed in this report.

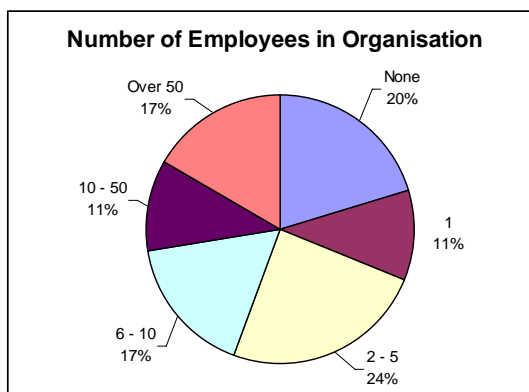
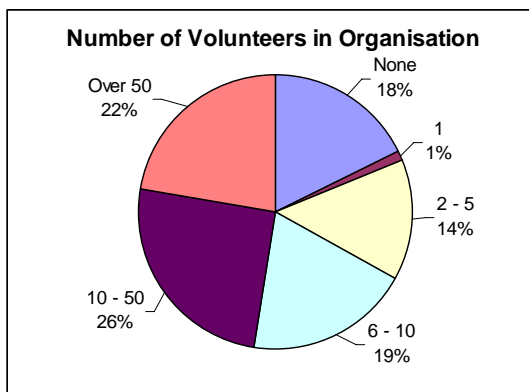
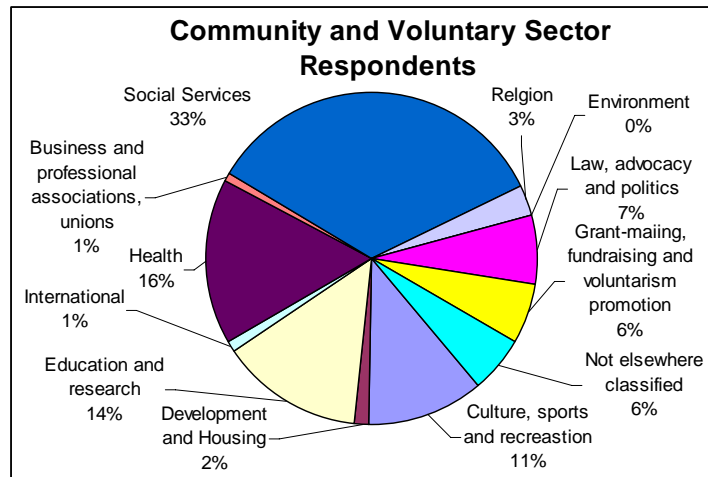
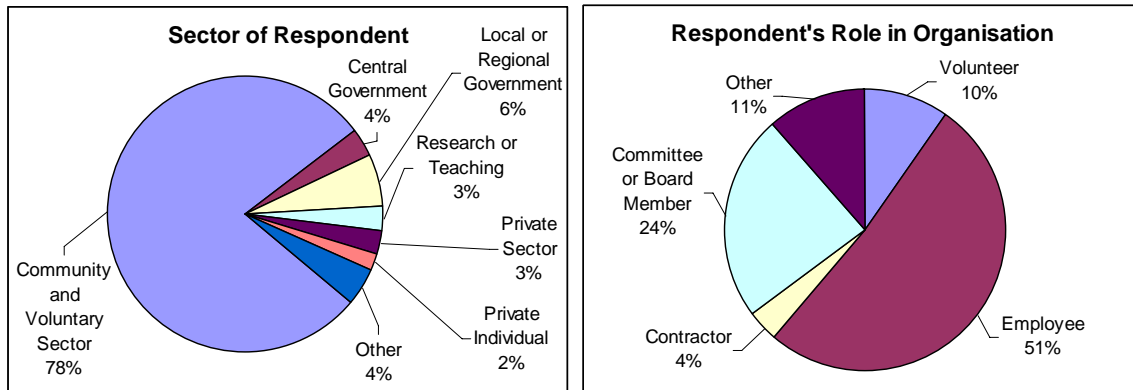
Results

The results and analysis of the online user survey, website usage and administrative postage records are detailed below.

On-line User Survey

The user survey collected a number of demographics on the respondent's roles and their organisations:

Demographics of respondents to the online *Keeping it Legal* user survey



Broadly speaking, these results met expectations. While the main users of *Keeping it Legal* were from community and voluntary sector organisations (78%), the resource is also being used in other sectors. It is also significant that:

- 51% of respondents were employees
- 24% were Committee or Board members
- 20% of respondents' organisations had no paid staff.

According to the *Counting Non-profit Institutions in New Zealand: October 2005* (Statistics New Zealand, 2007), 90% of non-profit organisations employ no paid staff. This would indicate that *Keeping it Legal* may have limited reach to organisations without paid employees. However, another explanation is that volunteers did not have time to fill in the survey, skewing the results.

Key Findings

Overall, there was a very positive response to *Keeping it Legal*:

- 88% of respondents indicated the knowledge in their organisation of legal risks and responsibilities had increased somewhat or markedly.
- 89% of respondents said they could better manage their legal risks and responsibilities.
- On average, all fact sheets rated three out of a possible four for their usefulness
- The three most useful fact sheets were 'Incorporated Societies', 'Trusts and Charitable Trust Boards' and 'People: Volunteers, Employees and Contractors'. This reflects almost exactly the same result from the website statistics.

Discovery and main use of *Keeping it Legal*

- 42% of respondents found out about *Keeping it Legal* by their organisation having a copy. 20% found out by word of mouth, 21% by searching the internet, and 20% by the resource being used on a course they attended. Only 10% saw it advertised.
- 71% used it individually as a work reference, while 50% used it with a committee or group. 63% had referred others to the resource.

Relationship between Online versus Print versions

- 42% of respondents used the print version only, and 16% used the online version only. Most significantly, 43% of respondents used both the online version and the print version.
- 40% of respondents had downloaded checklists from the *Keeping it Legal* website, and 50% had used the updated pages on the website.
- The printed version was rated as 'quite useful' or 'extremely useful' by 91% of respondents.
- The website was rated as 'quite useful' or 'extremely useful' by 85% of respondents.

Recall of last time *Keeping it Legal* was used

- 76% of respondents recalled the last time they had used *Keeping it Legal*. 46% of respondents had used it in the last month, and 18% within the last week.
- 61% of respondents had used the printed version, 24% online and 15% both versions when recalling the last time they used *Keeping it Legal*.
- If respondents said they had used the printed version, 72% found what they were looking for almost immediately, and 51% found the information extremely useful.
- If respondents said they had used the online version, 48 % found it almost immediately, and 46% found it extremely useful.

User pays and reprinting options

- There were a large number of comments requesting that a hard-copy version of *Keeping it Legal* be kept up-to-date and re-printed.
- To reprint a hard-copy, the OCVS estimates it would cost \$6.51 a copy for 10,000 copies. This does not include additional costs of administration and distribution. While almost half (48%) skipped this question, on average respondents were prepared to pay \$11.20 per copy.
- If there were no hard-copies reprinted, 47% of respondents would move entirely online, while 33% would refer to the print version but check online for updates. This opens up the remaining 20% of users to the risk of using out-of-date information in old hard-copies.

Website Usage

Key Results

The existing website was developed in June 2006, replacing an earlier website that only housed the PDF version of the hard copy resource.

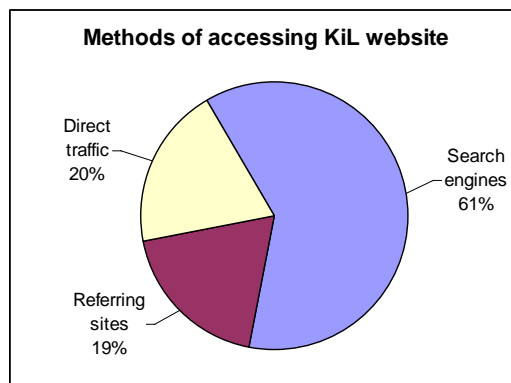
Google Analytics[™] collects ongoing usage data on the *Keeping it Legal* website (www.keepingitlegal.net.nz). For this evaluation the period of 30 June 2006 to 30 April 2008 was analysed. During this period the data shows that the website had:

- 27,204 visits
- 21,534 absolute unique visitors
- 78,620 page views
- 2.89 average pages viewed per visit to the website.

The website has averaged 1,334 visits per month over this period, with significant spikes in visits for September 2006, April 2007 and April 2008. These spikes seem to correlate respectively with the second print-run of the print version, and an advertising push which coincided with the lead up to the final registration period of organisations with the Charities Commission. Website usage dropped in April and May 2008, although recovered slightly in June and July 2008. Ongoing usage is around 1,000 visits per month.

Access

The majority of website users accessed through search engines.



Google referred 57% of all visits, with top keywords often referring to "charities" and "incorporated societies", reflecting the registration period of the Charities Commission.

Most visited web pages

The homepage was the most visited URL, with 11,058 page views. A number of other URLs gained 3,000 or more page views. This cluster represents the main areas of interest to website users:

URL	Page views
/learn-more/trusts	5283
/check	4172
/learn-more	4082
/learn-more/incorporated societies	3742
/learn-more/volunteers-employees-contractors	3385
/learn-more/torts-criminal-offence	3301

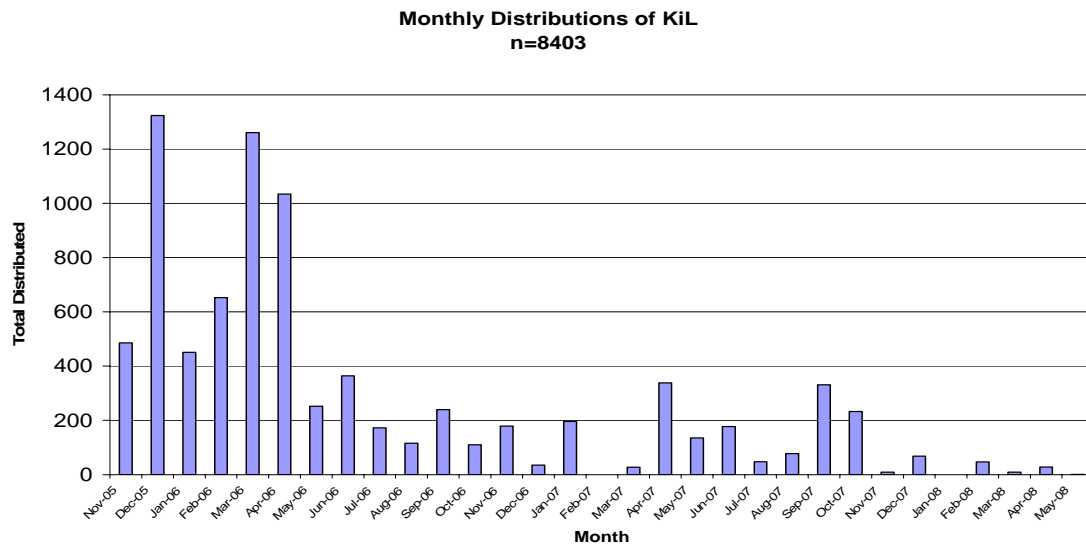
These pages show there are a number of legal issues that non-profit organisations want to cover, generally focussed around risk minimisation. The results are consistent with the user survey, where respondents identified most useful fact sheets.

The issue of legal structure is perhaps key for assessing whether an organisation can register as a charity. The homepage naturally leads into the '/check' page, and helps users decide whether their organisation has adequately covered its legal risks and obligations.

The fact that the '/check' page has had high page views is encouraging. This possibly reflects that high number of users in who need good, simple information to protect themselves and their organisations. The issues of paid staff and volunteer employment relations and criminal legal liability also reflect this concern for risk minimisation.

Posted Hard copies

Almost all of the 12,000 *Keeping it Legal* hard-copies had been distributed by January 2009. Of these distributions, OCVS mailed 8,403 copies to users, and therefore recorded by the OCVS. This is shown in the graph below, which shows the number of hard-copies distributed by the date they were ordered.



The initial launch of the resource in December 2005 saw a large numbers of *Keeping it Legal* hard-copies being distributed to key support and umbrella organisations such as Community Law Centres, Community Waikato, UNITEC (Diploma NFP Management, Volunteering Auckland, Environment & Conservation Organisations of NZ (ECO), and the NZ Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux. This was accompanied by a nation-wide roadshow, which both distributed 915 hard-copies of *Keeping it Legal* and created extra orders. The approximately 2,600 other hard-copies were distributed at other conferences and events by the OCVS and NZFVVO.

Keeping it Legal was revised in response to initial feedback and the interactive website was developed in June 2006. Hard-copies were reprinted in June 2006, which increased orders until October 2007, when orders have generally dropped to just over 20 copies per month. As of January 2009, the OCVS held less than 50 copies, and thus the hard-copy version is essentially now out of print.

Overall, the initial launch road show and the reprint were the best platforms for creating demand for hard-copies. All of these initiatives were accompanied with a significant, but low-level communications effort, supported by local community networks.

Evaluation questions revisited

During the scoping of this review, a number of questions were identified as important. These questions are detailed below, along with the corresponding answers.

How broad has the distribution of Keeping it Legal E Ai Ki Te Ture been? Are there parts of the community and voluntary sector that are not aware of, or using the resource?

- Generally, all parts of the community and voluntary sector use *Keeping it Legal* - especially social services, which made up 34% of community and voluntary sector respondents to the survey.
- 50% of respondents were employees. Only 20% of respondents had organisations with no paid staff, compared to 90% for the total non-profit sector. Volunteer-only organisations are either not being adequately reached, or did not fill out the survey due to time constraints.
- Certain parts of the community and voluntary sector do not seem to be using the resource, or simply did not fill out the survey in the numbers expected. These groups include: Environment; Religion; Professional and business associations, unions; and is also relatively low for Culture, sport and recreation. This could reflect the high number of volunteers in these types of organisations, but could also represent the limitations of the OCVS/NZFWO sample frame.

Is the resource meeting the needs of the all parts of the community and voluntary sector? If not, what can be changed?

- Overall, satisfaction with *Keeping it Legal* as a resource is very high, with 88% reporting increased organisational legal knowledge and 89% reporting their organisation being better able to manage legal risks because of Keeping it Legal
- The comments section of the survey had many positive anecdotes. The following statements were typical :
- *"It's good to have a free resource that helps untrained people with understanding of obligation and compliance (the legalities) of running and incorporated organisation."*
- *"I think this is an extremely valuable resource."*
- *"Very accessible and well laid-out."*
- *"I found it an extremely valuable resource especially in the early days of setting up our charitable trust."*
- As for improvements that could be made in terms of the resource's reach, the data indicates that volunteers may not be being reached as well as they could be, as well as certain parts of the community and voluntary sector.

Are people aware of both the online or hard copy resource? Which do they prefer? Why? What aspects are useful / not useful? Are people accessing the PDFs?

- *Keeping it Legal* users seem to be well aware of both the print and on-line versions.
- Hard-copies are preferred by most users, but users will move on-line if they have to. 47% of respondents stated they would move entirely online if there was no printed updates, while 33% would keep the old print version, but check for updates online.
- Generally, the website is currently considered harder to navigate than the hard-copy. It is noted that confidence about using on-line resources is steadily increasing in the non-profit sector, and it is expected that this will continue.

- 41% of respondents have downloaded the checklists for the *Keeping it Legal* website, and 51% have used the updates pages on the website.

Are the organisations that have copies of Keeping it Legal E Ai Ki Te Ture, or know about the online resource, using the resource? If yes, how? What has been the effect? If no, why not?

- 76% of respondents could recall the last time they used *Keeping it Legal*.
- 46% of respondents had used in the last month, and 18% within the last week.
- The best advertising of *Keeping it Legal* to potential users was if their organisation had a printed copy available, with 42% of respondents finding out about *Keeping it Legal* in this way.
- 89% of respondents indicated they could manage their legal risks and responsibilities better because of *Keeping it Legal*.
- 88% of respondents indicated the knowledge in their organisation of legal risks and responsibilities has increased somewhat or markedly because of *Keeping it Legal*.

Have lawyers and law centres noted any changes in their dealings with community organisations since the launch of Keeping it Legal E Ai Ki Te Ture?

- Law Centres, lawyers and legal trainers have ordered over 900 copies of *Keeping it Legal* since November 2005, and have been key in on-going distribution promotion.
- Although not asked to specifically identify themselves, a community law worker commented that:
'This is an excellent resource (sic)'
- All informal feedback from law centres has been very positive, indicating that they use it in their training.

How did people hear about Keeping it Legal E Ai Ki Te Ture? [If they haven't heard about the resource, where do they normally get information about sector news and resources?]

- 42% of respondents found out about *Keeping it Legal* by their organisation having a copy. 20% found out by word of mouth, 21% by searching the internet, and 20% by it being used on a course they attended. Only 10% saw it advertised.
- Questions about where people get news on the sector from were not addressed in this evaluation.

How do people keep up-to-date with law changes effecting their organisation?

- Not addressed in this evaluation.

Do organisations feel in a better position to manage their legal risks and responsibilities now than in 2004?

- 89% of respondents indicated their organisation can better manage their legal risks and responsibilities better because of *Keeping it Legal*.
- 88% of respondents indicated the knowledge in their organisation of legal risks and responsibilities has increased somewhat or markedly because of *Keeping it Legal*.

Conclusions

Overall, *Keeping it Legal* has been overwhelmingly well received, and is well recognised within the community and voluntary sector as a quality resource.

From an outputs perspective (i.e. what products have been produced):

- a high quality hard-copy and website have been produced, both of which are highly useful and easily navigable by users
- 12,000 hard-copies have been printed and distributed in just over 3 years
- the website has maintained an average of 1,130 visits per month.

From an outcomes perspective (i.e. what results have been achieved):

- 89% of respondents indicated their organisation can manage their legal risks and responsibilities better because of *Keeping it Legal*.
- 88% of respondents indicated the knowledge in their organisation of legal risks and responsibilities has increased somewhat or markedly because of *Keeping it Legal*.

Recommendations

1. *Develop a strategy to ensure the Keeping it Legal can be maintained over the next 10 years.* OCVS and NZFVWO are committed to maintain this project so that it remains up to date and useful, and will work jointly to achieve this. This work will focus on keeping resource allocation to *Keeping it Legal* at low levels, and ensuring all updating processes are quick and efficient. The strategy should also detail proposed financial investment in *Keeping it Legal*. This strategy would also identify the distribution channels for *Keeping it Legal* either through website links or through the individual contact that other organisations have.
2. *Investigate one more re-printing Keeping it Legal if it is cost-effective.* There were many calls for the hard-copy to be kept, but the cost of printing, administration and postage of doing so is prohibitively high within the existing format and distribution (postage) system. The OCVS is exploring the possibility of producing a cheaper printed format to ensure that *Keeping it Legal* stays accessible to those without good internet access or who need hard-copies.
3. *Website usage and usability is sufficiently high to move Keeping it Legal completely online over time.* Continually reprinting the hard-copy manuals

- and keeping them up-to-date is almost impossible and would create legal risk - especially if there are any abrupt, significant changes in legislation. It would be more cost-effective to invest in the website, which can be kept up-to-date much more easily.
4. Any further significant investment in the *Keeping it Legal* website should make it smarter and easier *to use*. The technology exists to add functions that could suggest related articles to users. Having a smarter search engine, and making the website look and feel less like a web version of a paper document, including interactive personalised checklists and action plans, is also important. However, ensuring pages and fact sheets can be printed easily by users remains a priority. The original cost of developing the website was \$20,000, and a similar investment in either the 09/10 or 10/11 years would be sufficient to update and upgrade the site. A list of future upgrades has already been compiled by OCVS and NZFVWO.
 5. In the same vein, an upgraded website needs to be designed with volunteers in mind. The current website was well designed for volunteers, but with Web 2.0 technology becoming widely available (such as RSS feeds and 'fuzzy' search functions), it can be upgraded for increased usability. Volunteers are time-pressured, and so need simple a use and understand interface that can remember their previous searches and save time. This needs to include an investigation into how to engage volunteers with the website.

Further Information

Copies of the *Keeping it Legal Online User Survey* questions and the 2005/06 resource and process evaluation (including project costs) are available by contacting ocvs@msd.govt.nz