

Message from the CSIF team

By now most of you will know that there has been a change of staff within the CSIF team. Penelope McKay has started extended leave. Leonie Middleton has come in to take her place and Rebecca Hiscock has also joined the team. With Matthew Arnold back from his travels we are full steam ahead now on the remaining initiatives. Any enquiries or feedback can still be sent by email to csif@dhs.vic.gov.au or 03 9616 7660.

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Previous Newsletters are available at <http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/pdpd/csif/index.htm>

CSIF Sector Reference Group

As part of its ongoing commitment to consultation and partnership with the community sector, the CSIF has established a Sector Reference Group, to support the implementation of the projects detailed in the Ministerial Action Plan and identified by the CSIF Advisory Committee. The committee met last year and was chaired by Mr Telmo Languiller, Parliamentary Secretary for Community Services and Mr Bob Stensholt, Parliamentary Secretary for Treasury.

The Sector Reference Group will focus on and participate in:

- terms of reference for any investigation and/or study;
- selection of any consultants;
- assessing any reports and proposals for pilots;
- limiting overlap with other work being undertaken in the sector and elsewhere; and
- consulting on and determining parameters, priorities and options for the remaining projects.

The Sector Reference Group's initial membership consists of:

- **Cath Smith** - Victorian Council of Social Service (VCSS)
- **Gerard Mansour** - Kindergarten Parents Victoria (KPV)
- **Deb Tsorbaris** - Council to Homeless Persons (CHP)
- **Coleen Clare** - Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare (CECFW)
- **Sue Jackson** - Council of Intellectual Disability Agencies (CIDA)

An additional two nominees are soon to be provided.

The Sector Reference Group will form subgroups for the remaining CSIF initiatives (as outlined in the Ministerial Action Plan). These initiatives have been broken into three key areas:

- *vehicle acquisition & fleet management;*
- *workforce strategies, WorkCover Claims management and OH & S;*
- *knowledge development.*

If you feel that you or your organisation have knowledge or expertise that would contribute to any of these initiatives, please email your contact details to the CSIF, at csif@dhs.vic.gov.au.

The Sector Reference Group held its inaugural meeting on Monday 15 August.

CSO Networks

The aim of the CSO Networks project is to establish processes, systems and structures that contribute to reducing the administrative demand on CSO's. To achieve this, CSO's were invited to form a group - or 'Network' - and apply for a non-recurrent funding grant of up to \$90,000. This grant will support the establishment of a CSO Network to share appropriate 'back office' and administrative tasks.

After a series of information sessions across the state in February and March about the CSO Networks project, 64 CSO Network submissions were received. Many of these submissions were of exceptionally high quality, containing innovative proposals and proposed collaborations. Initially, the CSIF announced that it would fund only 20-30 Networks, depending on the quality of submissions received. However, due to the overwhelming response and high quality of the submissions received, 38 Networks will receive CSIF CSO Networks funding.

These 38 Networks include over 180 CSO's located across the state, and address the full range of back-office issues, including:

- HR;
- IT;
- fleet management;
- OH & S and WorkCover;
- group purchasing;
- accounting services;
- payroll & salary packaging;
- management of volunteers; and
- facilities & asset management.

The organisations within these Networks are from every aspect of the sector including the following services:

- disability;
- kindergartens;
- mental health;
- Indigenous community organisations;
- youth support & child welfare;
- family support, including domestic violence support;
- early intervention;
- housing;
- drug and alcohol;
- home and community care;
- neighbourhood houses;

- volunteer support;
- CALD;
- community health centres; and
- local government.

The progress of these networks will be exciting to watch and the lessons learnt along the way will be enormously beneficial to other CSO's who want to follow and develop future networks. All network projects will be evaluated upon completion and these findings will be available next year on this website for the benefit of other CSO's.

Payment of the \$5,000 applicable to all CSO Network applicants that met the submission guidelines will be finalised in the coming weeks. CSO's with a 2005/06 DHS service agreement will be paid at the end of the current variation window, whilst any CSO without a current DHS service agreement will be paid on invoice.

The funding process for the grant payments has been finalised and the funds are now with the regions. Payment to the CSO's will depend upon the endorsement of the Project Plan by the department.

If you are interested in finding out more about any of the 38 CSO Networks, more information is available on the CSIF website at:

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/pdpd/csif/index.htm>

If your organisation is interested in talking to or joining one of these Networks, contact details are available at this address. You could also contact your local Program & Service Advisor at your regional Department of Human Services office.

Access to Whole of Government Contracts

In previous CSIF Newsletters, a number of actions CSOs could take immediately to potentially create efficiencies were identified.

Opportunities for CSOs include:

- access to state government contracts for fuel and associated products (through Shell Australia and Caltex), stationery and IT products
- access to state government contracts for telephony services
- accessing WorkCover premium discounts for advance payments
- access to free OH&S advice through WorkSafe
- access to fire safety training for disability accommodation services
- exemptions from certain Victorian government taxes and duties
- information on access to Department for Victorian Communities grants

Details of these opportunities can now be found on the CSIF website.

The CSIF team is continuing to investigate opportunities for CSO's to access Whole of Government contracts, including those for vehicles, and hopes to be able to make further announcements about this in the near future.

All updates will be posted on the website as the service becomes available.

What else is happening?

The CSIF Advisory Committee met on 1 September 2005 for an update on the progress of the initiatives identified in its Report provided in October 2004 to the Minister for Community Services. This committee, chaired by Mr Telmo Languiller, Parliamentary Secretary for Community Services and Mr Bob Stensholt, Parliamentary Secretary for

Treasury, consisted of members from across the sector, business and government.

The CSIF team is working with the Funded Agency Channel to develop an information portal that will have all relevant information for CSO's on CSIF activities. There will eventually be information on fleet management, whole of government contracts, OH&S resources and, with the assistance of the Uniting Church, a new procurement portal located on the Our Community website. Links will be available to and from both sites for CSO's to access relevant information with as much ease as possible. The Funded Agency Channel can be accessed through this link - <https://fac.dhs.vic.gov.au>.

Another sector activity consistent with CSIF objectives is the preschool payroll support service.

ADP Employer Services (ADP) and Kindergarten Parents Victoria (KPV) have provided a comprehensive payroll support service to CSO's for over a decade. DHS contracts ADP in partnership with KPV to provide a range of payroll support services for community based, not for profit CSO's that operate a stand-alone funded kindergarten program through a committee of management.

ADP and KPV have recently announced that this payroll support service will now be extended to all not for profit community based service providers on a fee for service basis, to assist CSO's with their payroll needs.

If you would like further information on payroll support services available to all CSO's please contact ADP on freecall 1800 000 729 or email marketing@au.adp.com and mention the payroll service for CSO's. Further information will be distributed to all CSO's shortly.