



An Australian Government Initiative



A new relationship between the Australian Government and the Third Sector



National Compact between the Australian Government and Third Sector

Consultation Report February 2010

part of the social inclusion agenda

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National Compact between the
Australian Government and Third Sector

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Building a National Compact

Thank you for your engagement in these consultations on the development of the National Compact (the Compact).

A diverse range of non-profit organisations from the Third Sector (the Sector) has contributed to the development of the Compact.

The Compact is an exciting opportunity for the Australian Government and the Sector to develop a new way of working together to achieve our shared vision for addressing key social, economic and environmental challenges.

Together, we can build a stronger Sector in Australia and through this, collaboratively improve community wellbeing.

There is broad support for the Compact and we look forward to the development of an improved, positive and respectful relationship between the Government and the Sector.



Jenny Macklin
The Hon Jenny Macklin MP
Minister for Families, Housing, Community
Services and Indigenous Affairs



Ursula Stephens
Parliamentary Secretary for Social
Inclusion
Parliamentary Secretary for the
Voluntary Sector

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Executive summary

Consultations on the development of a National Compact (the Compact) are now complete. Extensive consultation on the Compact was held over 2008 and 2009 in two phases.

The first phase of consultation, in 2008, confirmed widespread support for a Compact between the Third Sector (the Sector) and the Australian Government (the Government).

The second phase of the consultation held between May and October 2009, focused on engaging representatives from Sector organisations and Government to seek their input to the content and focus of a Compact. The feedback received during this phase of consultation is summarised in this report.

Consultation with a diverse group of stakeholders has ensured the Compact appropriately recognises and accommodates a broad range of potential partners. A variety of strategies and technologies were used to engage Sector organisations, government agencies and interested individuals taking into account the diversity of the Sector (a table of consultation activities is at **Appendix A**). The Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) provided multiple opportunities for all those interested to participate.

A whole-of-government approach to the development of the Compact was led by FaHCSIA and supported by an Across Government Working Group (the Working Group). The Working Group helped to ensure that the Compact represents the views and interests of all Government departments and their stakeholders.

Consultation indicated broad support for the development of a Compact to improve relationships and ways of working between the Government and the Sector.

Consultation identified expectations from the Sector that included:

- the Compact document be succinct, high-level and aspirational;
- the wording reinforce joint ownership by the Government and the Sector;
- the Compact include strong statements around Sector and community diversity;
- the Compact be positioned as a crucial first step in transforming the relationship between the Government and the Sector;
- the Compact actively engage all parts of the Sector, particularly including and valuing the smaller organisations and volunteers;
- other Government initiatives and reform activities be considered in developing the Compact and its implementation arrangements;
- the Sector's independence and their ability to advocate and participate in policy and program decisions be respected;
- the Sector nominate their own representatives for Compact processes; and
- the need for appropriate resourcing for the Sector to grow their capacity to innovate and ensure the Compact is adopted across the Sector.

Many respondents highlighted the need for the Compact to deliver measurable change through agreed actions. Consultation identified eight priority action areas.

Progressing these action areas as soon as possible will ensure the Compact can start to make a real difference. The priority action areas are:

1. document and promote the value and contribution of the Sector;
2. protect the Sector's right to advocacy irrespective of any funding relationship that might exist;
3. recognise Sector diversity in consultation processes and Sector development initiatives;
4. improve information sharing including greater access to publicly funded research and data;
5. reduce red tape and streamline reporting;
6. simplify and improve consistency of financial arrangements including across state and federal jurisdictions;
7. act to improve paid and unpaid workforce issues; and
8. improve funding and procurement processes.

All consultation input and feedback was taken into consideration in the development of the Compact. The Compact will be an aspirational, principles based document supported by action plans developed collaboratively between the Government and the Sector. Action plans will include an overarching Commonwealth action plan focused on the eight priority action areas to be developed by April 2010 and, over the next 12 months, the development of joint action plans by portfolios with key Sector relationships with their Sector partners, specific to their work together.

Considerable momentum, good will and ownership from both the Sector and the Government has been generated through the consultation. The Compact has been acknowledged by both the Government and organisations across the Sector as an effective framework for working together to address the broad range of challenging issues facing Australian society.

This report summarises the feedback from consultation with stakeholders including a broad range of Sector organisations, state and territory governments, peak bodies, academics and individuals.

Consultation on support for developing a Compact

As part of its 2007 election commitments, the Government undertook to consult with Sector organisations about whether a compact could or should be developed in Australia and what might be included in such a partnership.

The preliminary Compact consultation, undertaken between August and October 2008, included forums with peak organisations and other key stakeholders¹; written submissions; letters from Senator the Hon Ursula Stephens, Parliamentary Secretary for Social Inclusion and the Voluntary Sector, to a broad range of non-profit organisations and state and territory government ministers; and the establishment of an Expert Panel comprising representatives from the Sector and FaHCSIA.

These consultations generated awareness and interest and revealed a genuine desire across the Sector to be engaged in partnership with the Government. Most participants viewed the aims of a Compact as relevant to their activities and supported further dialogue with the Government and within the Sector. This process showed support for the development of a Compact as a framework for guiding and working to improve relationships between the Government and the Sector.

Consultation on the concept and content

Consultation in 2009 focused on gaining input on the concept and content of a Compact. A range of strategies and technologies were used to engage Sector organisations, departments and interested individuals which take into account the diversity of the Sector. Representatives from Sector organisations and Government were engaged through a number of forums including a specially convened National Compact Joint Taskforce (the Joint Taskforce), an Across Government Working Group (the working group) and consultation meetings around the country.

The Joint Taskforce, comprising diverse Sector and Government representatives, was established to provide input on the concept and content of a National Compact. This group met in May, June and July 2009 to draft the Compact content including principles and potential action areas which built on the findings from earlier consultation.

State and territory governments were informed about the development of the Compact through Community and Disability Services Ministers' Conferences.

At a workshop with 70 Sector leaders in July 2009, which brought together a broadly representative group from across the Sector, there was agreement on a consultation approach and the draft Compact content to be the focus of further consultation. Workshop attendees endorsed the concepts encapsulated in the draft Compact principles and undertakings which were included in a consultation paper that provided the focus for further consultation.

¹ The Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) was commissioned to conduct the forums across Australia including each state and territory capital city, Townsville and Alice Springs.

Following the workshop, extensive public consultation took place until the end of October 2009. Consultation activity (outlined in detail in **Appendix B**) included:

- an on-line forum attracting 400 users between 3 August and 30 September 2009;
- a consultation paper published on the Social Inclusion website and available for wider distribution;
- ten targeted face-to-face consultation forums held nationally with specific parts of the Sector that may not have been previously engaged, such as environment and sports groups;
- a consultation toolkit to help Government agencies, peak bodies and community organisations promote the opportunity to have a say and provide feedback;
- directly inviting peak bodies to participate and engage via mail;
- advertising nationally in major newspapers and Sector newsletters and websites;
- an on-line survey to invite focused feedback attracting more than 180 responses;
- a public call for submissions in response to consultation activities attracting 67 submissions from a wide range of groups; and
- consultation across the Government through the Working Group.

Members of the National Compact Joint Taskforce and Expert Panel reconvened in October 2009 to consider the consultation findings and review a revised draft of the Compact principles. Final refinements were made to the content including reframing the list of draft undertakings as “aspirations”, a term that was considered more realistic. The eight priority action areas were endorsed to be expanded upon in future Compact action plans following the announcement and signing of the Compact.

Main findings

Compact concept

Initial consultation in 2008 clarified that there was support for a National Compact as a means to address issues impeding productive working relationships between the Government and the Sector.

Further consultation in 2009 indicated widespread support for the development of a Compact to improve relationships and the way the Government and the Sector work together.

A number of groups expressed concern about trying to reach agreement across such a broad and diverse Sector. Other groups also expressed the need for the Compact to reach beyond those focused on welfare.

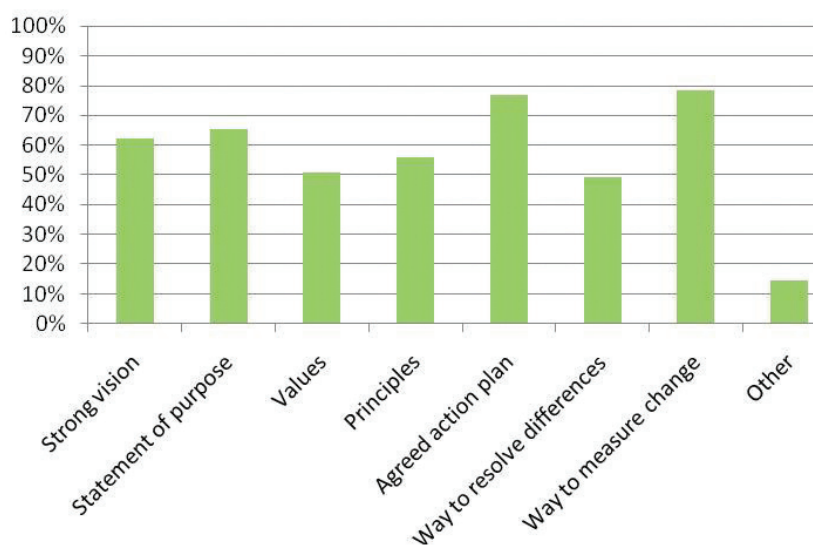
Some respondents called for a two-phased approach, with the Compact identifying broad principles followed by development of action plans with specific parts of the Sector (e.g. community services) or focusing on specific issues (e.g. contracting).

The view was also consistently expressed that the Compact must be endorsed across all levels of government. Consultation identified that a responsibility exists for the Government to champion the Compact in partnership with state, territory and local governments to achieve – to the greatest extent possible – consistency between compacts at the national and state levels.

Consultation also identified that the development and implementation of the Compact needs to include gaining support from all potential parties. This includes peak organisations and advocacy organisations as well as locally based smaller organisations. Consultation also strongly supported ensuring the Compact recognises the importance of community capacity and civil action beyond the “non-profit” Sector i.e. the role of citizens and communities and volunteer organisations.

Responses to the Compact online survey highlighted the desired features of a Compact in Australia. As shown in the following table, many respondents highlighted the need for the Compact to result in agreed actions and measurable change.

Desired features of a Compact – online survey results (116 responses)



Compact principles

Six broad principles were identified to underpin the Compact: respect, inclusion, diversity, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability, with undertakings and actions relating to each.

Feedback from the consultation paper indicated broad support for these concepts. Comment on the principles of ‘efficiency’ and ‘effectiveness’, although largely supported, did identify some sensitivity around wording and intent. Specific comments included that the principle of ‘efficiency’ needs to be balanced with recognition of the value of smaller local organisations to respond to local issues. Responses to both the principles of ‘efficiency’ and ‘effectiveness’ included comments that there should be an emphasis on outcomes not outputs, the need to invest better in measurement and data collection and the need to resource information sharing, collaboration and innovation.

The principle of diversity generated considerable comment. There was a consistent desire for a strong Government statement on multiculturalism within the Social Inclusion agenda. Specific feedback included that the undertakings and principles need to specifically recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities and that the principle should express the value of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and recognise the historical disadvantage and contemporary disadvantages. This would build on and support the Government's commitment to addressing Indigenous disadvantage through actions such as the apology to the Stolen Generations in February 2008 and the Government's 'Closing the Gap' policy agenda.

Compact undertakings and actions

Along with comments about the need for "quick wins" and an action focus, there was a suggestion that the Government should undertake initiatives to provide tangible evidence to the Sector of the Government's commitment to the Compact.

Consultation also recognised that effective implementation of the Compact will require active leadership, engagement and involvement from both the Government and Sector organisations. Because of the diversity of the Sector, no Sector-specific action plans emerged from consultations but there was strong support for the eight identified priority action areas. Consultation participants argued that any action plans developed should be agreed by both Government and representatives from the broad Sector. As outlined in the Executive Summary, the eight priority action areas are:

- document and promote the value and contribution of the Sector;
- protect the Sector's right to advocacy irrespective of any funding relationship that might exist;
- recognise Sector diversity in consultation processes and Sector development initiatives;
- improve information sharing including greater access to publicly funded research and data;
- reduce red tape and streamline reporting;
- simplify and improve consistency of financial arrangements including across state and federal jurisdictions;
- act to improve paid and unpaid workforce issues; and
- improve funding and procurement processes.

It was also identified that once the principles of the Compact were communicated and adopted across the Sector, Sector-specific action plans and undertakings would begin to emerge. It was acknowledged that these should be independent of any Government direction.

The Compact online survey revealed some areas in which the Sector may potentially develop their own Compact action plans or undertakings. These included:

- ensuring Sector organisations comply with all their legal or regulatory obligations (e.g. insurance cover and financial reporting);
- supporting networks that help strengthen the Sector’s ability to work with the Government to help demonstrate its respect for and trust in the Government; and
- agreeing to share information across organisations that have common goals which would demonstrate a commitment to ‘inclusiveness’.

Consultation also suggested additional actions for the Government including:

- investing in the Sector’s capacity for advocacy;
- a national communication campaign to raise the Sector profile; and
- the development of codes of conduct on consultation, policy appraisal, funding and volunteering.

Consultation on the Compact highlighted the major issues perceived by Sector representatives to be hampering their effectiveness and impeding a positive relationship with the Government.

The identified issues included:

- impediments to efficiency and performance caused by red tape, over-regulation, lack of transparency and overly prescriptive approaches to contracting services;
- an expressed lack of trust, open communication and mutual respect between the Government and some parts of the Sector;
- competitive tendering arrangements damaging relationships across the Sector and favouring larger providers;
- inconsistencies and conflicts across departments and states seen to result in administrative burdens and impaired service provision;
- threats to small and medium Sector organisations from funding and accountability processes;
- concerns about the potential of advocacy activity by organisations to result in loss of funding and damage to relationships;
- issues around consultation processes, including problems with short timeframes and lack of feedback;
- inadequate funding to cover the full cost of service provision or provide organisations with scope to innovate, collaborate or participate in consultative processes; and
- concerns about the sustainability of the Sector’s organisations, particularly in its ability to attract and recruit workers in a competitive labour market.

There were strong messages from many groups about the need for explicit wording focused on valuing and allowing advocacy (“real and genuine” consultation is sought). There was also some criticism of consultation timelines and it was suggested that consultation needs to allow time for Sector organisations to prepare a position. Respectful

consultation was raised consistently as something a Compact could provide a framework for. Specific comments included that consultation needs to include citizens, service users and small organisations directly to ensure a wide range of ‘local knowledge’ is sought. There were consistent calls for consultation to be resourced and for the Sector to receive feedback from consultation.

Ideas were provided including the potential for ‘joint commissioning’ processes; bringing the expertise of Sector representatives to the table to encourage innovation and diversity in approaches to tackling entrenched social issues. Also, a suggestion to build in peer review so the Sector can comment about other members and all levels of government. The establishment of resourced and easily accessible information ‘hubs’ was also identified as a way to both streamline consultation and ensure diverse input is sought.

Many consultation participants saw value in developing a Compact to provide a framework for growth and evolution in the Sector including regulatory and legislative reform and initiatives to enhance financial security and viability of the Sector. Specific comments included:

- contracts need to be based on full and fair pricing; realistic funding is needed;
- significant support for a Standard Chart of Accounts;
- longer term contracts are needed;
- the need for earlier notice regarding the ceasing or extension of contracts which has implications for staff retention, leases etc. The current timeframes impede the effectiveness and sustainability of organisations;
- increasing flexibility in funding arrangements, e.g. less stringent divisions of operational/administration funding;
- core funding should be increased;
- the need for standard terminology for non-financial reporting;
- suggestions of a national approach to regulation to assist organisations that work across jurisdictions; and
- questions about how a “genuine partnership approach” fits with a competitive tendering environment.

Consultation highlighted that the capacity of the Sector to adapt is important in ensuring viability and sustainability. Some participants stated there is a need to support partnership brokering and diversification of funding sources in the Sector.

Participants identified the need for action to address workforce requirements in order to improve both staff retention and employee skills. It was stated there is a need for better training and employment conditions for Sector workers. Salary parity is also an issue. Many organisations identified that it is difficult for the Sector to compete for staff with the private and government sectors.

Another important area identified for ensuring Sector sustainability was the recognition of donations and tax arrangements for Sector organisations.

Some respondents stated that the Compact should recognise power imbalances between large and small organisations. There was reiteration of the need to protect smaller local organisations so they can “win” tenders over larger organisations and to support them so they can participate in processes like consultation and Compact implementation.

The draft undertakings and actions provided an opportunity for consultation participants to see how the Government and the Sector might work together to address these issues.

Compact governance and implementation

Written submissions, responses to the online survey and face-to-face forums highlighted the need for robust implementation, evaluation and governance arrangements for the Compact. There were many comments about the need for specific actions, resourcing, measurement and reporting on implementation.

Compact governance

Comments relating to the governance of the Compact included:

- a strong and broad campaign is needed to encourage Sector sign-up to the Compact;
- cross-departmental buy-in is needed so it doesn't just sit in the 'community' area;
- a potential for a sub-Sector governance committee to assist;
- Sector representatives should be nominated by the Sector, not appointed;
- a representative body should include small Sector organisations as well as peak bodies;
- there is a need for a central office or department to manage implementation and development of action plans;
- the Queensland Compact governance committee, with an independent chair, has worked well;
- an annual report to Parliament; and
- including private Sector representatives in the governance arrangements to encourage partnership development.

Compact implementation

Comments about Compact implementation included:

- initiatives need to cut across all Government departments, not just the social inclusion area;
- dedicated resources are needed for Compact implementation;
- there is a need to measure the outcomes of the Compact;
- cultural change across the Australian Public Service will also be necessary;
- a need for practical measures to deal with disagreement and complaints; and
- the Compact should be referred to in public service performance agreements.

Compact measurement

Comments about measurement of the Compact's effectiveness included:

- an independent evaluation is needed;
- any evaluation of the Compact should actively involve the Sector; and
- research is needed to establish the baseline picture now so the Compact impact can be assessed in future.

Key outcomes

Consultation identified the following key expectations for the development of the Compact:

- the Compact document be succinct, high-level and aspirational;
- the wording reinforce joint ownership by the Government and Sector organisations;
- it include strong statements around Sector and community diversity;
- the Compact be positioned as a crucial first step in transforming the relationship between the Government and Sector organisations;
- the Compact actively engage all parts of the Sector, particularly including and valuing smaller organisations;
- other Government initiatives and reform activities be considered in developing the Compact, action plans and implementation arrangements;
- that the Sector's independence and ability to advocate and participate in policy and program decisions be respected;
- that Sector organisations select their own representatives for Compact processes; and
- the need for appropriate resourcing for the Sector to grow capacity to innovate and ensure the Compact is adopted across the Sector.

Next Steps

A Compact has been developed in collaboration with the Sector. Further announcements are anticipated in early 2010.

Implementing the Compact will deliver a new focus to the shared vision, principles and aspirations. The Compact will provide a mechanism for focusing on the eight identified priority action areas.

Appendix A

Consultation Activity – Phase 2

The table below provides a high level summary of the activities undertaken during phase two consultation.

Consultation Activity	Purpose
Senator the Hon Ursula Stephens – Letters to Peak Bodies	To announce the second stage of consultation and invite participation and to seek interest and engagement in the process.
Senator the Hon Ursula Stephens – Meetings with Stakeholders	Wide and varied engagement with key stakeholders on the development of a National Compact throughout 2009.
National Compact Joint Taskforce Meetings	The National Compact Joint Taskforce met on 11 May, 15 June and 6 July 2009, to provide input on the wording and structure of the draft National Compact and proposed consultation approach.
Stakeholder Workshop	A workshop was held on 20 July 2009 with Australian Government representatives and 70 Sector leaders to seek comment on the work of the Joint Taskforce and proposed consultation approach. The outcome of this workshop was the consultation paper which provided the basis for further consultation.
Consultation Paper	The consultation paper was made available on the Social Inclusion website and was printed in accessible versions for wider distribution. The consultation paper listed key consultation questions and provided information on how to contribute during the consultation, including how and where to send a written submission.
Online Forum	The online forum was communicated as the core component of the consultation and was set up to provide a free and open exchange of ideas. The forum was based on key consultation questions identified from preliminary consultation in 2008. Registered users: nearly 400 accessed the online forum between 3 August and 30 September 2009. Feedback on the forum revealed general support for the development of the National Compact and the proposed principles and purpose.
Online Survey	A survey tool was designed to further analyse the views on the development of a National Compact between the Government and the Sector and to collate feedback on specific aspects on the Compact's purpose and proposed development.

Consultation Activity	Purpose
Consultation Toolkit	<p>A consultation toolkit was developed to help interested individuals, communities, organisations and peak bodies who wanted to know more about the National Compact. It included the consultation paper, a power-point presentation, some learning circle materials and feedback forms. The consultation toolkit was made available for use by Commonwealth agencies and other Compact champions to engage with their own stakeholder groups and collect feedback.</p> <p>Volunteering and Indigenous organisations made particular use of the toolkit, holding their own meetings.</p>
Targeted Consultation	<p>Targeted consultations were set up to ensure broad engagement across the Sector.</p> <p>Ten targeted face-to-face consultations were held nationally. A total of 72 organisations attended.</p>
National Compact Across Government Working Group	<p>The National Compact Across Government Working Group (Working Group) was formed to lead a whole-of-government approach to the development of a National Compact. The Working Group has helped to ensure that the development of a National Compact is an inclusive process that represents the views and interests of Australian Government departments and their stakeholders.</p>
Consultation Assisted by Government Departments	<p>The Attorney General's Office held workshops and meetings. These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous Legal Aid: The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services (ATSILS) meeting in Adelaide, 21 September 2009. • National ATSILS conference in Canberra, 13-15 October 2009. • ATSILS meeting in Adelaide, 22-23 September 2009. • Community Legal Centres – National Association of Community Legal Centres – National Conference in Perth, 14-17 September 2009. • Legal Aid Program conducted their own consultation and provided feedback. • The Indian Ocean Territories raised the Compact during their meetings. <p>Australian Agency for International Development also held their own consultation with key agency stakeholders and sought wider engagement through existing networks.</p>

Consultation Activity	Purpose
National Advertising	<p>Advertising was carried out nationally in major metropolitan and regional papers. In addition, community newsletters and websites were used. Community and Sector media examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision Australia • Volunteering Australia • Australian Local Government News • ProBono • Third Sector Magazine • Adult Learning Australia • communityNet
Submissions	<p>Official submissions were invited from 17 August 2009 until 30 October 2009.</p> <p>Submissions were provided in hard copy, via e-mail or on the web.</p> <p>Submissions are accessible on the FaHCSIA website at www.fahcsia.gov.au.</p> <p>Number of formal Submissions received: 67</p>
Dedicated Hotline Number	<p>A dedicated hotline number was set up to receive calls from those within the Sector who wanted additional information or help in providing submissions or getting access to the online forum. Number of calls: 140</p>
National Compact Mailbox	<p>A dedicated e-mail address was provided as a consultation mechanism and as an additional method for lodging submissions.</p>
Websites	<p>Further information on the National Compact was provided on the FaHCSIA website www.fahcsia.gov.au and the Social Inclusion website (maintained by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations – DEEWR) www.socialinclusion.gov.au, both of which provided updates on the progress of the consultation.</p>

Targeted Consultations

25 August 2009 – Arts, culture and heritage – Adelaide

1. Ausdance SA Inc and Arts Industry Council
2. Media Resource Centre
3. Centre for Aboriginal Studies in Music (CASM)
4. History Trust SA
5. Radio Adelaide and Community Broadcasting Association of Australia

1 September 2009 – Environment and volunteering – Perth

6. Volunteering WA
7. Conservation Council of WA
8. The Wilderness Society
9. Greening Australia
10. Greens WA
11. Alliance for a Clean Environment Inc

21 September 2009 – Women – Sydney

12. Women with Disabilities Australia
13. Business and Professional Women (BPW) Australia
14. Country Women's Association of Australia
15. Australian Women's Coalition Inc
16. National Women's Library
17. Women's Services Network (WESNET)
18. WomenSpeak Network

23 September 2009 – Members of the Queensland Compact ‘Futures Forum’ – Brisbane

19. Salvation Army
20. Aged Care Qld
21. Queensland Council of Social Service (QCOSS)
22. Spiritus
23. Queensland Shelter
24. Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland
25. PeakCare Qld
26. Council of the Ageing Qld
27. OzCare
28. Health and Community Services Workforce Council

23 September 2009 – Disability – Brisbane

29. Australian Women in Science and IT Entity (AWISE)
30. Centacare
31. MontroseAccess
32. Mental Health Association
33. Endeavour Foundation
34. Brisbane City Council
35. BlueCare
36. Cerebral Palsy League
37. Family Support Group (FSG) Australia
38. Spinal Injuries Association
39. Motor Neurone Disease Association

24 September 2009 – Environment – Melbourne

40. Australian Conservation Foundation
41. Environment Australia
42. Friends of the Earth

43. Gene Ethics

44. National Toxics Network

24 September 2009 – Culturally and Linguistically Diverse – Melbourne

45. Asylum Seeker Resource Centre

46. New Hope Foundation

47. Action on Disability in Ethnic Communities

48. Cultural Diversity in Ageing

49. Municipal Association of Victoria

50. Burgher Association of Victoria

51. University of Melbourne

52. Australian Polish Community Services

53. Ethnic Communities Council

54. African Think Tank Inc

25 September 2009 – Sporting – Melbourne

55. Confederation of Australian Sport

56. Disability Sports Victoria

57. Sports Without Borders

58. North Melbourne Learning and Life Centre

59. Vic Sport

28 September 2009 – Cross section – Hobart

60. Relationships Australia

61. St. Vincent de Paul Society

62. Aspire

21 October 2009 – Removal of Same Sex Discrimination – Community Reference Group

63. National Welfare Rights Network
64. Aids Council of NSW (ACON)
65. People With Disability Australia Incorporated
66. Positive Life NSW
67. Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission
68. National Association of People Living with HIV / AIDS (NAPWA)
69. National LGBT Health Alliance
70. Gay and Lesbian Community Services WA
71. National Ethnic Disability Alliance
72. NSW Gay and Lesbian Rights Lobby

Appendix B

Consultative Bodies

National Compact Expert Panel

Mr David Crosbie	Co-Chair	Mental Health Council of Australia
Mr Evan Lewis	Co-Chair	Group Manager, Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
Dr Stephen Judd		The Hammond Care Group (aged care services)
Ms Rhonda Galbally AO		Our Community
Dr Wendy Scaife		Centre for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Studies Queensland University of Technology
Dr Ken Baker		National Disability Service
Mr Julian Pocock		Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC)
Mr Frank Quinlan		Catholic Social Services Australia
Ms Voula Messimeri		Federation of Ethnic Communities Council of Australia
Mr David Thompson AM		Not-For-Profit Roundtable and Jobs Australia
Ms Di Morgan		Volunteering Queensland
Ms Lesley Young		Country Women's Association of Australia

The National Compact Joint Taskforce

The National Compact Joint Taskforce (the Joint Taskforce) was set up to work in partnership with the Parliamentary Secretary for Social Inclusion and the Voluntary Sector, Senator the Hon Ursula Stephens, and the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA). Specifically, the Joint Taskforce was established to:

- negotiate the wording and structure of the draft National Compact including monitoring and reporting measures that could be the basis for consultation;
- provide input to a consultation strategy; and
- provide input to the work plan for the implementation of the National Compact.

The Joint Taskforce met on 11 May, 15 June and 6 July 2009. A workshop for Joint Taskforce members and around 70 additional invited Compact stakeholders was held on 20 July 2009 to consider the work of the Joint Taskforce, comment on the draft Compact and consultation strategy and agree to a way forward. The outcomes of the workshop and Joint Taskforce meetings informed broader consultation with the Sector and other interested stakeholders.

National Compact Joint Taskforce – List of members:

- John Atkin (Chair), Managing Director and Chief Executive Office (CEO), Trust Company Ltd
- Lynne Dalton, CEO, Centre for Volunteering
- Toby Hall, CEO, Mission Australia
- Phil Harrison, Director, Corporate and Government Affairs, and
- Christine Ellis, National Development Manager, Conservation Volunteers Australia
- Kristen Hilton, Executive Director, and
- Mat Tinkler, Public Interest Law Clearing House (PILCH)
- Jill Lang, Director, Queensland Council of Social Service
- Barry Sheehan, Director, Centacare Toowoomba
- Natalie Walker, former Chief Executive of the Aboriginal Employment Strategy
- Mary Agostino, Manager, Family Services, Whittlesea Council
- John Ryan, Community Campaign Co-ordinator, Australian Council of Trade Unions

Representatives from Australian Government agencies:

- Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
- Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
- Department of Treasury
- Department of Health and Ageing
- Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts
- Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)
- Australian Public Service Commission

The Across Government Working Group

The Across Government Working Group (the Working Group) was established to provide whole-of-government direction to the development of the Compact. Discussions have been focused on the scoping of whole of-government activities that will improve the relationship with the Sector and how these are linked to and support the development of the Compact. Working Group members also provided guidance and input to the consultation approach

Departments with membership in the Across Government Working Group included:

- Attorney General's Department
- Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)
- Australian Public Service Commission
- Centrelink
- Department of Employment, Education and Workplace Relations
- Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts
- Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
- Department of Finance and Deregulation
- Department of Health and Ageing
- Department of Human Services
- Department of Immigration and Citizenship
- Department of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development and Local Government
- Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Department of Treasury

Appendix C

Summary of National Compact online survey results

Of the 180 survey respondents:

- 56.7% were from Sector organisations;
- 20.0% were interested individuals;
- 12.2% were from local government;
- 5.6% were from government;
- 3.3% from the private sector; and
- 2.2% from philanthropic organisations with an interest in the Compact.

Main findings

Possible inclusions in the National Compact and issues it could work to address were surveyed:

- **98.4%** of respondents believed **acknowledging the contribution of the Sector to our society** is an important issue to be addressed in the Compact.
- **96.5%** of respondents agreed that the Compact should articulate, as an undertaking for the Sector, that **Sector organisations should ensure that they comply with all their legal or regulatory obligations** (e.g. insurance cover and financial reporting).
- **95.5%** of respondents agreed that the Compact should articulate, as an undertaking for the Government, that **the Government is accountable to the Australian people and should make decisions based on a range of views and factors**.
- **84.7%** of respondents believed that **agreeing to share information across organisations that have common goals** could be an action undertaken by the Sector which would demonstrate a commitment to 'inclusiveness'.
- The majority of respondents (**81.9%**) believed **supporting networks that help strengthen the Sector's ability to work with the Government** was an action the Sector could undertake to help demonstrate its respect for and trust in the Government.
- The majority of respondents (**79.5%**) believed that **encouraging organisations to contribute to policy and program development** was an action the Government could undertake to demonstrate its trust for and respect in the Sector.
- **77.5%** wanted the Compact to be a **way of measuring progress and change**.
- In measuring the support of principles for inclusion in the Compact, **73.2%** thought the principle of **sustainability should underpin the Compact**.
- **76.1%** of respondents stated they want an **agreed action plan** in the Compact.

- **75.7%** of respondents believe there needs to be **guidelines developed to promote how to work with and support the volunteers in our communities**, recognising that voluntary activity is not cost free.
- **71.9%** of respondents agreed that **evidence based decision making and practice** would contribute to more effective Government and community programs and policies.

The survey also highlighted issues impacting Sector organisations:

- **78.5%** of respondents agreed that **supporting innovation and good practice in planning, governance and operations** is an issue important to the organisations they represent.
- **67.6%** of respondents said that a **lack of resources, including money**, was the thing that most impacted on their organisation's efforts to be efficient.
- **64.2%** of respondents agreed that an **improvement to funding and procurement processes** is an action that could strengthen the sustainability of Sector organisations.

Sources of funding were also surveyed, revealing that **75.3%** of respondents receive their main source of funding from **Government funding sources**.

Appendix D

National Compact Joint Taskforce Progress Report of 29 June 2009

The National Compact Joint Taskforce met on 15 June to progress the development of a compact between the Australian Government and the third sector (also known as the non-profit sector). (See below for further information on the taskforce and its terms of reference.)

The government and the sector expect the compact to be an agreement outlining how they will improve and strengthen their working relationship to create better outcomes for all Australians across the spheres in which the sector engages. Preliminary consultation late last year showed genuine desire from the sector to engage in partnerships with the Government.

Following the first Taskforce meeting in May 2009, a number of members sought views from their networks about priorities for a national compact to complement the earlier consultation findings and on a range of related issues, including the breadth of the proposed compact and the inter-relationship of the development of the compact with other reviews and initiatives relevant to the sector.

At its second meeting on 15 June 2009, Taskforce members proposed that the national compact should evolve through a multi-phase process. Initially, development of the compact will begin with a high level statement of purpose and principles shared by government and the sector. Taskforce members anticipate that these principles will apply across the whole of the non-profit or third sector and the whole of the Australian Government. This breadth provides an opportunity for a powerful understanding that reframes relationships across the board.

Recognising the diversity of the sector and specific issues affecting some sub-sectors, Taskforce members anticipate the first phase of the compact will provide a foundation for development of more specific goals, commitments, codes of practice and action plans which may apply across the sector as a whole or to particular parts of the sector, for example community services, volunteering, arts, recreation, environment or sport.

These more targeted processes would be informed by more detailed consultation with relevant parts of the sector, including relevant peak bodies. Development of those more specific codes and plans will also take into account other related processes including the Productivity Commission's study into the contribution of the non-profit sector.

The Taskforce has begun work on a draft purpose and principles statement. These elements will be further refined at its next meeting in early July.

The draft compact framework produced following the Taskforce's next meeting will then be discussed by a wider group of stakeholders at a workshop later in July, with the aim of finalising a further draft for wider consultation.

At its next meeting the Taskforce will also contribute to a consultation strategy to seek feedback and input from across the sector (including online collaboration). Taskforce members will provide input into action plans to be developed based on the compact.

In the interim, members of the Taskforce will seek to broaden our dialogue in relation to the development of the draft compact, the proposed consultation strategy and priorities for inclusion in a five to ten year work plan for the implementation of a national compact.

Background information on the taskforce

In mid 2009 the Parliamentary Secretary for Social Inclusion and the Voluntary Sector, Senator Ursula Stephens, convened a National Compact Joint Taskforce to develop a draft compact framework for wider consultation.

The Taskforce brings together people from government and non-profit agencies involved in human services, environment, arts, volunteering, unions and local government.

Terms of reference and work programme

As part of the social inclusion agenda, the intention of the Government is to improve the nature of the relationship between the government and the third sector. The joint compact taskforce will work in partnership with the Parliamentary Secretary for Social Inclusion and the Voluntary Sector, Senator Ursula Stephens, and the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

(FaHCSIA) to:

- negotiate the wording and structure of a draft national compact including monitoring and reporting measures that could be the basis for consultation;
- develop a consultation strategy; and
- provide input to a five to ten year work plan for the implementation of a national compact.

The taskforce had its first meeting on **11 May 2009**. At that meeting the taskforce clarified its objectives, had some discussion as to how we are placed in developing a compact and started to explore the best way in which we could engage with a broader range of interested parties.

At the taskforce's second meeting **15 June 2009** we discussed a framework for the draft compact and sought to develop a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead to ensure we have an effective and inclusive consultation process. The taskforce has one further meeting on **6 July 2009**.

A workshop for the taskforce and around 40 additional invited compact stakeholders and partners will then be held on **20 July 2009** to consider the work of the taskforce, comment on the draft compact and consultation strategy and agree to a way forward. The outcomes of the workshop and taskforce meetings will inform a short, intensive and innovative

consultation process for the broader non-profit sector and other interested stakeholders. The consultations would take place from August to November 2009. This next stage for consultations will focus on the draft compact. Following consultation, a draft national compact and associated work plan will be presented to Government in December 2009.

John Atkin
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Appendix E

National Compact Expert Panel Communiqué – December 2008

Released Monday 15th of December 2008

The third and final meeting of the Expert Panel advising on consultation towards the development of a national compact between the Australian Government and non profit organisations was held in Melbourne on Thursday 11th of December.

The Panel, appointed by Parliamentary Secretary Senator Ursula Stephens, from a diverse range of interests across the Australian non profit sector, acknowledged the work of ACOSS and FaHCSIA in managing the first stage of compact consultation. It also strongly endorsed the need for a national compact between the Government and non profit organisations (the Sector).

Minister Jenny Macklin thanked the Expert Panel for its guidance and highlighted the pressing need for an effective leadership structure to partner with the Government on its national reform agenda.

According to Panel Co-Chair, Mr David Crosbie, *‘there is overwhelming acknowledgement from the Rudd Government and from many organisations in the Third Sector that we need to open a more meaningful dialogue and develop a more effective relationship between the Government and the Third Sector. The challenge is to translate this commitment into real change that will benefit the whole community.’*

The Panel has called for the creation of an Office of the Third Sector within the Government to better inform and co-ordinate strategies and drive positive change in the way the Government currently engages with Sector organisations and communities.

In turn, the Panel also called for the Sector to better co-ordinate its relationships with the Government and to be more accountable to the community. This will involve the sector developing more effective structures to advocate and engage in discussions on key issues currently challenging the Sector including: the very significant impact of the global financial crisis, the urgent need for the Sector to play a key role in carbon reduction, addressing the complexities of community organisations in a changing taxation system, leadership development and workforce support.

The Panel agreed the national compact was fundamentally about the Government taking an enabling approach to community engagement, resourced and facilitated through the Sector organisations that people and communities have built for themselves. If it achieves this goal, the Compact will improve the lives of all Australians.

Individual Panel members all made a commitment to continue the important work of developing a leadership structure for the Sector. They agreed to be foundation partners in a new national effort to unite the voice of the Sector.

National Compact' Expert Panel Communiqué – November 2008

Released Monday 10th of November 2008

The second meeting of the Expert Panel advising on consultation towards the development of a National Compact between the Government and non-profit organisations was held in Canberra on Wednesday 5th of November.

The Parliamentary Secretary for Social inclusion, Senator Ursula Stephens provided a brief overview of the Government's activities in relation to the proposed Compact and other relevant national developments underway including policy and regulation reviews.

The Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) presented an overview of its initial consultation with over 300 non-profit organisations across Australia. The consultation identified key issues, including the need to improve relationships between the Government and non-profit organisations, the perception that the value of non-profit organisations is not fully acknowledged by the Government or across the broader community, and the need to find a path forward that will benefit the whole Australian community.

The commitment by the Government to developing better ways of working with the not for profit sector was seen as an opportunity to make real gains for the Government, non-profit organisations and most importantly, the community.

The ACOSS consultation process indicated cautious support for the development of a National Compact between the Government and non-profit organisations, but emphasises the need to undertake a broader Government and non-profit organisation consultation and engagement process to ensure it is actively embraced rather than 'just words'.

The Panel commended ACOSS for its work on the initial consultation process and noted the need to engage with the broader not for profit sector and community beyond those involved in early discussions.

The Panel focused on how best to move forward in the consultation process to enable a National Compact to achieve this meaning and relevance beyond those already actively engaged.

It was noted that tougher economic times are likely to lead to greater involvement of non-profit organisations in the lives of Australians and more demand for non-profit services. The Panel will directly advise Senator Stephens to help ensure the next stage of developing a National Compact builds on stakeholder feedback and the initial work both within and outside the Government. The goal remains to establish more effective relationships between the Government and non-profit organisations and a more valued and effective non-profit sector.

National Compact Expert Panel Communiqués – 2008

National Compact Expert Panel Communiqué – September 2008

Released Wednesday 17th of September 2008

The first meeting of the Expert Panel advising on consultation towards the development of a National Compact between the Government and Non Government Organisations was held in Melbourne yesterday.

The Panel, appointed by Senator Ursula Stephens, from a diverse range of interests across the Australian non government sector, reviewed progress on the Government's commitment to develop a new relationship between the Government and non government organisations.

The Panel acknowledged the support of the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister and the significance of the social inclusion agenda in reshaping the way the Government and non government organisations might work together more effectively to benefit all Australians. The importance of non government organisations in realising the goal of a fairer Australia cannot be overstated.

The Panel also highlighted how important it is for both the non government sector and the Government sector to explore how to work better together. If a Compact is to work, it will provide a much needed vehicle for active dialogue and change in both sectors.

During the meeting, the Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) presented initial feedback on the first round of consultation with the non government sector. ACOSS indicated sector willingness to become involved in Australia's first National Compact, but also highlighted important issues to be considered going forward.

The active involvement of Senator Stephens and senior Government officials in the initial consultation was seen by the Panel as the beginning of an ongoing process that has the potential to deliver real outcomes, especially for the marginalised and socially disadvantaged in our communities.

The Panel all committed to working with the Government and the various stakeholders to continue this process. The goal is to ensure all Australians are able to benefit from a more effective relationship between the Government and non government organisations.

Anyone interested in the way a Compact may work and its impact on their organisation or community is encouraged to participate in the ongoing consultation around the country. The ACOSS website has details of the dates, times and places for these consultations.

