

SOCIAL WELFARE

COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Commonwealth Commission of Inquiry into Poverty

To date, four main reports from the independent commissioners have been received covering the broad areas of social security and welfare, health, education, and the law, and these contain more than five hundred recommendations to alleviate poverty.

During the year ended 30 June 1978, twelve research reports were published under the auspices of the commissioners, bringing to a total of forty the number of research reports printed since 1973.

The Secretariat to the Commission was terminated on 31 March 1978 and the outstanding functions transferred to the Commonwealth Department of Social Security.

Further reference: *Victorian Year Book* 1978, p. 696

Commonwealth Department of Social Security*

Introduction

The Commonwealth Department of Social Security remains the Commonwealth Government's main administering authority for social welfare. Programmes administered by the Department range from direct transfer payments to individuals, through grants to organisations, to direct welfare service provision.

In March 1975, most of the Migrant Welfare Section of the Commonwealth Department of Labour and Immigration was transferred to the Department of Social Security. In December 1977, these functions reverted to that Department — now called the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs.

The Commonwealth Department of Social Security continued its programme of decentralisation by upgrading the functions performed by offices in Moonee Ponds, Box Hill, and Sunshine. Of the twenty-five regional offices operating throughout Victoria, eight had the capacity to handle fully all applications for benefits, allowances, and pensions. Other offices are located at Ballarat, Bendigo, Dandenong, Footscray, Geelong, Glenroy, Greensborough, Hamilton, Horsham, Mildura, Morwell, Oakleigh, Prahran, Preston, Richmond, Sale, Shepparton, Wangaratta, Warrnambool, and Werribee.

The various programmes administered and developed by the Commonwealth Department of Social Security can be divided into the following three categories:

- (1) Transfer payments to individual citizens;
- (2) grants to organisations to produce welfare services; and
- (3) welfare service production.

Transfer payments to individual citizens

The Social Services Act provides for direct payment to individuals in the form of age pensions, invalid pensions, wives' pensions, widows' pensions, supporting parents' benefits, maternity allowances, family allowances, funeral benefits, unemployment, sickness and special benefits, orphan's pensions, handicapped child's allowances, sheltered employment allowances, guardians' allowances, and supplementary assistance and

* The information contained in this section was accurate at 30 June 1978.

payments through the Victorian Government under the *States Grants (Deserted Wives) Act 1968*.

During the year 1977-78, the most significant changes in the administration of these payments were:

- (1) Extension of the supporting mothers' benefit to lone supporting fathers in November 1977;
- (2) change in unemployment benefits to payments made in arrears; and
- (3) extension of the appeals system to give clients wider avenues of appeal against Departmental decisions.

Each of the payments administered has a set of eligibility requirements based upon criteria such as period of residence in Australia, age, and income.

Age pensions

Age pensions were first introduced in 1909. The main criteria applied did not change during 1977-78, in that pensions were granted subject to age, residence in Australia, and an income test applied up until the age of 70 years. Pensions were adjusted twice yearly in May and November according to movements in the Consumer Price Index. The pension is assessed as taxable income.

At 30 June 1978, there were 1,264,778 age pensioners in Australia (the Victorian total being 342,565, of whom 67.2 per cent were women). There were 179,000 age pensioners in Australia receiving supplementary assistance, and this amounted to 14.2 per cent of total age pensioners. There were 976,700 age pensioners in Australia receiving fringe benefits which represented 77.2 per cent of the total number of age pensioners. A total of 60.3 per cent of age pensioners in Australia were home owners.

Invalid pensions

The fundamental requirements for eligibility for the invalid pensions relate to incapacity, residence, and income, unless the recipient is permanently blind. There is no age ceiling for invalid pensions though invalid pensioners who are otherwise qualified for age pensions are usually transferred to age pensions at 60 years (female) and 65 years (male). If the invalid pensioner is not qualified for age pension, invalid pension may continue.

At 30 June 1978, there were 49,379 persons in Victoria receiving invalid pensions. Of those persons in Australia receiving invalid pensions, 44.3 per cent were receiving supplementary assistance and 90.4 per cent were receiving fringe benefits. A total of 66.7 per cent of invalid pensioners were male.

Wife's pension

The wife of an age or invalid pensioner may receive a pension if she is residing with him and does not qualify for a pension in her own right. If the husband receives an age pension free of the income test, the wife's pension remains subject to the income test. The pension is assessed as taxable income if the husband's pension is taxable.

At 30 June 1978, there were 7,497 pensions being paid to wives of age pensioners and 12,441 pensions being paid to wives of invalid pensioners in Victoria.

Widow's pension

This pension is income support for widows and to certain other women who have lost the support of a male bread-winner, who have children in their care, or who are over 50 years of age. The basic rate was increased twice in the year, based on the Consumer Price Index figures. Payments are subject to an income test and the pension is assessed as taxable income.

At 30 June 1978, there were 149,956 widow pensioners in Australia (the Victorian total was 41,312); of these, 78.9 per cent were receiving the full rate of the pension; 31.8 per cent were receiving supplementary assistance; and 89.4 per cent were receiving fringe benefits. A total of 43 per cent of widows were home owners.

Sheltered employment allowances

This allowance is income support to disabled sheltered workshop employees, payable in the form of a supplement to wages paid by the sheltered workshop. Payments are subject to an income test at the same rate as for invalid pensions. An income test-free incentive

allowance of \$5 a week is also paid to disabled persons who receive the allowance. Both allowances are exempt from taxation.

At 30 June 1978, there were 1,220 employees receiving allowances in Victoria.

Fringe benefits

Fringe benefits are available to pensioners whose income, other than pension, does not exceed \$33 a week for a single person or \$57.50 a week for a married couple. The limits are increased if the pensioner has children in his/her care.

The fringe benefits available to pensioners and their dependants include a range of free pharmaceuticals, free optometrical consultations and hearing aids, reduction in telephone rental, and reduction in transport costs on Commonwealth Government trains and ships, and Victorian Government trains, trams, and buses.

Pensioners with income below the limits allowed for fringe benefits receive a Health Benefits Card which exempts them from payment of the Medibank levy and gives entitlement to standard Medibank cover.

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, that pensioner may qualify for a funeral benefit up to a maximum of \$40.

Where a person who is not a pensioner is responsible for the funeral expenses of an age or invalid pensioner, or a person receiving a tuberculosis allowance, a funeral benefit up to a maximum of \$20 may be granted.

Expenditure of funeral benefits during the year 1977-78 was \$1,551,000 for Australia, and \$389,000 for Victoria.

Unemployment benefits

Introduced in 1944, unemployment benefits may be paid to unemployed men aged 16 years to 64 years and women aged 16 years to 59 years who have lived in Australia for at least one year immediately before claiming the benefit, or who intend to remain in Australia permanently. To qualify for unemployment benefit, a person must be:

- (1) Unemployed (not due to being a direct participant in a strike); and
- (2) capable of undertaking, and willing to undertake, suitable work and taking reasonable steps to obtain such work.

This "work test" is applied by the Commonwealth Department of Employment and Youth Affairs through the Commonwealth Employment Service.

Only other income received affects the rate of payment. For new claims received from 1 November 1977, benefit payments were altered to cover a period of two weeks in arrears, rather than in advance. (Persons in receipt of unemployment benefit at that time continued to have their payments made fortnightly in advance.)

A person who makes a claim for unemployment benefit on the day he or she becomes unemployed will not be entitled to receive any benefit in respect of the first week of unemployment. After the end of the second week, he or she will receive the benefit for that week on submitting a statement that he or she has not been employed or received income which would cancel the entitlement. This process is repeated and the claimant receives a further two weeks' benefit at fortnightly intervals while the unemployment continues and the other eligibility requirements are met.

Another amendment provided for the consideration of a period of unemployment immediately prior to the date of application for benefit to be taken into account as the whole or part of the waiting period, if it was established that the claimant was able to work and taking reasonable steps to obtain work during that period.

A further amendment provided that, in the case of school leavers, unemployment benefit is not payable for six weeks after the date of ceasing full-time education, or the date of the last examination.

At 30 June 1978, there were 67,632 persons in Victoria on unemployment benefit and during the year \$179,035,000 was paid in Victoria to recipients of benefits. The totals for Australia were 286,091 persons and expenditure of \$794,144,000, respectively.

Sickness benefits

Also introduced in 1944, sickness benefits assist persons temporarily incapacitated for work who have lost income as a result. The benefit is available, subject to an income test, to men aged 16 years to 64 years and women aged 16 years to 59 years. The one year's residence qualification is waived where the Department is satisfied that the claimant intends to remain permanently in Australia.

The method of assessing sickness benefit was changed during 1977-78 so that the combined income of both husband and wife is now taken into account when assessing the rate of payment, as is the case with other income-tested pensions and benefits. Previously, the income of a wife was not taken into account in determining the husband's entitlement to sickness benefit.

A total of 145,910 grants of sickness benefit were made in Australia during 1977-78 (30,047 in Victoria), and there were 35,168 persons on benefit at the end of this period (9,515 in Victoria).

Special benefits

Special benefit is a discretionary payment available to persons who are ineligible for pensions, supporting parents benefit, unemployment or sickness benefits, and who are unable to provide for themselves and their dependants by reasons of age, physical or mental disability, or domestic circumstances.

In certain circumstances, special benefit may also be paid during the waiting period to persons claiming unemployment or sickness benefit who are experiencing immediate and unforeseen hardship due to factors beyond their own control.

At 30 June 1978, 10,964 persons were receiving special benefits throughout Australia, 2,957 of them in Victoria. During 1977-78, 42,706 special benefits were granted in Australia (8,689 in Victoria).

States Grants (Deserted Wives) Act

The States Grants (Deserted Wives) Act came into operation on 1 January 1968. It provides for assistance to be given by the Commonwealth 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 their husband's imprisonment, deserted de facto wives, and unmarried mothers who are ineligible for the Commonwealth Government's supporting parent's benefit.

During the year ended 30 June 1978, payments to the States under this legislation totalled \$20,083,000. The Victorian total was \$4,003,000.

Supporting parent's benefit

The supporting mother's benefit was introduced on 3 July 1973 to provide assistance to lone mothers who were not eligible for the widow's pension. It was changed to the supporting parent's benefit on 10 November 1977 so that this form of assistance would also be available to lone fathers. Those parents who may be eligible for this payment include a male divorcee, a widower, a separated husband or wife, a separated de facto husband or wife, an unmarried parent, or a sole parent supporting a child for any other reason.

These parents qualify for a supporting parent'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 an income test and other qualifications.

During the year ended 30 June 1978, payments under the supporting parent's benefit totalled \$192,825,000, the Victorian total being \$39,635,000. A total of 59,039 women and men were receiving this payment at that date throughout Australia, the Victorian totals being 11,999 women and 415 men.

Additional allowances

Pensioners and beneficiaries may be eligible for up to \$7.50 a week for each dependent child. Age, invalid, and widow pensioners, and supporting parent's beneficiaries may be eligible for up to \$6 a week guardian's or parent's allowance if they are lone parents. Up

to \$5 a week supplementary assistance may be paid to pensioners, only where the pensioner or supporting parent's beneficiary pays rent or for board and lodgings.

At 30 June 1978, there were 206,326 pensioners receiving the guardian's allowance and 366,603 pensioners receiving supplementary assistance throughout Australia.

Maternity allowances

Maternity allowances have, since their introduction in 1912, been paid to mothers residing in Australia on the birth of a child. The number of maternity allowances paid in Victoria during 1977-78 was 61,068, amounting to \$1,903,000.

Family allowances

Family allowances are a continuing payment made to each person (usually the mother) who has the care of one or more children under 16 years of age, or one or more qualified full-time students from 16 years to under 25 years of age. The rate of allowance for each child depends upon the child's position in the family in relation to the other children under 16 years of age. Student children aged from 16 years to under 25 years of age are treated on the same basis as other children.

When it was introduced in 1941, the scheme provided for family allowances to be paid at the rate of 50 cents a week for each child under 16 years of age, other than the first child, 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 16 years of age in families, so that for each child the rate is 25 cents a week more than for the next immediate older child. In October 1971 family allowances were increased by 50 cents for the third and later children.

On 20 May 1976, the Minister for Social Security announced a major restructuring of the family allowances system. The rates for family allowances were increased for the first child from 50 cents a week to \$3.50 a week, for the second child from \$1 to \$5, for the third child from \$2 to \$6, for the fourth child from \$2.25 to \$6, and for the fifth child from \$2.50 to \$7. The rate of allowances for children after the fifth child is also \$7 a week.

The previous "flat rate" of \$1.50 a week for each student child was abolished, and the age limit for student children was extended from under 21 years to under 25 years of age. The rate for student family allowances now ranges from \$3.50 to \$7 a week, depending on how many other children there are in the family and the student child's position in the family. The new rates became effective from the first family allowances pay day after 15 June 1976.

In relation to children under 16 years of age, the total number of endowed families in Australia and abroad at 30 June 1978, was 2,071,058. In Victoria there were 564,779 families with 1,179,289 children and students in families, and 3,077 children and students in institutions. The amount paid to families and approved institutions was \$286,695,000 for Victoria.

Double orphan's pensions

An orphan's pension of \$11 a week is payable to any person having the custody, care, and control of a child under 16 years of age or a full-time student child under 25 years of age if both parents (including adoptive parents of the child) are dead or if one parent is dead and the whereabouts of the other parent is unknown. From 4 November 1975, this was extended to a child whose sole surviving parent or adoptive parent has been committed to prison for not less than ten years or is a long-term patient of a mental hospital. An orphan's pension is free of any means test and is payable in addition to family allowances.

At 30 June 1978, 2,418 guardians and 119 institutions throughout Australia were receiving this payment, of which 438 guardians and 15 institutions were in Victoria.

Handicapped child's allowances

A handicapped child's allowance of \$15 a week 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 16 years of age requiring constant attention and who prefer to provide this attention at home rather than place the child in an institution. A handicapped

child's allowance is free of any means test and is payable in addition to family allowances. A similar allowance is paid in respect of a substantially handicapped child, but is subject to an income test.

A total of 21,220 persons throughout Australia (6,340 persons in Victoria) were in receipt of a handicapped child's allowance at 30 June 1978.

Reciprocal agreements

The Social Services Act provides for the Commonwealth 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 the United Kingdom at 30 June 1978.

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. Persons receiving a pension only by virtue of the reciprocal agreements with the United Kingdom or New Zealand are not eligible for "portability of pensions".

Portability of pensions

Age and invalid pensioners and their wives, widow pensioners, and supporting parents beneficiaries may continue to receive their pensions overseas, whether their absence is temporary or permanent. Portability applies only to those persons who left Australia after 8 May 1973 and were entitled to a pension at the date of departure. If a former resident returns to Australia prior to the granting of a pension, he or she must intend to stay permanently and, if granted, the pension is not portable for twelve months. At 30 June 1978, a total of 13,318 Australian pensions and benefits were being paid overseas.

Appeals

If individuals are dissatisfied with decisions made by the Department on pensions, benefits, or allowances, they may ask that their case be examined by a special review officer, or make an approach to the Social Security Appeals Tribunal.

Grants to organisations to produce welfare services

The Commonwealth Government also provides financial assistance to eligible organisations such as other levels of government and non-profit organisations (e.g., religious, ethnic, or ex-servicemen organisations). These organisations in turn conduct welfare services with specialised target groups such as migrants, handicapped persons, aged persons, children, and homeless persons. The various programmes are: (1) aged or disabled persons homes, (2) personal care subsidy, (3) delivered meals subsidy, (4) States Grants (Home Care) Act, (5) handicapped persons assistance, (6) homeless persons assistance, (7) welfare rights, (8) Office of Child Care, (9) community information centres, (10) financial assistance for community welfare agencies in need, and (11) grant to Victorian Council of Social Service.

Aged or disabled persons homes

The Aged Persons Homes Act was introduced in 1954 to assist eligible charitable and benevolent organisations, or organisations of a similar nature, with Commonwealth Government capital grants towards the cost of providing self-contained and hostel-type accommodation for aged persons.

Grants were originally made on a \$1 for \$1 basis but were increased to \$2 for \$1 in 1957. In 1967, local government bodies were included as eligible organisations and grants became available for nursing accommodation. In April 1974, a separate subsidy for land became available. The Act was amended to the Aged or Disabled Persons Homes Act from 3 December 1974 to include disabled persons and the ratio of subsidy was increased to \$4 for \$1.

From 20 May 1976, the ratio of subsidy reverted to \$2 for \$1 but at the same time the maximum subsidy limits were increased to \$10,200 per single self-contained unit, hostel, or nursing bed and further increased to \$10,480 from 1 October 1976, \$10,800 from February 1977, and \$11,130 from 1 April 1977.

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 residents.

Since the original legislation was enacted in 1954, grants amounting to \$280,431,753 had been approved to 30 June 1978. The projects gave accommodation to 60,972 aged and later disabled persons. In Victoria, 41 grants had been approved amounting to \$8,663,890.

In 1976, the Commonwealth Government announced that it proposed to allocate \$225m Australia-wide over the next three years for capital grants under the Aged or Disabled Persons Homes Act and the Aged Persons Hostels Act. Grants were approved on a priority needs basis. Details concerning those organisations which have received a priority appeared in the Commonwealth Parliament's *Hansard* on 8 September 1976.

The Commonwealth Government set up a Committee of Inquiry into the Care of the Aged and Infirm and also appointed a task force to examine welfare services and community based programmes in the health/welfare/community development area. Future policy decisions may be made in the light of the recommendations received from these inquiries.

Aged Persons Hostels Act

This legislation is explained on page 710 of the *Victorian Year Book* 1976. Organisations which established an entitlement under this Act have had their entitlement preserved. Since the original legislation was enacted in 1972, grants amounting to \$126,430,487 had been approved to 30 June 1978, giving accommodation to 9,359 aged persons. In Victoria, 63 grants providing accommodation for 1,913 aged persons amounting to \$28,583,109 had been approved.

Details concerning priorities, and the future programme, are set out in the previous section on the Aged or Disabled Persons Homes Act.

Personal care subsidy

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 are employed to assist those who need help with bathing, dressing, personal laundry, and the cleaning of their room, 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: (1) 80 years of age and over, and (2) under 80 years of age but receiving personal care service because they are permanently unable to perform those tasks themselves. At 30 June 1978, 609 premises had been approved for subsidy in Australia, and the subsidy paid for the twelve months was \$12,564,000. In Victoria, the number of homes approved was 161 and the subsidy paid was \$3,449,000.

Delivered meals subsidy

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 Commonwealth or State Governments may apply for the subsidy. Local government bodies may also apply. At 30 June 1978, the number of approved organisations in Australia was 609, the number of meals served was 7,111,750 during the year, and the amounts granted totalled \$2,198,000. The Victorian totals were 177 approved organisations, 2,252,338 meals, and the amounts granted totalled \$730,220.

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. Up to 30 June 1978, the Commonwealth Government subsidised services provided through municipal councils on a \$2 for \$1 basis. The Commonwealth Government paid half the salary of a welfare officer co-ordinating home care services run by, or in association with, senior citizens centres. During the year, payments of \$13,805,368 were made to the States under the Act, of which \$4,464,010 was allocated to Victoria.

Handicapped person's assistance

The Handicapped Persons Assistance Act came into effect 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 had previously been 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 rehabilitation 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 within 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 \$5 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. For the year 1977-78, the amount paid under the Act by all States was \$37,869,944—the Victorian total being \$8,845,000.

Homeless person's assistance

This programme was set up to assist non-profit organisations and local government authorities to provide accommodation, food, and care for homeless persons.

To 30 June 1978, the total amount paid to organisations in Victoria was \$448,509.

Welfare rights programme

Funding continued to five organisations in Victoria for the appointment of welfare rights officers to work with organisations associated with disadvantaged minority groups within the community. These organisations are Parents Without Partners, Council for Single Mother and her Child, Comitato Assistenza Italiani, Australian-Turkish Association, and Australian-Greek Welfare Society. The programme is designed to promote self-help and improve access to welfare services and entitlements. At present, grants of \$10,000 are allocated to each of the organisations each year.

The programme will continue until 30 June 1979 and is presently being evaluated to determine the effectiveness of a welfare rights approach to social welfare.

Child care

The Children's Services Programme provides funds for a wide range of child care services, including pre-schooling, full day care, centre-based care, family day care, occasional and emergency care, family support and counselling services, and innovative services for children with particular needs.

Where a project is approved, financial assistance is given to local government authorities and community organisations which provide priority of access to those whose need is greatest. In addition, block grants are made to the State Governments for pre-schooling and family support services.

Total expenditure on the Children's Services Programme in Australia in 1977-78 was \$71,132,000, and in Victoria was \$21,951,600.

Community information centres

The evaluation of the operation of the Ballarat Citizens Advice Bureau which is functioning as a community information centre and referral service with partial funding from the Department is continuing.

Financial assistance for community welfare agencies in need

This scheme was introduced to provide assistance to organisations experiencing financial difficulties as "once only" aid to enable agencies to make their own adjustments. It is not meant to replace other government and non-government funding.

In 1977-78, the amount of grants made in Victoria totalled \$34,500 to two organisations, bringing the total paid since 1974-75 in Victoria to \$198,400.

Grant to Victorian Council of Social Service

A supplementary grant of \$10,000 was made to the Victorian Council of Social Service to assist in the production, in conjunction with the Victorian Social Welfare Department, of a directory of welfare services in Victoria, using the Department of Social Security's computer system.

Welfare service provision

The Commonwealth Department of Social Security also engages in the provision of the following welfare services.

Commonwealth Government Rehabilitation Service

Rehabilitation is provided free of charge to: (1) Pensioners and claimants for pensions who would derive substantial benefit from the treatment or training; (2) beneficiaries and claimants for benefit who, without treatment, would be likely to become unemployable; (3) those receiving a tuberculosis allowance; (4) any other person (men aged 16 years to 65 years or women aged 16 years to 60 years) who would be likely to derive substantial benefit from the treatment or training; and (5) boys and girls aged 14 years or 15 years who, without treatment or training, would be likely to qualify for an invalid pension at 16 years of age.

Persons are chosen from these groups if the treatment will lead to persons: (1) Undertaking employment whether full-time, part-time, or sheltered employment; (2) undertaking or resuming household duties; or (3) leading an independent or semi-independent life in his/her home. Persons who do not fall within the eligibility criteria may be accepted for treatment on a paying basis.

During 1977-78, 831 persons were accepted for rehabilitation in Victoria; 343 commenced vocational training and 435 were placed in employment. Expenditure on rehabilitation in Victoria during the year totalled \$4,248,279.

Individual and group welfare work

Social workers and welfare officers located in the Department's regional offices provide assistance to beneficiaries of the Department's programmes and to community groups and organisations in planning and developing services which either remedy problems common to many persons, or are designed to prevent their occurrence in the first place.

The Victorian Office of the Department introduced a standardised reporting sheet in April 1978 to be completed by welfare workers on a monthly basis recording the number of client contacts and the responses to these contacts in order to begin building data to help in predicting future trends.

Information services

During 1977-78, this section continued to inform individuals and agencies of their rights and entitlements to various payments and services. Activities included arranging seminars for Aborigines, for Members of Parliament and their staff, and for rural welfare agencies; arranging displays at the Royal Melbourne Show, Moomba, and city banks; producing a public contact system directory for welfare agencies; arranging speakers to present talks to various groups on social security matters; submitting regular advice columns on social security to country newspapers; distributing leaflets and posters; and answering inquiries from the public concerning Departmental programmes.

Statistical summary

VICTORIA—SOCIAL WELFARE PROGRAMMES

Programme	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76	1976-77	1977-78
Transfer payments to individual citizens—					
Age pensions—					
Number of pensioners	277,502	300,839	316,950	329,467	342,565
Amount paid (\$'000) (a)	306,714	432,555	576,850	670,118	786,832
Invalid pensions—					
Number of pensioners	35,392	38,257	42,044	47,698	49,379
Amount paid (\$'000) (a)	50,201	68,190	90,906	114,621	138,545

VICTORIA—SOCIAL WELFARE PROGRAMMES—*continued*

Programme	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76	1976-77	1977-78
Widow's pensions—					
Number of pensioners	32,232	34,056	36,664	39,125	41,312
Amount paid (\$'000)	50,064	66,474	90,491	102,341	119,255
Sheltered employment allowances—					
Amount paid (\$'000)	..	..	1,230	2,667	3,212
Funeral benefits—					
Number of claims granted	n.a.	14,184	13,227	12,910	13,126
Amount paid (\$'000)	416	417	395	383	389
Unemployment benefits—					
Number of benefits granted	54,213	175,596	187,393	163,677	216,928
Amount paid (\$'000)	14,635	66,361	128,634	131,419	179,035
Sickness benefits—					
Number of benefits granted	29,180	31,569	31,623	28,464	30,047
Amount paid (\$'000)	12,271	18,193	25,976	28,950	30,608
Special benefits—					
Number of benefits granted (b)	2,679	3,470	7,350	7,817	8,689
Amount paid (\$'000) (b)	1,606	2,560	4,032	5,292	7,119
States Grants (Deserted Wives) Act—					
Amount paid (\$'000)	n.a.	1,256	2,016	2,824	4,003
Supporting parent's benefit—					
Number of beneficiaries	5,638	7,511	9,275	10,716	12,414
Amount paid (\$'000)	8,964	15,786	25,678	32,123	39,635
Maternity allowances—					
Number of allowances granted	67,252	62,955	62,197	58,228	61,068
Amount paid (\$'000)	2,138	1,978	1,953	1,808	1,903
Family allowances—					
Number of families	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	560,261	564,779
Number of approved institutions	n.a.	128	128	128	128
Number of children and students in—					
Families	1,182,925	1,186,411	1,181,692	1,178,318	1,179,289
Institutions	5,767	4,755	4,408	3,738	3,077
Total amount paid (\$'000)	n.a.	62,885	73,912	282,527	286,695
Double orphan's pensions—					
Number of guardians	n.a.	368	453	497	438
Number of institutions	n.a.	15	15	15	15
Number of orphans	691	687	810	913	835
Amount paid (\$'000)	107	291	415	495	401
Handicapped child's allowances—					
Number of claims granted	..	4,118	1,748	1,317	1,480
Amount paid (\$'000)	..	248	2,155	3,833	4,828
Grants to organisations to produce welfare services—					
Aged or Disabled Persons Homes Act—					
Number of capital grants	34	45	38	17	41
Amount of grants (\$'000)	3,337	7,743	1,064	5,656	8,664
Personal Care Subsidy Act—					
Subsidies paid (\$'000)	1,440	2,283	2,514	2,900	3,449
Delivered Meals Subsidy Act—					
Expenditure (\$'000)	440	480	585	540	730
States Grants (Home Care) Act—					
Amount paid (\$'000)	568	642	3,647	3,882	4,464
Handicapped Persons Assistance Act—					
Number of grants approved	..	274	476	469	394
Amount paid (\$'000)	..	1,741	2,248	5,244	3,885
Handicapped Persons Assistance Act—					
Children's Benefit—					
Amount paid (\$'000)	114	196	270	329	358
Homeless Persons Assistance Act—					
Amount paid (\$'000)	..	142	491	383	449
Welfare services provision—					
Commonwealth Government Rehabilitation Scheme—					
Amount paid (\$'000)	2,358	3,487	3,994	4,142	4,248

(a) Amount comprises payment for pensioners and pensioners in benevolent homes, allowances/pensions to wives, guardian's allowance, additional pension in respect of children, and supplementary assistance.

(b) Excludes special benefits to migrants in accommodation centres.

Further references: History of social services, *Victorian Year Book* 1962, pp. 281-95; Sheltered employment assistance, 1969, pp. 561-3

Commonwealth Department of Veterans' Affairs*Introduction*

The Commonwealth Department of Veterans' Affairs is responsible, subject to the control of the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, 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 provision of assistance towards 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. Since 5 October 1976, the Department has also been responsible for the administration of the Defence Service Homes Scheme and the Office of Australian War Graves.

Disability and dependants 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. Disability pensions for incapacity are paid in accordance with the assessed degree of disablement suffered by the veterans and are not subject to any income 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.

Dependants' pensions are payable to the wife of a disability pensioner and for each child under 16 years of age or a student child who is not receiving a Commonwealth 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 service-related, or if, at the time of his death, he was receiving the special rate of disability pension, or the equivalent rate payable to certain double amputees, a war widow's (or defence widow's) pension is paid to his widow, and pensions are also paid for each child under 16 years of age or receiving full-time education regardless of age. Eligible war widows (and defence widows) may also receive an additional payment known as a domestic allowance. There were 462,686 disability pensions payable to veterans, miscellaneous personnel, and their dependants at 30 June 1978, and the annual expenditure including allowances was \$419,033,854. Of these pensions, 118,319 were payable in Victoria and the annual expenditure was \$108,826,764.

Service pensions

Service pensions were introduced in 1936. Unlike a disability pension, a service pension is not a compensatory pension and was introduced to provide for the intangible and indefinable effects of war service. It is payable to a veteran who has served in a theatre of war, and has either attained 60 years of age (55 years of age in the case of a female veteran) or who is permanently unemployable. It may also be payable to a veteran of the Boer War. Certain veterans who had theatre of war service in the armed forces of the British Commonwealth countries in wars or war-like conflicts in which Australian forces were engaged and who have resided in Australia for ten years may also qualify for a service pension.

Before November 1976, service pensions were subject to a means test, which, from that date, was replaced by a test on income only. The wife of a service pensioner may also be eligible if she is not in receipt of a pension, subject to an income test from the Commonwealth Department of Social Security. The same income 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. Eligibility for these benefits is not extended to service pensioners who served only in the armed forces of other British Commonwealth countries. At 30 June 1978, 118,955 veterans and 69,535 wives were receiving a service pension. Of these 3,124 veterans and 1,886 wives/widows were receiving a service pension in respect of service in the armed forces of other British Commonwealth countries.

In Victoria, at 30 June 1978, 30,052 veterans and 17,599 wives/widows were in receipt of a service pension.

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. A description of the types of service and institutions operated by the Department is set out on page 612.

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 service-related, or who died from causes not service-related, but who were receiving, at the time of death, a pension at or equivalent to the special rate, or who, as a result of service, are blinded or totally and permanently incapacitated.

Re-establishment benefits for former regular servicemen

Re-establishment loans may be granted, subject to certain conditions, to former regular servicemen 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.

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.

Statistical summary

VICTORIA—DISABILITY AND SERVICE PENSIONS (a)

Year	Veterans	Dependants of incapacitated veterans	Dependants of deceased veterans	Total pensions in effect	Amount paid during year
					\$'000
DISABILITY PENSIONS					
1973-74	53,823	70,647	16,328	140,798	67,458
1974-75	52,113	67,251	15,865	135,229	83,837
1975-76	50,422	63,904	15,525	129,851	89,249
1976-77	48,826	60,491	15,169	124,486	98,156
1977-78	46,965	56,238	15,116	118,319	108,827
SERVICE PENSIONS					
1973-74	19,874	7,707	743	28,324	26,532
1974-75	21,593	9,244	738	31,575	40,181
1975-76	24,165	11,418	715	36,298	55,141
1976-77	27,196	14,234	688	42,118	72,127
1977-78	30,052	17,599	(b)	47,651	93,631

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

(b) Included in figure for dependants of incapacitated veterans.

VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Victorian Ministry of Social Welfare

Introduction

New welfare legislation

In December 1978, the Victorian Parliament passed a Bill to amend the *Social Welfare Act 1970*, and to establish a Department of Community Welfare Services. It was expected

that the *Community Services Act 1978* would be proclaimed early in 1979. The major provisions of the new Act are described below.

First, the new Act involves the explicit establishment of community development functions for the Department of Community Welfare Services. Under the new Act, the functions of the Department with respect to community welfare and development and welfare services are:

- (1) To facilitate the development of welfare services and the administration of welfare programmes at the regional and local level, in co-operation and conjunction with government departments, voluntary organisations, and community groups;
- (2) to ensure that welfare services are fully accessible to all persons, and that information concerning all services is readily available, by co-operating with government departments, municipalities, voluntary organisations, and community groups;
- (3) to promote co-ordination of welfare services planning and delivery through co-operating with providers and consumers of welfare services, and to encourage voluntary participation, self-help, and consumer involvement in the planning, development, and carrying out of welfare services; and
- (4) to assist communities to identify and to meet the continuing and emerging needs of families and individuals within their communities.

The functions of the Department with respect to social planning are:

- (1) To establish, maintain, and develop consultative and co-operative arrangements which promote the co-ordination of social resources in Victoria in conjunction with government agencies, municipalities, voluntary organisations, and community groups;
- (2) to integrate social planning with economic and physical planning, in conjunction with other government agencies; and
- (3) to promote, assist, and encourage community consultation in social resource planning.

Second, the new Act incorporates the formation of a Child Development and Family Services Council to supersede the Family Welfare Advisory Council.

The functions of the new Council are:

- (1) At the request of any of the Ministers, to advise on policy and programme matters relating to community, family, youth, child care, and development, and in particular, the policies to be adopted and programme requirements and practices, but not including any matters otherwise referred to the Consultative Council on Maternal and Child Health, established pursuant to the provisions of the *Health Commission Act 1977*;
- (2) subject to the approval of any of the Ministers, to initiate, promote, or carry out investigations relating to community, family, youth, child care, and development and welfare matters, and to make recommendations arising out of those investigations;
- (3) to invite and receive information from State and Federal bodies, municipalities, non-government organisations, and community groups and others in the community, family, youth, child care, and development fields, and generally keep informed of developments the Council considers relevant to the work of the Council;
- (4) subject to the approval of any of the Ministers, to initiate meetings, seminars, and discussion documents in relation to child development and family services;
- (5) to advise the Minister on principles relating to licensing, contracts, and registration; and
- (6) at the request of any of the Ministers, to establish, convene, or co-ordinate sub-committees, working parties, or task forces which facilitate the undertaking of the functions of the Council.

Third, the new Act provides for the establishment of a Correctional Services Advisory Council to replace the Prisons Advisory Council.

The functions of the new Council are:

- (1) To advise the Ministers concerning the policies to be adopted and the programmes to be undertaken from time to time in relation to the custody, care, education, discipline, training, and treatment of persons held on remand or sentenced to imprisonment or to detention in a youth training centre by the Supreme Court, the County Court, or a Magistrates' Court;
- (2) to advise the Ministers concerning the policies to be adopted and programmes to be undertaken from time to time in relation to community correctional programmes;

- (3) to consult with government and non-government organisations and community groups on policies relating to correctional services in the community;
- (4) to seek and acquire information from government and non-government organisations and community groups on correctional services in the community; and
- (5) at the request of any of the Ministers, to initiate meetings, seminars, and discussion documents in relation to correctional services.

The new Act also legislates for the mandatory annual review of all wardships and children in care, and for the establishment of an independent appeals tribunal.

White Paper on Social Welfare

The *Community Welfare Services Act 1978* was tabled in the Victorian Parliament simultaneously with the release of the first Victorian Government White Paper on Social Welfare, which represented the Victorian Government's public statement on long-term policy directions for welfare services in Victoria. The White Paper followed a year-long process of consultations and discussions, and the major policies approved by the Victorian Government are described below.

First, the Victorian Government will promote the co-ordination of existing services, and their integration into broader and simpler programmes where reasonably practical. The Victorian Government will encourage interaction between physical, economic, and social planning arrangements for Victoria.

Second, the Child Development and Family Services Council will report to the Minister for Community Welfare Services and the Minister responsible for the administration of the Health Commission of Victoria, with respect to early childhood development, together with such other Ministers as determined by the Premier of Victoria. The Correctional Services Council will report to the Minister for Community Welfare Services and the Attorney-General, and such other Ministers as determined by the Premier of Victoria.

Third, the Local Government Board of Review into the role and structure of local government in Victoria will be requested to examine the report of the Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research at the University of Melbourne, entitled *Local government, health, and welfare services*, together with the Municipal Association of Victoria's concept for the provision of tied subsidies to local government authorities being replaced, where appropriate, by mini-block grants, through the Victorian Local Government Department.

Fourth, the Department of Community Welfare Services, in conjunction with the voluntary agencies, Citizens' Advice Bureaux, and other relevant organisations, will develop the human services information system being created by the Victorian Consultative Committee on Social Development, to ensure that existing services are widely utilised and adequately supported, and are acknowledged in developing new services.

Fifth, family policies arising from the Child Care Inquiry and the Family Services Report will be progressively implemented. Preventive services for families and young persons will be expanded in co-operation with the Commonwealth Government and local government authorities, voluntary agencies, and the community at large. Preventive pre-Court, post-Court, and after-care programmes will be provided for children, young persons, and adults to restore individual family and community functioning. Existing opportunities for volunteer and voluntary associations to participate in the provision of services as part of the community resource network will be expanded.

Sixth, correctional services in Victoria will be re-organised to separate first offenders who are sentenced to less than twelve months imprisonment, and who have not previously been imprisoned, from all other offenders. There will be increased emphasis on promoting alternatives to institutional penalties. Work release schemes and attendance centres will be expanded. Community service orders will be developed. There will be a Commissioner of Correctional Services within the Department of Community Welfare Services, to identify the specialist nature of the Correctional Services Division. High security accommodation will be extended, and the prison system will be improved, to reach the minimum standards set by the United Nations. Prison industries and farms will be re-organised, and a Prisons Industry Corporation established. Increasing emphasis will be placed on programme development within prisons, and more accredited volunteers will be encouraged, to assist prisoners towards self-development.

Next, the Public Service Board of Victoria will be requested to assist the Department of Community Welfare Services to improve its management and administrative systems, to replace out-of-date equipment, and give consideration to modern management practices, including programme planning, objectives-based management, and zero-based budgeting.

The Family and Community Services Consultative Committee will also be available to government departments and organisations wishing to utilise or seek advice from them concerning social planning, community development, advice on local service programmes, and assistance in the preparation of family and community impact statements.

Moreover, the Department of Community Welfare Services will be authorised to develop alternative programmes for the institutions currently holding wards of State, with a view to reducing the number of children and young persons in custodial care, and establishing family and community-based substitute care throughout the State. Funds currently available for institutional care will be re-directed, wherever possible, towards alternative community service schemes. Arrangements for licensing, contracts, and registration will be developed in conjunction with voluntary agencies to improve standards of service provision.

Finally, the Ministry of Federal Affairs, the Premier's Department, and the Department of Community Welfare Services will establish an inter-departmental committee to examine the extent to which the Commonwealth Government's "New Federalism" policies have transferred financial burdens to the State Governments, and recommend ways and means of ensuring that the Commonwealth Government properly shoulders its responsibilities, under the Australian Constitution, in the welfare field for income security programmes.

Family and Adolescent Services Division

Reception and Youth Training Centre Section

Children may be admitted to the care of the Department through an order from the Children's Court, on the grounds that a child may be in need of care and protection, is uncontrolled, or has broken the law. Children may also be placed in the care of the Department through an application to the Director-General by a parent or other custodian. The Director-General must be satisfied that admission to care will be in the best interests of the child.

The Department 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 is one other youth training centre for boys at Bayswater. The Bayswater centre is directed by the Salvation Army. Young persons entering Turana and Winlton youth training centres are classified by social workers according to their individual problems, and programmes are planned for them to meet their particular needs.

The programmes carried out at youth training centres aim to help these young persons to adjust to community living by encouraging social growth, and by providing opportunities for education and training, geared towards individual levels of ability, maturity, and interest. Special efforts are made to maintain and strengthen family relationships—visits by parents are encouraged and regular weekend and special leave may be granted.

Youth Welfare Services Section

The Department operates two hostels, situated at Sunshine and Ivanhoe, to accommodate young persons coming from Turana and Winlton. Residents at the hostels are encouraged to become self-reliant, and to find suitable private accommodation when they leave. There are also twenty-four voluntary hostels which work in close co-operation with the Department.

The Department maintains four community-based youth welfare services, and finances another service at Doveton, which is operated by a voluntary agency. The Hawthorn Youth Welfare Service provides short-term non-residential care for boys between the ages of 14 years and 17 years. The boys participate in group discussions and undertake community service projects. They are helped individually through counselling, and in a variety of other ways, aimed at helping them to make a more satisfactory adjustment to community living. The Brunswick Youth Welfare Service is similar to the Hawthorn Service in its basic aims, but it also provides residential accommodation, and caters for boys who experience problems at home, at school, or in their employment. The staff at

the Brunswick Service work closely with parents, teachers, and employers. The Windsor Youth Welfare Service is for girls, and it also includes a residential section. The Western Youth Welfare Service at Ascot Vale caters for young persons from the West and North-West regions of the Melbourne metropolitan area. It conducts special education programmes for the younger and older age groups, including an education and employment programme for young persons experiencing problems at school and work.

The Grassmere Youth Welfare Service at Doveton operates on a similar principle to the youth welfare services operated by the Department, but is directed by a voluntary agency. The Carlton Project is another youth welfare service which is supported by the Department and directed by a community group. The services to be provided by the Carlton Project include a youth legal service, an employment service, and an emergency accommodation service. An after-school programme is already operating at the Project. The Co-ordinator of Aboriginal Family and Adolescent Services supervises two hostels for Aboriginal boys and girls, and a Youth Support Unit in the inner urban region of Melbourne.

Adoptions Section

The Adoptions Section of the Department works in close co-operation with eleven private adoption agencies in selecting suitable adoptive parents, and arranging placements for the limited number of babies now becoming available for adoption. The Department arranges the adoption of children in its care where adoption eligibility has been established, and of children whose parents or guardian nominates the Director-General to arrange the adoption. The Department has set up a specialised adoption unit to arrange adoptions for children with special needs, including older and handicapped children. The Departmental Adoptions Section and the Child Care Service of the Uniting Church (formerly the Child Care Service of the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches) are the only two adoption agencies in Victoria involved in arranging and monitoring inter-country adoptions.

Residential Child Care Section

Children are usually received into one of the four Departmental reception centres—Allambie and Baltara in Melbourne; Warrawee in Ballarat; and Miraltee in Mildura. Normally, the children are placed away from these centres after a stay ranging from a few weeks to a few months. They may either move on to a departmental or voluntary children's home, or a foster home, or be home-released under supervision to their parents or relatives.

The Department operates six children's homes of its own, each capable of caring for about thirty children, and sixty family group homes in which four to eight children are cared for by cottage parents in a family-type situation. Departmental children's homes take account of the individual needs of each child, and attempt to avoid an institutional-type atmosphere. Regional centre social workers review the progress of children in care in consultation with such persons as child care staff, youth officers, nurses, doctors, and teachers, and maintain contact with children released to their own homes. The continuing interest of parents in their children's progress is welcomed and encouraged by the Department.

Voluntary agencies operating approved children's homes caring for wards of State receive Victorian Government funding for 90 per cent of residential care workers' salaries, in addition to a per capita allocation.

Regional Services Division

Introduction

The regionalisation programme aims to make the services of the Department more accessible to the community; to encourage and support the development of programmes suited to local needs; and to improve co-operation and liaison with other government and private welfare agencies at the regional level.

The programme has been implemented progressively over the last six years, and is now almost completed. Regional centres have been opened in the ten rural regions, and a network of sub-offices and visiting services to outlying towns and shires has been established to supplement the work of the regional centres. Seven regional centres are in

operation in the Melbourne metropolitan area, serving the north-western suburbs, the north-eastern suburbs, the outer-eastern suburbs, the western suburbs, Western Port, the southern suburbs, and the inner urban region. It was planned to open a centre in the inner eastern region during 1979.

Regional centres are administering an increasing number of the services provided by the Department, as the following notes indicate.

Financial assistance

The Department may make family assistance payments to single-parent families or family supportive grants to families experiencing financial hardship. The aim of the payments is to help keep families together when a shortage of money might lead them to break up.

Family counselling and information services

Services are provided for persons who want to talk about, and seek information on, matters affecting their families. Advice may be given on accommodation services, the availability of financial assistance, and other services relevant to the needs of families and individuals.

Foster care

The administration of the foster care programme was transferred to the Regional Services Division in May 1976, with the aim of developing regionally-based foster care programmes throughout Victoria. The regional administration of foster care makes it possible for children to live in areas with which they are familiar, and facilitates continued contact with natural parents. The Department also conducts a conference of approved fostering agencies.

Probation

Probation in Victoria is an alternative to custodial care. When an offender is admitted to probation, which may be for a period of between one year and five years for adults, and up to three years, but not extending beyond their eighteenth birthday, for children, the offender consents to comply with certain conditions. These conditions are: to report to the probation service within 48 hours of appearing in court; 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, directing abstinence from liquor, attendance at a medical or psychiatric clinic, or avoidance of specified company or places. 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 ensure that the conditions of the order are adhered to. At the same time, every effort is made to assist the probationer to develop personal resources and any other capabilities which may enable the probationer to lead a more useful and productive life in society. Contact between the probationer and the probation officer varies in its intensity. Initially, it tends to be more frequent, and then gradually decreases. The seriousness of the offence committed, the person'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, and a decision is made as to whether or not 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 a sentence of imprisonment or detention in a youth training centre. On the other hand, the court may decide to take no action.

Parole

Victoria has a Youth Parole Board and an Adult Parole Board. These Boards have the power to release on parole those persons who have been sentenced to imprisonment or detention, but who are eligible to be released on parole before the full sentence or detention is served. The Youth Parole Board can release on parole young persons undergoing detention in a youth training centre at any time during the term of the

sentence. The Adult Parole Board, however, may not consider the release of a prisoner until the minimum term of the sentence, less remissions, has been served.

The main concern of the Parole Boards is whether the person is a good risk on parole. The Boards base their decisions on the reports they receive from the parole services, and the youth welfare and prison authorities. Medical and psychiatric reports are also submitted when necessary. The person's criminal history is also taken into account. The Boards may either grant parole, defer consideration to a later date, or deny parole. Parole Board decisions cannot be appealed against legally but, at the request of the prisoner or the prisoner's relatives, can be reviewed.

In the main, parole supervision procedures are similar to those of probation. On the day of release, the parolee is handed a parole order which contains conditions similar to those on probation orders. The parole officer is required to ensure that the conditions of parole are complied with, to assist the parolee and, where appropriate, the family of the parolee.

Approximately 68 per cent of parolees complete parole successfully. The date of completion of parole is when the full sentence set by the court, less any remissions earned by the prisoner before being released on parole, expires. If a parolee is sentenced to a further term of imprisonment, his parole, as a rule, is cancelled. In addition, the Parole Boards can cancel parole at any time, should the parolee fail to comply with the conditions of the parole order, or should the parolee's behaviour be unsatisfactory.

Other services

Other supportive services being developed by regional centres, in conjunction with local community agencies, include financial counselling, family aides, family support units, emergency foster care, and emergency accommodation facilities. Regional centres are responsible for the supervision of residential care facilities, school attendance, regulation of the employment of children under 15 years of age in street trading or entertainment, the protection of children under 5 years of age who are placed away from home by their parents, after-care supervision of wards of State on home release to parents or relatives, and the provision of support for children and young persons in trouble with the law, involving the preparation of pre-sentence and post-sentence court reports.

The co-ordination and oversight of Departmental programmes and services at the regional level is maintained by Head Office co-ordinators of family substitute care (foster care), protective services, financial assistance, correctional field services, family supportive services, and family and community services programmes.

Some special facilities are provided as part of the activities of the Inner Urban Regional Centre. The Liaison and Referral Unit, located at Head Office, functions as a central reference point for all facilities and services in relation to case-planning inquiries and disputes, with access to all central records systems and the records of all facilities and services. As well, staff provide a comprehensive pre-sentence advisory service to the Melbourne Children's Court, and to families of children appearing before the Court, as well as liaising with the Victoria Police Force in all matters regarding children appearing before the Court.

The Special Supervision Unit is responsible for supervision of parolees who represent a severe risk to themselves or the community, or who demonstrate complex problems, independently of legal designation. The Unit provides a pre-parole service to the metropolitan prisons and youth training centres, and co-operates with regional centres in all matters associated with pre-parole and parolees.

Family and Community Services Programme

The Family and Community Services (FACS) Programme is a process combining three basic resources—funding, staff, and consultative structures—with the overall objective of developing services which preserve and strengthen individual and family life, promote personal growth, and help persons to play a significant role in their local communities. The three basic operating principles underlying the FACS Programme are:

- (1) The encouragement of voluntary activity, and the recognition that the work of self-help groups is the most efficient means of deploying welfare resources;
- (2) the fostering of local community projects is a significant preventive strategy in a system of services for families and communities; and

(3) the provision of appropriate services is best achieved by involving those affected by the programme.

Regional consultative committees operate in the eighteen designated regions of Victoria, comprising representatives from government departments, local councils, welfare agencies, self-help groups, and elected citizens. In addition to recommending regional priorities for projects seeking funds from the FACS Programme, regional consultative committees undertake consultation within their respective regions, to determine welfare needs and service deficiencies.

Funds are made available by the Victorian Government under the FACS Programme for local initiative grants, community service grants, federating agencies grants, and information and referral services. Three FACS Programme staff members are located at each regional centre to assist regional consultative committees and local communities to plan, design, and develop localised services within a regional network of family and community services.

For more detailed information on this programme, see the special article on pages 650-1.

Correctional Services Division

Prisons

All persons detained in Victorian prisons are controlled and supervised by the Social Welfare Department (now called the Department of Community Welfare Services). The management of prisoners involves a wide range of operations, and a variety of specialised skills. Qualified staff are employed to carry out the Department's correctional services programmes and welfare services. The maintenance of security is another important and obvious feature of the Department's responsibility in the correctional field.

In Victoria, ten prisons are maintained for men, and one for women. Differences in the levels of security at the prisons, and in the types of programmes provided, make it possible to match prisoners to the prison which is most appropriate for their management and rehabilitation.

Pentridge Prison, situated in the Melbourne suburb of Coburg, is the largest prison in Victoria, and holds more than half the number of male prisoners in the State. The Prisoners' Classification Centre is also located at Pentridge. Prisoners serving sentences of at least one year (or six months, if they are under 21 years of age), and those eligible for parole, are interviewed by the Classification Committee, which endeavours to place them in the most appropriate institution. Prisoners can be employed in a wide variety of prison industries, and industry products are supplied to outside customers as well as to government departments. Pentridge industries include the manufacture of number-plates for motor vehicles, brush and broom-making, a bakery, the tailoring of jackets and jeans, printing, matting, a laundry, and an engineering shop for maintenance work.

Pentridge is divided into three separate sub-prisons (Southern, Central, and Northern) which share general administration and supply services. Each sub-prison is autonomous, and is administered by a Governor who is responsible to the prison Superintendent. The Southern Prison comprises three Divisions: (1) D Division holds trial and remand cases; (2) G Division is a psychiatric and medical clinic; and (3) F Division holds short-term prisoners convicted of minor offences. The Central Prison comprises two Divisions: (1) E Division provides dormitory accommodation for medium-term prisoners; and (2) B Division is a high-security division holding long-term prisoners. The Northern Prison comprises three Divisions: (1) J Division caters specifically for offenders who are under 21 years of age; (2) A Division holds mainly first offenders who are serving longer terms, and offers a wide range of diversified activities; and (3) H Division holds prisoners who are considered to be a security risk, or who have been sent for disciplinary or safety reasons from other Divisions or prisons.

Ararat Prison is the largest prison in Victoria outside Melbourne. It is a medium-security prison, in which most prisoners are housed in four-bed cells. Industries conducted at the prison include the manufacture of tubular steel products, sign-writing, mat-making, silk-screen printing, forestry, and market gardening. Beechworth has a medium-security prison of the old walled type. Prisoners at Beechworth take part in a variety of community service projects. The prison also has a carpenter's shop, a farm, and a large commercial pine plantation. Bendigo Prison is also an old walled medium-security prison.

Prisoners there take part in community service projects, and the prison has a well-equipped sheetmetal work industry. Castlemaine Prison operates as a medium-security prison for offenders with sentences ranging from medium to short-term in length. Some Castlemaine prisoners work outside the prison for community organisations during the day, while mat-making is the main industry undertaken inside the prison. Vegetable gardening also provides employment for a number of prisoners. The Dhurringile Rehabilitation Centre is a minimum-security "open" prison farm, catering for short-term prisoners. At Dhurringile, prisoners work on the farm, in the orchard, or in the recently built cannery.

Geelong Prison is a maximum-security walled prison, and is the second most secure prison in Victoria. Geelong's main prison industry is tailoring, and articles of clothing are manufactured for use in other institutions. Morwell River Prison and Won Wron Prison are minimum-security prisons where prisoners engage in forestry work from seed-raising to tree felling. Sale Prison is a medium-security prison, which caters for prisoners serving both long and short-term sentences. Mat-making is the main industry at Sale, while a number of prisoners work outside the prison.

Fairlea Prison is Victoria's only prison for women. It consists of a group of older-type buildings, which are being supplemented by villa-type units. At Fairlea, women prisoners can work in the laundry, or can be employed in the kitchen, or engaged in doing general cleaning work. Vegetable and flower gardens e.g., are maintained by the prisoners, and the women make and mend their own clothes.

Attendance centres

Attendance centres were established in Victoria in June 1976 as an alternative to full-time imprisonment. In the scheme's first year of operation, the attendance centres at Geelong and Thornbury handled more than 180 offenders who would otherwise have gone to prison. The Attendance Centre Scheme makes it possible for offenders to serve their sentences in the community, while at the same time maintaining their family life and their continuity of employment or education.

Instead of serving a traditional sentence in prison, an attendee gives time to the centre. He or she is able to continue working at a job, and earning money for personal and family needs, but is required to attend the centre for two evenings a week for discussions, training, or advice. Saturdays are spent in doing community work similar to that done by voluntary service organisations. It is estimated that about 70 per cent to 80 per cent of community work now undertaken is for needy individuals. Community service projects carried out during the scheme's first year of operation represented nearly 3,000 days of work.

Offenders who attend the centre come by sentence of a court. The courts endeavour to ensure that offenders who could endanger the public do not receive the benefits of the scheme, or the other alternatives to imprisonment. The superintendent of an attendance centre supplies to the court, upon request, a report on the suitability of an offender before sentence is passed. When offenders start at an attendance centre, the superintendent and the welfare officers try to identify their individual needs, at the same time helping them to face problems and attempt to overcome them. This can be done by discussion, counselling, or referral to a community service, such as marriage guidance, English classes, and so forth.

The work of attendees is organised by the programme supervisor. Attendance centre projects range from fire-fighting to home maintenance for pensioners and needy individuals, to the construction of aids for handicapped persons, and to gardening and beautification programmes. The beneficiaries of the scheme include children's homes, hospitals, schools, handicapped persons pensioners, and the National Trust of Australia (Victoria).

Office of Research and Social Policy

The Office of Research and Social Policy is headed by a Director, and is composed of the following five units: (1) Social Planning and Programmes Unit; (2) Social Indicators and Resources Unit; (3) Administrative Unit; (4) Research and Evaluation Unit; and (5) Policy Analysis and Development Unit.

Training Division

The Institute of Social Welfare is responsible for the training services provided by the Department. The Institute offers courses relevant to the major aspects of welfare work undertaken by government and non-government agencies. It offers courses for a Diploma and Certificate of Child Care, Certificate of Youth Work, Certificate in Welfare Work, and Certificate in Penology. In addition, there are courses of training for honorary probation officers, welfare volunteers, and for welfare officers to become field teachers of welfare students. Tuition in all courses offered by the Institute is free of charge. Students undertaking a diploma or certificate course may be eligible for financial assistance under the Commonwealth Government's 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. A Social Welfare Training Council, comprising twelve members, exercises general supervision of courses.

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

Particulars	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76	1976-77	1977-78
Revenue	940	812	938	1,202	1,007
Expenditure—					
Central Administration	3,962	(a) 88,999	(b) 71,602	21,167	27,833
Regional Services	850	1,472	2,313	3,976	(c) 15,084
Family Welfare Services	8,958	13,886	17,983	23,230	17,185
Youth Welfare Services	4,059	5,281	6,477	7,448	8,370
Correctional Services	6,617	8,576	10,825	12,734	14,385
Probation and Parole Services	555	729	915	756	889
Training Services	313	425	672	846	729
Total expenditure	25,314	119,368	110,788	70,157	84,475
Net expenditure	24,374	118,555	109,850	68,955	83,468

(a) 1974-75 figures include \$81.5m from the Hospitals and Charities Fund and \$171,625 from the Anzac Day Proceeds Fund.

(b) This figure includes \$59m from the Hospitals and Charities Fund.

(c) Includes Family Assistance payments previously included in Family Welfare Services.

NOTE: This table excludes Expenditure on Works and Services and recouped payments from the Commonwealth Government under the Deserted Wives Act.

VICTORIA—FAMILY ASSISTANCE: FAMILIES
RECEIVING ASSISTANCE AT 30 JUNE

Type of case	Families receiving assistance		Children involved	
	1977	1978	1977	1978
Cases where the Commonwealth Government reimburses half of the expenditure—				
Deserted wives	1,673	2,049	3,560	4,302
Wives of prisoners	44	37	111	77
Single mothers	376	471	383	475
Deserted <i>de facto</i> wives	310	349	448	522
<i>De facto</i> wives of prisoners	13	10	17	17
Mothers with child (or children) not of marriage	—	—	—	—
Cases not subject to Commonwealth Government reimbursement—				
Assistance to people who care for children whose parents—				
Are deceased	260	295	380	426
Have deserted the child	338	373	496	542
Are in prison	52	86	76	121
Special benefits (a)	11	6	21	12
Total	3,077	3,676	5,492	6,494

(a) Those receiving special benefits on the grounds of hardship.

VICTORIA—ADOPTIONS

Organisation	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76	1976-77	1977-78
Social Welfare Department—					
Children placed during year	185	211	101	189	127
Legally finalised adoptions	250	209	173	158	154
Private agencies—					
Children placed during year	642	523	426	287	249
Legally finalised adoptions	915	537	460	328	290

VICTORIA—FAMILY WELFARE SERVICES AND YOUTH WELFARE SERVICES: ADMISSIONS AND DISCHARGES OF WARDS

Particulars	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76	1976-77	1977-78
Admissions during year	1,382	1,396	1,055	922	915
Discharges during year	1,661	1,687	1,001	1,128	1,273
Total wards at end of year—					
Males	3,994	3,832	4,009	3,909	3,617
Females	2,683	2,554	2,592	2,486	2,420

VICTORIA—CORRECTIONAL SERVICES: RECEPTIONS AND DISCHARGES OF CONVICTED PERSONS

Particulars	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76	1976-77	1977-78
Prisons					
Receptions during year	11,245	9,857	9,574	8,901	9,201
Discharges during year	11,570	10,047	9,568	8,965	9,088
In prison at end of year—					
Males	1,741	1,561	1,549	1,488	1,594
Females	30	20	38	35	42
Number of prisons for—					
Males	12	12	11	10	10
Females	1	1	1	1	1
Attendance centres					
Receptions during year	..	..	17	183	246
Discharges during year	..	..	..	138	182
In attendance at end of year—					
Males	..	..	17	57	125
Females	..	..	..	5	1
Number of attendance centres	..	..	2	2	4

VICTORIA—PROBATION AND PAROLE SERVICES: PERSONS ON PROBATION AND PAROLE

Particulars	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76	1976-77	1977-78
Placed on probation or supervision during year	4,637	4,563	4,438	4,138	3,728
Completed probation or supervision during year	4,612	4,320	3,946	3,888	n.a.
Probation or supervision cancelled during year	406	400	481	374	n.a.
On probation or supervision at end of year—					
Males	4,930	4,704	4,725	4,795	n.a.
Females	1,466	1,535	1,525	1,329	n.a.
Released on parole during year	1,224	1,071	983	851	866
Completed parole during year	795	830	705	695	643
Parole cancelled during year	299	233	244	254	271
On parole at end of year	1,119	1,127	1,161	917	866

Family and Community Services Programme

The Family and Community Services (FACS) Programme began to operate at the beginning of 1978. Since it was announced to the Victorian Parliament in April 1977, it has received public attention and support to the extent that more than 200 local government councils and hundreds of community groups throughout the State are now taking part in it.

The FACS Programme has been designed to encourage the development of services which strengthen and support individual, family, and community life. It emphasises the importance of involving people in the planning and provision of services which affect them, and on the role of local government in promoting citizen and community involvement. The principles underlying the operation of the FACS Programme are the same as those which relate to other social welfare programmes in Victoria, namely, that services should be personal; close to the house; easy to use; and relevant to the needs of the local community. These goals can best be achieved by encouraging community groups to provide a wide range of personalised services such as are suited to the particular needs of the community.

The FACS Programme takes into account the degree of welfare work already being undertaken at a community level; to make this widely understood, the development of information services is encouraged to let the public know what services are available and to keep the "service providers" informed on what each is doing.

The categories of funding available through the Programme relate to the basic objectives set out above.

(1) Community Service Grants (\$455,000 was allocated in 1977-78). Under this category, grants may be made to community groups for individual and family life support services; welfare service co-ordination programmes; volunteer and community involvement programmes; and information and referral services. Preference is given to funding services on a \$1 for \$1 basis.

(2) Local Initiative Grants (\$180,000 was allocated in 1977-78). An amount of \$10,000 is made available to each region to encourage the development of community groups, and to enhance their capacity to participate in the provision of community services. The money may be spent on a range of suitable programmes which have been determined within the region.

(3) Information and Co-ordination Grants (more than \$200,000 was allocated in 1977-78). Grants are available on a \$2 for \$1 basis either direct to local councils or, through the local council, to an approved agency for the development and provision of information and co-ordination services.

Local needs and priorities are assessed by regional consultative committees which have been established in the eighteen regions throughout the State. Regional consultative committees are responsible for advising on the development of a comprehensive network of family and community services in each region, and provide a means by which members of the community can give an opinion in deciding what those services should be. The consultative committees comprise equal numbers of community representatives and representatives nominated by local councils. A number of government departments are also represented on the committees. Elections are held for community representation on the consultative committees on an annual basis and, throughout the year, members of the community have an opportunity to influence and participate in committee decisions. A State FACS Committee has been set up to advise the Minister for Social Welfare on funding. The Committee comprises representatives from various government departments and the voluntary sector.

The range of services which have been initiated or expanded through the FACS Programme is extensive. They include counselling services, emergency accommodation services, community "drop-in" centres, community newsletters, play-group equipment, and similar facilities. In the community service grant funding category alone, more than 150 services are receiving support from FACS. Beneficiaries of the services include babies, children, young persons, handicapped persons, parents, the elderly, the lonely, and the homeless. The eventual aim of the FACS Programme is the development of a strong, close-knit, caring community in which each person has a part to play and upon which each person can call for help and support.

Further references: Voluntary social services, *Victorian Year Book* 1965, pp. 304-7; Old People's Welfare Council, 1966, pp. 286-7; Voluntary Child Welfare, 1967, pp. 557-61; Voluntary social welfare work for the physically handicapped, 1968, pp. 558-60; Care of the elderly, 1969, pp. 582-4; Rehabilitation, 1970, pp. 577-8; Employment of the Handicapped, 1970, pp. 578-9; Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind, 1970, pp. 579-80; Victorian School for Deaf Children, 1971, pp. 557-8; Voluntary services for the mentally handicapped, 1972, pp. 546-50; Social welfare activities in local government, 1974, pp. 580-3; Brotherhood of St Laurence, 1975, pp. 840-2; Consumer participation in voluntary social welfare, 1975, pp. 845-7; Life Line, 1976, p. 730; Youth Line, 1976, p. 730; Citizens' Advice Bureaux, 1977, pp. 852-4

VOLUNTARY SOCIAL WELFARE AGENCIES

Australian Red Cross Society*Activities*

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 aid to the sick and wounded, irrespective of nationality; rendering assistance in the case of large-scale public disaster, calamity, or need; improvement of health; prevention of disease; and the mitigation of suffering in Australia and elsewhere. The services include:

(1) *Blood transfusion service.* Whole blood and blood derivatives are provided free of charge to all persons in need of them.

(2) *Transport.* Red Cross volunteer drivers cover nearly 2,000,000 kilometres each year taking handicapped children and adults to special schools, clinics, and hospitals, or elderly persons on outings, etc.

(3) *Disaster and emergency relief services.* Red Cross plays a major role in times of bushfires and other disasters and emergencies. Teams of volunteers are trained to set up Red Cross posts whenever the need arises. In individual emergencies such as house fires, Red Cross provides essential items such as bedding, clothing, toilet requisites, etc.

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

(5) *Handcrafts.* All types of craftwork are taught at Red Cross centres, hospitals, and homes throughout Victoria to handicapped persons.

(6) *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 persons in Victoria, for news of relatives displaced by war, political disturbances, or large-scale disasters.

(7) *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 each year.

(8) *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.

Statistical summary

VICTORIA—RED CROSS SOCIETY: BLOOD BANK OPERATIONS

Particulars	Unit	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76	1976-77	1977-78
Blood donors on metropolitan rolls	number	88,008	97,230	109,569	87,914	104,839
Blood donations collected	number	151,901	163,840	171,732	183,903	207,871
Blood distributed	units	103,367	103,178	105,841	110,793	118,730
Stable plasma protein solution (SPPS)	units	11,704	13,953	19,482	21,294	23,653

VICTORIA—RED CROSS SOCIETY: INCOME AND EXPENDITURE
(\$)

Particulars	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76	1976-77	1977-78
Income—					
Commonwealth and Victorian Government grants	1,697,913	2,216,104	2,965,570	3,822,761	3,811,810
Annual appeal and fund raising	294,365	343,731	369,424	554,831	617,778
Donations—Red Cross branches and companies	490,877	588,972	614,808	713,284	792,167
Other	252,914	469,939	405,394	264,094	263,035
Total income	2,736,069	3,618,746	4,355,196	5,354,970	5,484,790

VICTORIA—RED CROSS SOCIETY: INCOME AND EXPENDITURE—*continued*
(\$)

Particulars	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76	1976-77	1977-78
Expenditure—					
Blood transfusion service	1,496,519	1,976,103	2,693,410	3,325,908	3,843,037
Hospital services	129,180	161,642	227,137	245,300	287,559
Handcraft therapy	104,723	129,916	137,618	119,605	137,079
Red Cross homes	304,869	353,723	415,788	543,746	(a)
Relief activities	37,909	45,820	133,658	85,837	121,721
Social work service	130,552	149,475	182,652	193,001	175,566
Other community services	151,009	183,579	221,764	312,614	313,125
Other	379,858	457,289	537,262	530,724	608,123
Total expenditure	2,734,619	3,457,547	4,549,289	5,356,735	5,486,210

(a) Red Cross homes ceased to operate from this year.

Further references: Blood Transfusion Service, *Victorian Year Book* 1971, pp. 559-60; Youth activities, 1972, p. 551; Red Cross service corps, 1972, pp. 551-2; Music Therapy Service, 1974, p. 584; Disaster relief services, 1975, pp. 838-40; Social work service, 1976, p. 729; Hospital Services 1977, pp. 851-2

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 types of societies eligible for registration are:

- (1) "Ordinary" societies, which provide one or more of the benefits set out in Section 5 of the Act, namely, periodical payments during sickness, old age and infirmity, lump sum payments on death or on the attainment of a specified age (endowment benefits), payments for hospital, medical, medicinal, and dental expenses;
- (2) dividing societies, which are "shop clubs" providing sickness and funeral benefits, and which divide their assets periodically;
- (3) united friendly societies' dispensaries, which provide medicine and medical and surgical appliances to members of friendly societies; and
- (4) societies "specially authorised" under the provisions of Section 6 of the Act. The only societies which have been registered as "specially authorised" societies are four total abstinence societies.

The following tables provide a summary of friendly societies' activities for the years 1971-72 to 1975-76. For further details, reference may be made to the *Report of the Government Statist on Friendly Societies*, printed annually by the Government Printer, Melbourne.

VICTORIA—FRIENDLY SOCIETIES: DETAILS OF ACTIVITIES

Particulars	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76
Number of societies—					
Ordinary	36	34	33	35	39
Dividing	79	75	71	69	66
Dispensaries	30	30	30	30	30
Specially authorised	4	4	4	4	4
Number of branches of ordinary societies	1,046	1,034	1,023	1,015	1,006
Membership—ordinary and dividing societies (a)—					
Contributors for sick and funeral benefits	147,115	147,444	145,623	144,054	135,642
Contributors for medical benefits	278,251	297,468	310,302	320,717	(b)496,999
Contributors for hospital benefits	288,847	305,824	321,764	336,185	291,469

VICTORIA—FRIENDLY SOCIETIES: DETAILS OF ACTIVITIES—*continued*

Particulars	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76
Benefit contracts in force for whole of life and endowment benefits	34,148	37,952	39,318	40,743	41,449
Members affiliated with dispensaries	76,268	73,627	72,896	68,532	54,416
Membership—specially authorised societies	162	157	155	152	156

(a) 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.

(b) This figure represents contributions for ancillary benefits. With the introduction of the Medibank Medical Scheme on 1 July 1975, membership of the Medical Benefit Funds of Friendly Societies ceased. The figure of 496,999 includes 284,596 belonging to the H.B.A. Friendly Society which was registered just prior to the commencement of 1975-76.

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

Particulars	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76
Income—					
Ordinary and dividing societies	40,389	44,887	57,131	74,809	84,681
Dispensaries	4,359	4,580	4,641	5,252	6,024
Specially authorised societies	18	20	23	22	28
Total income	44,766	49,487	61,795	80,083	90,733
Expenditure—					
Ordinary and dividing societies	37,438	42,091	51,917	70,352	68,173
Dispensaries	4,183	4,434	4,575	5,287	5,641
Specially authorised societies	6	7	7	10	12
Total expenditure	41,627	46,532	56,499	75,649	73,826
Fund balances—					
Ordinary and dividing societies—					
Sick and funeral funds	21,187	21,970	22,427	23,027	23,096
Assurance funds	11,402	13,933	16,247	18,290	20,866
Medical benefit funds	1,571	16	935	1,785	1,078
Hospital benefit funds	8,781	9,539	10,145	10,420	15,799
Management and other funds	7,694	8,086	8,991	9,952	10,015
Ancillary benefit funds	..	..	..	..	8,784
Total ordinary and dividing societies	50,635	53,544	58,745	63,474	79,638
Dispensaries	3,017	3,233	3,301	3,284	3,768
Specially authorised societies	291	304	320	332	347
Total funds	53,943	57,081	62,366	67,090	83,753

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

Nature of benefit	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76
Sick pay	567	580	558	574	577
Funeral benefits	270	280	278	308	322
Non-contributory endowment benefits	254	95	138	156	524
Whole of life, endowment, and other assurance benefits	863	1,200	1,730	2,330	2,770
Medical benefits—					
Society benefit	7,743	8,348	9,987	14,745	(a)9,536
Government subsidy	7,921	9,256	10,256	11,374	2,987
Hospital benefits—					
Society benefit	13,191	15,270	20,546	29,095	25,205
Government subsidy	1,335	1,414	1,487	1,586	1,348
Medicinal, dental, and ancillary benefits	(b)34	261	488	929	(c)11,183

(a) Includes payments by H.B.A. Friendly Society amounting to \$5,269m.

(b) Medicine benefits only.

(c) Includes payments by H.B.A. Friendly Society amounting to \$8,007m.

RECREATION

Victorian Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation*Sport and recreation*

The Victorian Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation assists recreation and sport in Victoria in two main ways:

(1) By providing capital financial assistance to municipal councils towards the construction of indoor sports and recreation centres, indoor and outdoor swimming pools, and the development and extension of existing recreation reserves and facilities, including the purchase of land. To the end of the financial year 1977-78, the Department assisted 184 of the 211 Victorian municipalities with subsidies totalling \$15.8m and loans totalling \$993,675.

(2) By providing assistance to State-wide sports and recreation bodies for the development and promotion of sporting and recreational activities in Victoria. During 1977-78, \$390,283 was provided for this purpose. In addition, \$23,250 was provided for sports coaches, education courses and assistance to handicapped groups.

Racing

The management of the sports of horse racing, trotting, and greyhound racing in Victoria is the responsibility of the Victorian Racing Club, the Trotting Control Board, and the Greyhound Racing Control Board, respectively. The Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation controls the administration of the *Racing Act* 1958 through its Racing Division. This Division is also responsible for the provision of administrative and secretarial services to the Racecourses Licenses Board (Racing and Trotting Divisions) and the Greyhound Racing Grounds Development Board. It also issues permits pursuant to the *Racing Act*. During the year ended 30 June 1978, 98 licences were issued.

The greater part of the funds for the Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation is received from the racing industry by means of a deduction from specified off-course totalizator investments. The present rate of deduction is 2 per cent of daily double investments and 4 per cent of quadrella investments. For the year ended 31 July 1978, \$7.0m was paid directly to the Department, \$33.0m was allocated by the Victorian Government to the Hospitals and Charities Commission, and \$4.1m to the Racecourse Development Funds.

Youth programmes

The Department has a continuing commitment to provide assistance, guidance, and interesting activities for young persons in their leisure time. Its most important youth programmes are the "Youth 2000" series, the development of camps and youth facilities, and Youth Outreach Workers. As a means of assisting the development of volunteer youth organisations the Department provides a salary subsidy to State-wide organisations towards the appointment of recruitment and training officers whose sole responsibility is to recruit and train voluntary workers.

During 1977-78, the main allocations from the Youth Fund were: \$368,450 to State-wide or parent youth organisations; \$240,725 in youth building subsidies; \$202,389 in subsidies (at the rate of \$8,000 a year) for the employment of 32 special youth workers, including outreach workers; \$192,448 to 538 individual youth organisations and clubs towards operating expenses and equipment; \$162,277 for programmes (\$500 maximum) encouraging the community use of State, registered, and private schools; \$159,482 for improvements at 25 youth and family camps; \$71,338 for improvements at camps operated by the National Fitness Council; and \$57,385 in salary subsidies (at the rate of \$8,000 a year) for the employment, by eight State-wide or parent youth organisations, of special youth workers to recruit and train voluntary youth leaders. Total allocations from the Youth Fund for 1977-78 were \$1.96m.

In 1977, the Department commenced a wide-ranging review of its youth policy. To ensure community involvement in the review, the Department sought public submissions through media advertisements, and in November 1977 held a public workshop, attended by persons concerned with, or involved in, youth work. It was expected that the results of the review would be submitted to the Minister, for consideration by the Victorian Government in the latter half of 1978.

"Youth 2000" series

The "Youth 2000" series has been designed to assist communication with young persons who have just completed secondary school and are commencing tertiary education, or have entered the labour force within the last five years.

The "Youth 2007 . . . Local Government" project was the seventh programme of the "Youth 2000" series, organised by the Youth Council of Victoria and financed by the Department. The project aimed at creating a greater awareness among persons, particularly youth, of the potential of local government in Victoria. It also sought to encourage persons to participate in local government and to be involved in decisions which affect, or will affect, them. The project culminated in a forum held in November 1977, at which the Youth Council of Victoria presented the Premier of Victoria, the Minister for Local Government, and the Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation with a summary of the project.

Finance

The following table shows details of principal sources of receipts and payments, for the years 1976-77 and 1977-78:

VICTORIA—DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH, SPORT AND RECREATION:
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS
(\$)

Particulars	1976-77	1977-78
Receipts—		
Racing—percentage of Totalizator Agency Board turnover	6,718,237	6,914,963
Tabella—percentage of Totalizator Agency Board turnover	24,906	51,164
Soccer Pools Consultations	982,540	968,101
Commonwealth Department of Environment, Housing, and Community Development	972,584	450,525
Miscellaneous	6,319	9,129
Total	8,704,586	8,393,882
Payments—		
Sports and Recreation Fund	5,589,399	5,950,517
Youth Fund	2,108,188	2,031,736
Australian Football Fund	135,636	201,522
Total	7,833,223	8,183,775

Youth Employment Committee

The Youth Employment Committee, previously known as the Youth Unemployment Standing Committee, was established by the Victorian Government in response to the special problems of youth unemployment. The Committee, while considering the many problems associated with youth unemployment, has concentrated its efforts on the youth education and training aspects, as well as the social issues, of youth unemployment.

"Life. Be in it"

The Department initiated its "Life. Be in it" campaign in 1975 to help promote the fitness and general health of Victorians and to encourage their participation in sporting activities. The active recreation campaign around the "Life. Be in it" slogan grew from an attitudinal study commissioned by the Department in 1975, and from the work of a special project team which interpreted the study's findings. The team developed a five-year strategy, based on the premise that it was possible to encourage a large proportion of the population to become more physically active.

By the end of 1977, a survey indicated that the "Life. Be in it" programme had attained a 97 per cent awareness level in Victoria. The entire programme had gained so much popularity that other States and even overseas countries began to study the programme with interest. In late 1977, "Life. Be in it" was launched as a national programme in Australia. In 1978, Victoria was in Phase III of the "Life. Be in it" programme. This phase sought to encourage persons to participate in recreational pursuits

with the ultimate aim of establishing physical activity as part of a daily lifestyle. The Department continues to promote "Life. Be in it" by providing initiatives, advice, assistance, and funds to extend the recreational opportunities available throughout Victoria.

Councils and boards

Under the Youth, Sport and Recreation Act, as amended in 1977, the Minister is advised on policy by the State Youth Council, the State Recreational Council, and the State Sports Council. Each council meets not less than six times during the year to initiate, consider, and review departmental policies. In addition, there are the following five advisory bodies in existence: the Youth Council of Victoria, Junior Football Council, Bushwalking and Mountain-craft Leadership Training Advisory Board, Victorian Advisory Council on Recreation for the Handicapped, and State Swimming and Water Safety Development Committee.

Municipal recreation

The Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation has, as a major priority, the encouragement and further development of the State's municipal recreation network. To this end, the Department has regionalised its own resources and staff and established a strong municipal recreational service. During 1977-78, the number of municipalities utilising the Department's Municipal Recreational Officer's (MRO) subsidy increased from 54 to 70. A notable benefit of the subsidy has been the encouragement given to a number of municipalities to appoint MRO support staff and to establish recreation departments within their administrative structures.

Research and special projects

In 1977-78 the Department allocated \$88,268 to research projects. These projects included:

- (1) The Geelong Region Recreation Study;
- (2) a survey of demands on roads and conservation areas due to recreational travel;
- (3) the preparation of a draft manual on the management of indoor recreation facilities;
- (4) a survey of activity patterns in public swimming pools;
- (5) the preparation of a strategy plan for the siting of new public swimming pools and the upgrading of existing pool facilities;
- (6) a survey of participation rates in recreational activities; and
- (7) the Geelong Bike Plan.

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