



The State of Our Community Report 2007

Starting the conversation

A Report from the Stronger Communities Taskforce
on Tasmanian Communities in 2007

This report is tribute to the more than 5,000 community organisations currently working in Tasmania.

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The Taskforce also acknowledges the assistance of Bridget Hutton in preparing this report and the additional expertise provided by Alison Lovell and Sally Shepherd.

The Taskforce is indebted to all those community organisations, individuals and government agencies who responded at short notice with information about what they are doing and ideas for the future. While this report contains only a representative cross-section of the information supplied, more can be found on the Taskforce's website:

www.dpac.tas.gov.au

There are more than 5,000 community organisations in Tasmania. This report cannot do justice to the enormous work they do in the community but rather gives a taste of the diversity of community strengthening activity across the State.

Dear Minister

Tasmanians value their communities and the connections they make. Strong communities can make a great contribution to the quality of life for all by increasing the social and economic participation of their members. However, not all communities are equally equipped to support their members.

The State of Our Community Report 2007: Starting the conversation is a snapshot of Tasmanian communities today. It provides information on current research and identifies gaps in information. Significantly it also recognises the importance of connection and involvement in the community.

This report is a useful starting point for the Stronger Communities Taskforce in analysing and identifying priorities and opportunities for action to increase community inclusion and connection. The Taskforce is pleased to know that it will be used by the Tasmanian Government in developing a more comprehensive social inclusion strategy.

This report and the contacts made in its preparation are the first step in a much longer and more comprehensive conversation with Tasmanian communities and the organisations which serve them.

The Taskforce is very appreciative of the data and information provided by a broad cross-section of the community, business and government to enable this report to be completed by the end of 2007.

The Taskforce invites feedback on the report from those involved in community development and building community connections.

Drawing on the report and the associated feedback, the Taskforce will provide you with further advice on action which can be undertaken to increase social inclusion and connection to community in Tasmania.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. O'Meara', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tom O'Meara
Chair
Stronger Communities Taskforce

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The State of Our Community Report 2007 is the basis from which the Stronger Communities Taskforce will advise the Minister for Community Development on first steps forward in making communities more inclusive by encouraging social and economic participation by all Tasmanians. It will also inform the work of the Department of Premier and Cabinet and the development of the Tasmanian Government's social inclusion strategy.

This report contains recently published data on measures of social progress. This 'snapshot' provides the key characteristics of the Tasmanian community, sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics and other data. In particular, it refers to relevant Tasmania *Together* objectives focusing on social inclusion, community connection and community capacity building.

It emphasises that, although Tasmania has experienced growth and prosperity in recent years, there are sections of our community which have been left behind and remain socially and/or economically disadvantaged. This report highlights ways of supporting all Tasmanians to participate fully in our community.

This report provides examples of current action and projects by government, business and community groups on which we can build to increase community connection.

The relevance of geographic communities and communities of interest is identified and possible areas for future action outlined. First steps forward are outlined in the following areas:

Planning for a better future

- Social inclusion strategy
- Collecting evidence

Making a difference

- Community capacity building
- Sharing experiences
- Reconnecting to community
- Building the business connection
- Developing leaders

What Government can do

- Better cross agency and inter-government co-operation
- Better communication
- Simpler funding processes

A glossary of terms is provided at the end of this report and the appendices include the Stronger Communities Taskforce membership and terms of reference, Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data, Tasmania *Together* community survey and Professor Tony Vinson's map of disadvantage for Tasmania.

This report is intended as a starting point a - conversation starter - with further work to be undertaken by the Taskforce and the Tasmanian Government, in partnership with other community and business organisations and Local Government, to achieve a more socially inclusive Tasmania.



1. INTRODUCTION

'People are healthier, happier and more productive when they are actively engaged in their communities.'

Stronger Communities Taskforce terms of reference

Tasmania, like other states of Australia, has experienced a period of economic growth. Tasmania's economic performance in recent years has been characterised by sustained jobs growth in all regions, a substantial reduction in unemployment and in the number of long-term unemployed people, strong private sector investment, continued growth in consumer spending, and population growth.

Tasmania's natural attractions and enviable lifestyle, coupled with low crime rates and ease of access to the State's services and facilities, make Tasmania a desirable place to call home.

However there is a strong perception in the community that while Tasmania is a great place to live, work and bring up a family, some Tasmanians are 'doing it tough'.

Despite our strong economy, there are still some Tasmanian communities that have not shared in the good fortune. They remain socially disadvantaged and face serious and often multiple barriers to participation and inclusion.

Community organisations, governments and businesses have already made many beneficial investments in community development and there is evidence that strengthening communities and increasing social cohesion can help mitigate individual disadvantage by increasing social and economic participation.

The State of Our Community Report 2007 looks at some options and actions to make Tasmania an even better place to live.

1.1 The Stronger Communities Taskforce

The Minister for Community Development, Michelle O'Byrne, established the Stronger Communities Taskforce in July 2007. Its terms of reference and membership are provided in Appendix 1.

Members of the Taskforce were appointed for their knowledge and experience in the community sector, in business, in government and in community development. They have all been appointed in their own right, not as representatives of particular organisations and groups, and they each bring a unique set of connections and networks to the table.

The Taskforce secretariat is located within the Community Development Division of the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPAC).

1.2 The State of Our Community Report

The Taskforce was established to advise the Minister on:

- the state of our community
- strategies to make Tasmania more inclusive
- the promotion of community development goals.

The Taskforce's terms of reference include the following:

'The Stronger Communities Taskforce will bring together all sectors of the community to work together to investigate the current state of our community, develop strategies and encourage action to build stronger communities and increase social inclusion.'

'...The Taskforce will review data and significant action taken in relation to community development since the commencement of Tasmania Together. It will report to the Minister on the state of our communities in the context of increasing social inclusion with reference to current barriers, as well as strategies to strengthen the communities.'

The State of Our Community Report 2007 is the Taskforce's first project.

The Premier, Paul Lennon, in his State of the State Address in October 2007 said:

'There is a link between strong families, strong and sustainable communities and positive social outcomes. We also understand the fundamental importance of the link between economic prosperity and social inclusion. My Government is committed to a socially connected Tasmania – a fair society that works to keep us all moving forward together. All Tasmanians deserve the best start in life and the best opportunities in life.'

'...I commit my Government to using this report as the starting point in developing a comprehensive, whole of government, social inclusion strategy. A social inclusion strategy is central to our vision for a fair and connected Tasmania.'

This report contains a collection of recently published data to provide a 'snapshot' of the key characteristics of the Tasmanian community. The data is a selection of qualitative and quantitative information across a broad range of indicators and measures of social progress.

The Taskforce's work is firmly founded in the overarching objectives of Tasmania *Together*. The work of the Taskforce will contribute towards the achievement of the following Tasmania *Together* Goals:

- Vibrant, inclusive and growing communities where people feel valued and connected.
- A reasonable lifestyle and standard of living for all Tasmanians.
- Confident, friendly and safe communities.

Consistent with these goals the Taskforce recognises the importance of supporting communities to make decisions about their own futures.

1.3 Scope

This report focuses its attention on issues of social inclusion, community connectedness and community capacity building.

It presents a cross-section of current activity and attempts to describe the gaps and ways of identifying areas in need of further action.

Social inclusion strategies elsewhere include South Australia's Social Inclusion Initiative and *A Fairer Victoria*, which have involved the establishment of a specific Social Inclusion Unit within the Department of Premier and Cabinet in South Australia and the establishment of the Department of Planning and Community Development in Victoria with an associated action plan and funding.

In the United Kingdom, the Cabinet Office established a Social Exclusion Task Force in 2006 which gives priority to working with the most socially excluded.

In 1997, Ireland developed a National Anti Poverty Strategy and was the first European Union country to set an anti-poverty target. Ireland has also established an Office for Social Inclusion which has released a *National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007-2016* identifying a wide range of whole-of-government targets and interventions.

In preparing this report, the Taskforce has looked at these and other models and sees its work as an important part of the development and implementation of the Tasmanian Government's wider social inclusion strategy.

The Taskforce sees its work as based in the community, working with communities to strengthen them, to build capacity and reconnect those who suffer unwelcome isolation.

1.4 Characteristics of a strong community

As part of its research, the Taskforce asked Tasmanians what they valued about their community.

Respondents agreed that Tasmania is a good place to bring up a family and spoke about security and safety, a relaxed lifestyle, quality of life, affordability, and quietness, natural resources, clean air and water quality and the importance of public parks and gardens. They talked about friends and neighbours and family connections and people being friendly and helpful. This was followed by issues such as community cohesion, co-operation and working together. They saw access to services, health, schools, police, transport, sporting and recreational facilities as important as having a say, freedom of expression and freedom of movement. They also placed value on social equality and respect.

The Taskforce recognises the importance of these attributes to Tasmanians and has taken them into account in its report.

1.5 Social inclusion and barriers to inclusion

Despite the positive view of community held by most Tasmanians, the Taskforce also heard that:

- Within communities there are individuals who experience isolation and loneliness, and many suffer social and/or economic disadvantage.
- Some communities lack the capacity to meet the needs of their members to be connected to the community support mechanisms, both social and economic.

Professor Tony Vinson's study *Dropping off the edge: the distribution of disadvantage in Australia* examines indicators of disadvantage in five broad categories:

- *social distress* - including low family income, rental and home purchase stress
- *health* - including low birth-weight, disability/sickness support, suicide
- *community safety* - including criminal convictions, prison admission, domestic violence
- *economic* - including unemployment, long-term unemployment, computer/internet access and use
- *education* - including incomplete education, post-school qualifications and early school leaving.

Further information on the Vinson study is included in Chapter 2 and more definitions are in the glossary at the end of this report.

1.6 Where to from here?

1.6.1 How this report will be used

The State of Our Community Report 2007 has been developed by the Taskforce as the first step forward in taking action aimed at increasing social inclusion and community connection in Tasmania.

The Taskforce will provide advice to the Minister for Community Development on steps aimed at increasing community connection and social inclusion, and building community capacity. This report will also contribute to the Government's social inclusion strategy from a community development perspective.

1.6.2 Next steps

The Taskforce will develop proposals to strengthen communities, increase community connection and social and economic participation.

A program of active stakeholder engagement and discussion around the State will also be developed.

The Taskforce appreciates comments on this report as a next step in the process of strengthening communities. It is seeking further information from communities on what is working for them, examples of successful programs and projects as well as areas of need and how these can be addressed.

Written comments can be posted to Mr Tom O'Meara, Chair, Stronger Communities Taskforce Secretariat, Community Development Division, Department of Premier and Cabinet, GPO Box 123, Hobart 7001. Comments can also be submitted by email to cdd@dpac.tas.gov.au.



2. WHAT WE KNOW

'Not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted.'

Attributed to Albert Einstein

The Taskforce has worked with the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), the Tasmania *Together* Progress Board and other government agencies to identify the key characteristics of the Tasmanian community. It has used a collection of published and new data from a range of sources.

2.1 Key characteristics of the Tasmanian community

Data in this section is from ABS publications. More information is included in Appendix 2 with references to source documents.

- The Tasmanian population increased by 0.7 per cent to 493,341 during the 12 months ended 30 June 2007.
- Tasmania has the most regional and dispersed population of any state in Australia with almost 60 per cent of the population living outside the capital city but populations in some Local Government Areas (LGAs) are decreasing despite the current increase in the State's population.
- Tasmania's proportion of family households is 67.3 per cent, the proportion of couple families with children is 41.4 per cent, couple families without children 40.5 per cent and sole parent families 16.7 per cent.
- Over the next 20 years, the proportion of Tasmanians under the age of 15 is projected to decline by about 14 per cent, the proportion of 15-39 year olds will also decline, while the proportion of people aged 65 years and over could increase by almost 80 per cent.
- With South Australia, Tasmania now has the oldest population in Australia, with about 8,600 people aged over 85 years. This number is projected to grow to 16,500 over the next 20 years and to 32,800 over the following two decades.

- Tasmanians have a very strong commitment to community and in 2006 about 131,000 (36 per cent of the adult population) participated in volunteering activities. However, the ageing population and declining numbers of younger people will mean an increasing demand for voluntary services and a decreasing pool of volunteers on which to draw.
- The proportion of Tasmanians 18 years and over who report mental and behavioural problems is lower than the national rate.
- Approximately 20 per cent of Tasmanians have a disability.
- In the ABS 2006 Census, 10.7 per cent of Tasmanians aged 15 years and over reported they provided unpaid assistance to a person with disability, long-term illness or problems relating to old age. The majority were aged 45 and over, indicating the carer workforce will also be impacted by the State's ageing population.
- The ABS Census 2006 shows that 16,718 (3.4 per cent) of Tasmanians identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. However the figure is likely to be lower than reported because of issues with self-identification and incorrect ticking of the 'origin' category.
- Generally the feeling of safety at home and in public places is greater in Tasmania than for Australia as a whole.
- While fruit and vegetable consumption by adult Tasmanians is around the Australian average, only half of the Tasmanian population is reaching the target for a healthy lifestyle.
- The proportion of children (five to 14 years) participating in organised sport in Tasmania is below the national participation rate.
- The proportion of Tasmanians over 18 who are overweight or obese is slightly lower than that for the whole of Australia.
- The proportion of Tasmanians 18 and over who are smokers is slightly higher than the average for Australia.
- Tasmania was the worst performing state in the recently released ABS adult literacy and life skills survey.
- The percentage of 15-19 year olds in employment or continuing in education has increased in recent years.
- Tasmania's retention rate from year 10 to year 12 is below the national average.
- The proportion of Tasmanians aged 15-64 with post-school qualifications is lower than the national rate.

- The five largest industry sectors employing Tasmanians are: retail trade, health care and social assistance, manufacturing, public administration and safety, and education and training.
- Childcare availability has increased significantly.
- Tasmania's unemployment rate is slightly higher and the workforce participation rate is lower than the national rate.
- Tasmania has the highest percentage of people unemployed for 12 months and the highest rate of workers who want, and are available for more hours of work than they currently have.
- Tasmanians have the lowest median weekly household income with an average of \$801 compared with \$1,027 nationally, and net household worth is lower in Tasmania. Despite this, Tasmanians are more likely than other Australians to own their home outright.
- The proportion of Tasmanians whose principal source of household income was government pensions and allowances has decreased from 37.6 per cent in 2002-03 to 31.5 per cent in 2005-06 but is higher than for Australia as a whole.

2.2 Tasmania *Together*

Tasmania *Together* is the long-term social, economic and environmental plan developed by Tasmanians for Tasmania. It outlines what we want for ourselves, our children and our State by the year 2020. It sets the goals we are aiming for - as well as ways to measure our progress - so we can see what we have achieved and what still needs to be done.

The Tasmania *Together* Progress Board measures progress and encourages all sectors of government, the community and business to work together through its partnership program and other activities to address issues of importance to the community.

The Tasmania *Together* Goals that are of particular relevance to the Taskforce and its report are:

- Goal 1: A reasonable lifestyle and standard of living for all Tasmanians
- Goal 2: Confident, friendly and safe communities
- Goal 5: Vibrant, inclusive and growing communities where people feel valued and connected.

The first steps forward suggested by the Stronger Communities Taskforce will identify measurable outcomes which will in turn contribute to the achievement of Tasmania *Together* targets.

2.2.1 Tasmania *Together* measures

Standard of living

Tasmania *Together* Indicator 1.1.1 shows that the cost of living in Tasmania is increasing quite rapidly. The proportion of the cost of essentials as a percentage of income for low-income families was 73 per cent in 2001 and 98.67 per cent in 2007. This data is based on mortgage costs and has been calculated using the average sale value for the cheapest Hobart suburb.

Indicator 1.1.2 provides data on the proportion of households where the primary source of income is government pensions or allowances. Although at first glance it would appear that Tasmania has made impressive improvements on this indicator (decreasing from 37.6 per cent in 2002-03 to 31.5 per cent in 2005-06), the national average has decreased from 25 per cent to 20 per cent in the same period.

Undoubtedly one of the major factors in the increase in the cost of living is that house prices have increased markedly and, as a consequence, so too has private rental. Housing stress experienced by low-income earners in Tasmania within the private rental market was 25.4 per cent in 2006-07, compared to 20.6 per cent in November 2002 (Indicator 1.1.4). The Tasmanian house price to income ratio has shown a significant increase from 1:3.4 in 2001-02 to 1:5.5 in 2005-06 (Indicator 1.1.5). However, there have been improvements in public housing waiting times for priority applicants, dropping from 38 weeks in 2005 to 21 weeks in 2006-07 (Indicator 1.1.6). A qualifier to the improvement in this indicator is that a counting change to record time from the end of an assessment period rather than application date accounts for 14 of the 17 week improvements.

Transport accessibility (Indicator 1.1.7) is an issue for 12.5 per cent of the adult population and a possibly higher proportion of young people. Access to affordable and reliable transport is extremely important in disadvantaged communities, particularly those in rural and remote areas, for a range of purposes including accessing employment, health and other services and recreational activities.

Safety

Generally the Tasmanian community is feeling safer at home and in public places (Indicators 2.1.2 and 2.1.3) and there has been a significant lowering in Indicator 2.1.4 (crime victimisation rate), down from 13.8 per cent in 1998 to 8.7 per cent in 2005. However, there is a definite increase in the reported level of family violence (Indicator 2.1.5) up from 1,300 incidents in 2001-02 to 4,095 in 2004-05. This is at least in part due to a range of *Safe at Home* initiatives which have increased the community's confidence in reporting incidents and an understanding that family violence is no longer acceptable.

Tasmania *Together* provides a variety of indicators which examine youth at risk in the Tasmanian community. Indicator 2.2.1 shows the number of deaths of people aged zero to 29 years due to external causes. In 1998 the figure was 55 and in 2004 the number was 56. The trend data for this benchmark is very inconsistent, fluctuating from 45 in 2003 to 74 in 1999.

Education

Tasmania's retention rate from year 10 to year 12 (Indicator 3.3.1) is of concern and would appear to be declining from 71.6 per cent in 2000 to 65 per cent in 2006 (the 2006 figure for the national average is 76.1 per cent). There are no clear trends as the Tasmanian figure had risen to 76.4 per cent in 2003 (Australia 76.7 per cent) and 76.3 per cent in 2004 (Australia 77.6 per cent) before falling again to 67.85 per cent in 2005 (Australia 75.6 per cent). The percentage of 15-19 year olds not employed or in education (Indicator 5.5.1) has shown improvement decreasing from 10.7 per cent in 2000 to 9.5 per cent in 2005.

Health

In examining the major health risk factors for Tasmanians, the following picture emerges: an improvement in the proportion of over 18 year olds who eat at least two serves of fruit and five serves of vegetables a day. The proportion of Tasmanians over 18 who are overweight or obese (Indicator 4.1.5) has increased from 30.7 per cent overweight and 14.7 per cent obese in 2001 to 31.8 per cent overweight and 17.1 per cent obese in 2004-05.

The proportion of Tasmanians aged 18 and over who are current smokers (Indicator 4.3.3) shows a slight increase, which is of concern particularly in light of recently released Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) information about the number of teenage mothers who smoke during pregnancy. In 2005, 27.6 per cent of Tasmanian women smoked while pregnant, and this percentage was higher among younger women, particularly those aged under 24 years.

The health of Tasmanians is of concern particularly in relation to prevalence of Type 2 diabetes in people aged 25-64 (Indicator 4.1.6) which is increasing in prevalence from 2.1 per cent in 2001 to 2.8 per cent in 2005. The proportion of children (five to 14 years) participating in organised sport (Indicator 4.1.3) in Tasmania was, in 2000, close to the Australian participation rate. By 2006, the Tasmanian participation rate of 59.5 per cent had slipped below the national participation rate of 63 per cent. On a more positive note, the proportion of Tasmanians 18 years and over who report their level of psychological distress as high/very high (Indicator 4.2.2) has decreased from 14 per cent in 2001 to 12.6 per cent in 2004-05.

The latest Tasmanian General Practitioner (GP) Census 2007 shows that the greatest concentration of GPs is in the capital city Hobart, where 50.4 per cent of all GPs work, while there are very small numbers of GPs working in remote areas. Overall the GP Census 2007 shows that when the Tasmanian GP workforce was mapped against population levels and socio-economic status, access to GPs in rural and regional areas, and areas of socio-economic disadvantage, is likely to be more difficult.

2.3 Community participation

The data shows high levels of community connection and participation in Tasmania. There are over 5,000 community groups and a higher than the national average participation rate for volunteers (Indicator 5.3.1). Tasmania's volunteer participation rate of 36 per cent is higher than the national participation rate of 34.1 per cent. Participation is slightly higher in Tasmanian regional areas (37.4 per cent) compared with the capital city rate of 34.2 per cent. The percentage of people participating in cultural activities (Indicator 6.2.1) remains constant at 18 per cent, while the number of multicultural events in Tasmania in 2005 has doubled to 40 from 20 events in 2000. The percentage of councils with youth advisory committees (Indicator 8.2.1) has increased from 65.5 per cent in 2001 to 79 per cent in 2005. Twenty-three of the 29 councils have a youth advisory committee.

2.3.1 Tasmania Together community survey

Tasmania Together community survey

Communities are complicated. The data above reveals only part of the story. Communities are made up of people and the connections between them. When we talk about communities we talk about interaction, a common identity, shared experiences, friends and neighbours, trust and reciprocity, help in adversity, feeling safe, sociability, feeling valued and useful, taking action for the common good, and getting involved.

The Tasmania *Together* Progress Board has been looking for new measures of 'community': feeling part of the community, perception that Tasmanian communities are inclusive, and quality of life. The Board has developed a survey to ask Tasmanians about their perceptions on these matters. The survey will allow new benchmarks to be developed. The Board has provided some preliminary results to the Taskforce, which is most appreciative of the Board's assistance.

The Board is running a quarterly survey of 500 Tasmanians. The results will be aggregated to provide annual data for the new benchmarks. The Board will publish the new benchmarks and the survey results in mid 2008.

So far the Board has surveyed 1,000 Tasmanians (in two surveys three months apart). The questions include how satisfied people are with various aspects of their lives, the support they have received from various sources, their opportunities to socialise, and how accepting they believe Tasmanians are of other people's sexual orientation, culture and religion. Survey participants were randomly selected from the three regions to represent the current Tasmanian age breakdown. However, participation in the survey was dependent on respondents being in a house with a fixed telephone line. The questions asked are in Appendix 3.

The following estimates are subject to sampling variability and may differ from results for the whole population. The sample size of 1,000 results in relatively small sampling errors. Further errors can be expected from non-sampling errors, such as a respondent not clearly understanding a question or errors processing data from the survey.

Almost 90 per cent of respondents said they were satisfied with their life as a whole with about six per cent indicating they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. More than 85 per cent indicated satisfaction with their standard of living and people were even more positive about what they were currently achieving in life, family and other relationships and levels of happiness.

Looking at support received in the last 12 months, more than 60 per cent reported support from family and friends, more than 40 per cent from neighbours and 13 per cent from community services. Of those receiving support, more than 80 per cent were satisfied with the support they received.

More than 80 per cent of those surveyed were satisfied with their opportunities to socialise, with about 10 per cent expressing dissatisfaction. Those dissatisfied cited work and caring responsibilities as well as transport, cost and health as the main barriers. Very few mentioned lack of friends and family.

About 50 per cent of those asked agreed that Tasmanians are accepting of people's sexual orientation, with 27 per cent disagreeing. More than 60 per cent agreed that Tasmanians are accepting of people from different ethnic groups and religions and nearly 20 per cent disagreed.

While these results appear positive and reinforce the Taskforce's view that most Tasmanians are experiencing the benefits of economic growth and strong communities, it is important that we keep in mind those Tasmanians who expressed dissatisfaction with their lives, standard of living, relationships and the support they have received from various sources as well as their opportunities to socialise.

2.4 Geographic communities and communities of interest

2.4.1 Communities of interest

Migrants

Tasmania has a commitment to cultural diversity which contributes to the economic, social and cultural life of the State.

Many migrant groups are well established in Tasmania and Tasmania's communities welcome a number of new arrivals every year including humanitarian entrants, family sponsored, skilled and business migrants.

It is important all levels of government collaborate with each other as well as with communities to address culturally based social exclusion and disadvantage.

The Taskforce looks forward to meeting the Tasmanian Advisory Council on Multicultural Affairs (TACMA) to gain a better understanding of how culturally diverse Tasmanians can best be connected to, and included in, all aspects of community life.

Disability

People with disability make up a significant component of the State's population and Tasmanians who are already socially excluded due to age, cultural identity, location or gender may also live with disability that can further heighten their vulnerability, disadvantage and isolation.

The Taskforce will work with the Premier's Disability Advisory Council to find ways of ensuring these Tasmanians are connected and included in the community.

Tasmanian Aboriginal community

The Tasmanian Aborigines have a strong and well-connected community. By working together, they and the Tasmanian Government have led the nation in progressing Aboriginal reconciliation through enacting Stolen Generations legislation, and a hand back of over 50,000 hectares of land. Most recently the Tasmanian Aboriginal community has successfully repatriated Aboriginal remains from the British Natural History Museum in London.

Despite these significant achievements, the Tasmanian Aboriginal community continues to experience higher proportions of social disadvantage, such as higher unemployment, fewer private rental or home ownership, literacy and numeracy problems, family violence and over-representation in the justice system, and health and wellbeing issues that need to be addressed.

Older people

Older Tasmanians have the right to age positively by living happy, healthy, independent lives while maintaining their connections to the community.

It is essential older Tasmanians are encouraged and supported to develop the capacity and tools to manage their lifestyle and choices to ensure they experience good health for as long as possible. This can be achieved by minimising the risks of physical decline and the period of morbidity at the end of life.

The Tasmanian Government's Positive Ageing Consultative Committee will ensure the Taskforce is well informed and contributes to positioning Tasmania to enhance opportunities for older Tasmanians to age positively.

Children and young people

Some Tasmanian children are at risk of social exclusion because of where they live or a range of other socio-economic factors that may affect their capacity to achieve their full potential. There is a strong body of evidence that the early years are a crucially important stage of human development, setting the stage for later development, learning and wellbeing.

Intervention during early childhood is likely to be more cost effective and influence a wider range of health, social and economic outcomes than intervention later in life. It is imperative that Tasmanian children are given the best possible start in life as a basis for a healthy and positive future and to encourage them to engage in their community.

Women

Women who are also members of communities of interest previously outlined can face additional disadvantage. In particular financial inclusion and economic participation of women are important for developing more inclusive communities in Tasmania.

Online

Tasmania has a growing online community, but its growth is slower than other states. Online communities can increase an individual's social connectedness, particularly in rural and regional areas.

2.4.2 Geographic communities

Despite the strong economy, there are still some Tasmanian communities that have not shared in the good fortune and remain economically disadvantaged compared with other communities.

Professor Tony Vinson's report *Dropping off the Edge: the distribution of disadvantage in Australia* shows barriers include low levels of school attainment and completion, high unemployment, poor health and housing, high imprisonment rates, child abuse, low levels of access to and use of new technology and so on. Vinson's report highlights the particularly strong link between intergenerational poverty and low educational attainment.

The most inter-correlating indicators for Tasmanian families on low incomes were: disability and sickness, unemployment, long-term unemployment, limited computer use and internet access, and early school leaving. The major characteristics of seven of Tasmania's most disadvantaged LGAs also included imprisonment, mortality, criminal convictions and suicide.

An important aspect of Vinson's work is community strength and social cohesion. Vinson assessed social cohesion based on:

- extent of volunteering
- availability of help from neighbours in times of adversity
- participation in 'sociable' recreational activities.

Vinson found that a relatively high degree of 'cohesion' could be found in communities with high indicators of disadvantage.

2.5 Identifying areas for action

While a great deal is known about the Tasmanian community at a statewide level, more data needs to be available at the local level. There are several resources which can assist to more accurately identify disadvantage. Examples follow.

2.5.1 Census data

Census data is available at a Local Government Area (LGA) level, with some basic data available down to Census Collection District (CCD), which averages 220 dwellings in urban areas and less in rural areas.

New Mesh Block geographical units of 50-60 households will provide basic gender and dwelling counts in 2008. It will also be possible to combine Mesh Blocks so summary statistics can be made available for a range of user-defined areas.

2.5.2 Data collected as part of government administrative processes

Data collected by State, Australian and non-government agencies could be 'de-identified' by removing personal details to provide useful information for local-level planning and targeting support programs. However, this would be subject to legislative changes, community consultation and acceptance.

In addition, the Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources' (DIER) State Infrastructure Planning System (SIPS), which provides whole-of-government analytical modelling tools and techniques, will be useful.

Coding administrative data collections to Mesh Blocks will make agencies' data more readily comparable with ABS data and will allow data to be produced for user-defined geographic areas, subject to appropriate confidentiality provisions.

2.5.3 SEIFA index

Socio-Economic Indexes For Areas (SEIFA) summarises a number of variables associated with socio-economic disadvantage derived from the ABS Census of Population and Housing. The indexes measure aspects of socio-economic conditions including education, occupation, employment, income and some measures of wealth such as owning a car or the number of bedrooms in the dwelling.

More work needs to be done in comparing the SEIFA data with Vinson's study to identify specific areas of locational disadvantage in Tasmania, particularly in larger LGAs.

2.5.4 Conclusion

Further research is required to identify good examples of community capacity building and areas of greatest need.

It is clear communities want easy access to information about themselves and what similar communities are doing. Further analysis of existing data is also required to assist the Taskforce in developing well-targeted, long-term programs to promote social inclusion and increase community capacity.

Further consultation is needed with the ABS on the use of Census data as well as other social and economic survey data to build a better long-term picture of community needs. By further refining the Vinson findings with the help of SEIFA indexes and the assistance of others working in the area, the Taskforce is confident it can develop proposals for well-targeted and effective programs in the short and medium term.



3. WHAT WE DON'T KNOW

To know yet to think that one does not know is best; Not to know yet to think that one knows will lead to difficulty.'

Lao-Tzu

There is a great deal of research and analysis in the area of community development and community capacity building either in progress or almost completed. This section of the report briefly references a number of research and analysis projects underway in Tasmania at the time of publication. The Taskforce welcomes findings of other relevant research and analysis and will include progress reports on the Stronger Communities Taskforce website at www.dpac.tas.gov.au.

3.1 Current research

3.1.1 Demographic change

In June 2006, Treasurer Michael Aird established the Demographic Change Advisory Council (DCAC) to identify and assess demographic change issues expected to affect Tasmania. DCAC aims to research and analyse information and trends on demographic change issues; lead and influence the debate on demographic change issues and identify possible strategies available to address these issues; and facilitate the sharing of information and research across the relevant stakeholder groups within Tasmania.

DCAC released an issues paper, *Demographic Change in Tasmania: challenges and opportunities*, in October 2007. The issues paper was prepared by DCAC in response to community and stakeholder feedback on a discussion paper released in March 2007. The submissions and consultation provided valuable input towards identifying some of the emerging social, economic and fiscal issues that Tasmania could expect in future years if no action is taken. DCAC's next step is to prepare a report on possible strategies which can address the challenges and capture the opportunities of demographic change that are outlined in the issues paper. DCAC will provide an opportunity for the community to comment on proposed strategies as part of this process.

DCAC has also published an information paper, *Who is not participating in Tasmania's labour force?*, which examines the characteristics of Tasmanians not participating in the labour force and some reasons for this non-participation. In 2008, DCAC expects to release further information papers on a range of areas, including the health of the workforce, productivity and migration. DCAC is also developing population projections for Tasmania (down to LGA level), which will be released in late 2008.

3.1.2 Health local service profiles

In 2006, as part of the Primary Health Services Plan, the ABS worked with the Department of Health and Human Services to develop a series of community profiles for each LGA including demographic and health services information (available at www.dhhs.tas.gov.au).

3.1.3 Local government profiles

DPAC's Local Government Office is working with assistance from the ABS to develop a core data set of information available at the LGA level that will be useful for a range of purposes. Key components are identification of available data, including from state agencies, which could be made more widely available.

3.1.4 Community asset audit surveys

Professor David Adams and Professor Michael Hess of the University of Tasmania are undertaking community asset audit surveys. This work is being progressed by the Faculty of Business in partnership with the Cradle Coast Institute for Regional Development and the Australian Innovation Research Centre. The surveys will be conducted in the north and north-west of the State to measure the stock of 'social capital or community strength' at the LGA level, as well as the risks and opportunities communities face in increasing their levels of wellbeing and competitiveness. Levels of community strength are known to be strongly correlated with higher levels of health, education and safety. The surveys deal with the general population and there is an additional survey in Northern Tasmania specifically on youth (16-24 years) with more focus on skills, training and employment issues.

The surveys measure factors such as:

- participation in sport, recreation, leisure and learning
- civic engagement and the capacity to engage
- levels of trust and identity with place
- existence and use of local resources
- type of network supports available and their utility
- use of new technologies.

The surveys will also align with the Australian Innovation Research Centre study of innovation across Tasmanian businesses. For the first time nationally, it will be possible to correlate the relationship between social capital (or social cohesion) and levels of innovation - for example the 'density' of supportive local networks correlates (based on the international evidence) - with levels of innovation such as new patents and sustainable business start-ups. The research project is due for completion in March 2008.

3.1.5 Volunteering research

The University of Tasmania's Department of Rural Health, in partnership with Volunteering Tasmania, is undertaking a sustainable volunteer workforce research project to explore assumptions about volunteering and to understand the nature of volunteer labour in regional and rural Tasmania and how this may be changing. Trends to be explored are: an ageing volunteer base, emerging trends in volunteer education and training, and the role of corporate volunteering. This research project is due for completion in September 2008.

3.1.6 Early years research

The Tasmanian Early Years Foundation has established a research project *Building the Evidence – an outcomes based framework to improve health, wellbeing and development of Tasmanian children*. The project prioritises and targets projects and initiatives funded by the Foundation. Key target areas include the health, wellbeing and development of Tasmanian children aged six and under.

3.1.7 State Infrastructure Planning System

The State Infrastructure Planning System (SIPS) is a system to improve policy and planning decision-making for government investment in infrastructure including transport, energy, water and land use, by measuring existing supply and demand. SIPS will help identify gaps in existing infrastructure and identify and help plan in response to emerging trends and needs.

3.1.8 Sustainable Natural Resource Management (NRM)

The National Land and Water Resources Audit was established to provide data, information and nationwide assessments of Australia's land, water and biological resources to support sustainable development. Its research project, *The potential to map the adaptive capacity of Australian land managers for the NRM using ABS data*, aims to assess the resilience and vulnerability of rural communities and to shape policy priorities.

3.2 Further information collection

The Taskforce is keen to identify further projects and information and will develop its website to maintain a database of successful community based activity. The aim will be to collect and provide easy access to examples of good practice. The website will encourage organisations to report on projects and programs which work and to leave their contact details so interested people can make further enquiries.

The biggest single gap in the data is the availability of information at the local level.

The Taskforce recognises the importance of good local data in planning, project and program delivery and evaluation.



4. WHAT WE'RE DOING NOW

'All Tasmanians are supported by a strong community.'

Vision: Tasmanian Association of Community Houses

There are more than 5,000 community organisations working in Tasmania.

Across the State and in all communities, there are an overwhelming number of initiatives, events, programs and projects designed to increase community capacity, social inclusion and community connection. These activities are undertaken by community service organisations, non-government organisations, businesses and all levels of government. It is not possible to document all their contributions in this report.

The Taskforce has chosen examples of successful community development programs in snapshot form to indicate the nature and range of this activity. Other examples will be added to the Stronger Communities Taskforce website and this collection of information will grow over time.

In collecting material for this report, the Taskforce wrote to a number of community and business sector organisations and peak bodies, State Government agencies and Local Government bodies to seek information on current activities aimed at increasing social inclusion through community development. The following is a summary of the responses received.

4.1 The community sector

4.1.1 Anglicare Tasmania

Anglicare Tasmania works in service provision, research, advocacy and public debate. Specific examples of activities designed to increase social inclusion, community participation and capacity building include:

- the Personal Support Program offering up to two years intensive support to people experiencing multiple barriers to participation in the community or workforce
- the Compass mentoring program for young people who are having trouble with school and learning.

Anglicare also offers a range of services including accommodation, counselling, employment, financial help, family support, and support for people with disability and mental illness.

Anglicare's Social Action and Research Centre addresses the causes of poverty and injustice. The centre's current priorities include affordable housing, the income support system, oral health, electricity affordability, food insecurity, the state concessions system, and the issues faced by low-income earners with disability or caring for those with disability.

CROC Services – Clarendon Vale Neighbourhood Centre

The Clarendon Vale, Rokeby, Oakdowns Community (CROC) Services project not only provides a service to members of the local community, but also has direct and ongoing benefits for participating volunteers.

CROC delivers home and garden maintenance services throughout the greater Hobart region and provides a discounted rate for pension and health care cardholders within Clarence Plains (Clarendon Vale, Rokeby and Oakdowns).

It also acts as a training program through which volunteers gain experience and skills useful in moving into paid employment.

Volunteers are trained in occupational health and safety, small machinery usage and maintenance, horticulture, as well as gaining experience in operating a small business, including governance, time management, financial operations and customer service.

Policies are in place to ensure sustainability of the service, including competitive pricing, cost recovery, written quotes and up-front payments.

CROC volunteer David Wilton said there was a real need for services in Clarendon Vale and surrounds.

"We take our time and make sure we do a good job and teach our members new skills - business is booming," he said.



4.1.2 Area Consultative Committee Tasmania

Area Consultative Committee Tasmania (ACCT) is established and funded under the Australian Government's Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government. The committee works in partnership with community, business and all levels of government. Members are drawn from businesses, community organisations, regional organisations and business organisations from around the State.

ACCT funds regional development projects, some of which promote community connection, including:

- Brighton Council's *All Roads Lead to Jordan and Beyond* to build a new community centre at Bridgewater and a new community centre at Old Beach
- Vintex Industries' redevelopment and expansion of its Vintex Recycling facility which will help create additional employment for people with disability
- Toosey Hospital Day Centre expansion and development in partnership with the Meander Valley Council to encourage greater use and increased participation by older people in the Longford community and surrounding rural areas
- Circular Head Community Garden project which will significantly increase the size of the current community garden to enable greater participation for students at the local high school, unemployed youth and long-term unemployed. The garden is used to teach horticulture, develop small business skills and improve social participation
- Project Penghana in Queenstown, which will use the restoration of the gardens at Penghana House as a youth training program in horticulture, leadership and mentoring.

4.1.3 Colony 47

Colony 47 works with people who are homeless, at risk of homelessness, or who are experiencing barriers to participation in society particularly because of issues relating to employment, training, housing or lack of social and family networks.

Colony 47 does this by offering assistance in:

- case management, direct financial assistance, support and information
- early intervention and education services
- employment and training services
- recreational, life skills and drop-in services
- advocacy, negotiation, and lobbying.

The organisation's Communities Supporting Families Action Research Project focuses on early intervention support for parents and children aged six to 12 and aims to strengthen relationships between families, schools and the wider community. The project emphasises creative and family friendly ways of exploring relationships.

4.1.4 Council on the Ageing (Tasmania)

The Council on the Ageing (Tasmania) is one of a number of organisations (including the Youth Network of Tasmania and the Multicultural Council of Tasmania) which are funded by the Tasmanian Government to bring to the attention of government the identified needs and wants of their communities of interest. The Council on the Ageing promotes positive ageing and strategic planning to assist vulnerable and disadvantaged older people in the community. The council's vision is for "an inclusive community which values, supports and recognises the contribution of older people".

TALENT (Third Age Learning Network of Tasmania) encourages mental, physical and social activities; works for greater community access to under-used school facilities; and supports school leaders in developing positive relationships with local seniors communities.

Community Shed - St Helens Neighbourhood House

The St Helens Community Shed was established in 2003 through support from the Tasmanian Government and the Tasmanian Community Fund. It is now completely self-sustaining through the sale of items made at the shed and construction of items for community groups and people in the local area. It has a core group of around 25 members as well as regular visitors, and caters for all members of the community.



Paul Wilson was one of the first through the door when the Community Shed opened. Known as the 'Flying Seat' for the speed he gets around in his wheelchair, Paul became President of the Community Shed and is the chief toy maker, producing paddle-wheelers, jeeps, trains, helicopters, boats, planes, tip trucks and log trucks. His specially crafted wooden toys provide much joy to their recipients.

The Community Shed has provided inspiration for similar projects with participants freely sharing information with others about how to set up a shed. Members have attended Men's Shed conferences in other states in 2005 and 2007.

4.1.5 Country Women's Association in Tasmania Inc.

The Country Women's Association Inc (CWA) provides a range of learning options from handcraft, to office bearing, to the study of social issues. Together with Eat Well Tasmania and Hobart Legacy, the CWA has gained funding to allow members to be trained as community cooking demonstrators. Members have also been involved with new residents through the Hobart Migrant Resource Centre.

4.1.6 Mission Australia

Mission Australia is a national community services organisation that has been operating in Tasmania since 1998. The organisation operates in eight locations across the State. Mission Australia's vision is to see a fairer Australia by enabling people in need to find pathways to a better life. To see this vision become a reality, Mission Australia delivers programs in five pathways:

- pathways away from homelessness: Chigwell House, Personal Helpers and Mentors program
- pathways through a successful youth – U-Turn, Youth Beat, Stay On Track
- pathways to strong families and healthy, happy children – Communities for children
- pathways to skills and qualifications – Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program, traineeships
- pathways to sustainable employment – Personal Support Program, Work for the Dole.

4.1.7 Natural Resource Management (South)

Natural Resource Management (South) works with primary industry and the community to raise awareness of natural resource management and provide advice on grant opportunities. A support officer works with the Tasmanian Aboriginal community to raise awareness within the broader community on cross-cultural issues impacting on natural resource management.

The organisation administers programs that support individual land managers and provides incentives to undertake property management and protect natural resource values.

One of these projects supports the Understorey Network in growing native understorey plants for local community projects on a volunteer basis. The Understorey Network has established effective links with a number of community groups including those involving people with disability.

4.1.8 Tasmanian Association of Community Houses

The Tasmanian Association of Community Houses (TACH) helps communities find innovative solutions to their own needs. The Neighbourhood House Program receives its core funding from the Department of Health and Human Services.

The association is the peak body for 34 community houses and neighbourhood centres throughout Tasmania, which make up the largest funded community development infrastructure in the State.

The houses and centres aim to:

- build communities
- support people and their families
- enhance choices.

Many are based in areas that were originally broadacre housing developments, that still house people on low incomes, or are regional areas disadvantaged by their location. They are managed by local community committees with some part-time paid staff.

North West Lifestyle Challenge – 10,000 Steps – Ulverstone Community House

The Ulverstone Community House Lifestyle Challenge aims to encourage and motivate the community to look at ways of making healthy choices for their own wellbeing.



The program supports more than 800 participants in setting themselves one or more healthy lifestyle challenges in the areas of physical fitness, healthier eating choices, life skills, motivation, and becoming more active in the community.

The program has grown and spread to community houses in Devonport, Burnie and the Central Coast.

Participant Jenny Purton said the program had enhanced her overall fitness and wellbeing.

"I joined a Living Longer Living Stronger program for over 50s and still attend two sessions a week," she said.

Fellow participant Maree discovered the program after relocating from Queensland.

"Since coming to Tasmania and joining the Lifestyle Challenge I have lost 10kg," she said.

"Using weights has helped me increase the strength in my arms and legs. I have also noticed my neck and back do not ache as much as they used to and I have more energy.

"The friendliness of staff and participants helped me settle into my new home."

4.19 Tasmanian Community Fund

The Tasmanian Community Fund (TCF) was established in 1999 as part of the sale of the Trust Bank to provide grants for worthwhile community purposes. It receives an annual appropriation from the Tasmanian Government. The TCF aims to respond to the needs of the Tasmanian community and enhance the services, opportunities and amenities available by making grants to a diverse range of not-for-profit organisations within the community for a wide variety of projects.

TCF funding has assisted the following:

- the Society for Multiply Disabled People of Tasmania's *Cycling Towards Mobility* project to teach people with disability on the North-West Coast to ride bicycles and participate in cycling activities

using a variety of cycling equipment including tandem, tricycles, fold-up bicycles and conventional bicycles

- the Australian Red Cross Tasmania *Prisoner Support Program*, which provides training to nominated peer supporters within the prison system, and the *Prisoner Support Mentoring Program* which recruits and trains volunteers to support people after their release from prison
- the Salvation Army and Parenting Partners program, which develops activities in the Kingborough area for disengaged families with children aged up to five years
- the Self Help Workshop, which employs people with disability in a supportive environment to buy a new forklift. The new forklift is used to load bales of recycled clothing and provide training for Workplace Standards forklift licences
- Cerebral Palsy Tasmania to buy 12 beach wheelchairs to make beach visits possible for hundreds of adults and children with a disability throughout the year.

Let's Go Girls – Gagebrook Community Centre and Family Support Service

'Let's Go Girls' provides young mothers in Brighton with opportunities for social interaction, peer support, problem solving, skill development, information gathering and fun.

The group, which meets on Tuesdays during school terms, was originally facilitated by Family Support and is now funded through the Department of Health and Human Services Community Capacity Building program. It has approximately 30 participants.

Childcare provides a break for the mothers and an opportunity for their children to interact in a supportive, nurturing environment.

Term programs are developed from participants' suggestions and have included training opportunities such as first aid courses and Certificate II and III in Community Services.

Project officer Kelly Smith said participants had ownership of the group.

"We constructed group rules, such as confidentiality, so everyone has the right to have their say without feeling uncomfortable and without being judged," she said.

"You know you're not the only mother with a certain problem or issue, others in the group are going through similar things, and it's good to have someone to talk to that understands how you are feeling.

"I don't know how some of us would manage without being able to talk and educate ourselves (through) Let's Go Girls."



4.2 The business sector

The business sector is a key contributor to the strength of a community and Tasmanian businesses are involved in a diverse range of community capacity building and community development activities including providing members for the boards of community and not-for-profit organisations.

For many Tasmanians, work is a significant form of community engagement. The financial security of employment allows people to participate and be economically and socially included in communities. The business sector stimulates economic and social activity in communities. The nature of the business community can be linked to and determines the identity of a community, be it agricultural, mining, fishing, manufacturing or tourist-oriented.

Companies like Fairbrother Pty Ltd and Hazell Bros Group encourage employees to be actively involved in the community, and provide financial and in-kind support to community events.

KPMG Tasmania sponsors community events, and participation on not-for-profit boards, makes donations to charitable organisations and engages in community fundraising events, as do the staff of Searson Buck Pty Ltd, WHK Group – Tasmania, MST Workplace Solutions and myState Financial. A number of these and other organisations including Vodaphone and Aurora also encourage staff to volunteer by allowing fully paid leave to engage in community volunteering activities.

Some companies like myState Financial and SEMF also allow staff to participate in volunteer emergency services duties on either full pay or paid allowances.

The Federal Council of Agricultural Societies provides opportunities for building community capacity and cohesion through country shows, often in remote locations. Volunteers organise and contribute in roles such as show committees, judges, stewards, grounds staff, gatekeepers and other personnel. Shows are a catalyst for commercial activities, provide information about services and enable sharing of new ideas. Service clubs and philanthropic organisations often undertake a range of fundraising activities at shows.

Businesses sponsor a diversity of community and not-for-profit organisations.

Park Homes has a long established program assisting the Scout Association of Tasmania including through sponsorship and developing a strategic plan.

Cosy Cabins has provided a large number of programs with more than \$1 million in sponsorship including to the Heart Foundation, the Cancer Council, Jim Bacon Foundation and Camp Quality, and has provided accommodation vouchers for schools and other community groups.

Hobart Water sponsors the annual Steve Balcombe Scholarship for engineering or earth science students and employs university students during holiday periods. It provides sponsorship for community events. Employees support Wateraid Australia, which assists villages in third world areas access clean water for drinking and hygiene. In 2006, Hobart Water began a special partnership with Kidney Health, which involves cross promotion of the importance of drinking water for health.

Nyrstar

"Lutana Woodlands will become a more pleasant environment to be enjoyed by the local community."

Nyrstar, through its Hobart smelter, has a close relationship with the nearby community. It seeks regular feedback on its performance through surveys, consultation and focus groups and has a policy of keeping the community up to date with



issues and developments at the site through methods such as a quarterly newsletter distributed to more than 7,000 neighbours and biannual community open days.

The company contributes approximately \$200,000 to the community each year through sponsorship and partnerships.

With the Glenorchy City Council and the Lutana Woodlands Group, the company was the driving force behind the Lutana Woodlands revegetation project. It contributed more than 1,500 native trees, which were planted by students from Bowen Road Primary School and The Friends Junior School, members of the Lutana Woodlands Community Group and company staff. A further 30,000 native trees and grasses have been planted on the site's foreshore to improve the community's view of the site.

Nyrstar general manager Francis Terwinghe said the project would have ongoing benefits.

"It will assist in our goal to plant a 'green corridor' linking New Town Bay and Prince of Wales Bay and provide a habitat for birds and animals," he said.

Rio Tinto Aluminium Bell Bay's Community Assistance Program is fostering an interest in science among young people, helping to improve their literacy and increasing awareness and protection of threatened species. The program provides funding for local community organisations and the company is working with the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery to provide a hands-on science centre to further education and knowledge of science.

The company has purchased a LEXIA interactive computer program to improve primary aged students' reading and learning skills and has participated in the Port Dalrymple School's Bridges Program, funded careers camps and a health and fitness expo, and assisted in a range of curriculum activities.

In 2006, the company commissioned Birds Australia to undertake a research project to review the threats and management needs of Tasmanian shorebirds and worked with the Tasmanian Conservation Trust to help create greater community awareness of the threats to the bird species.

Ecka Granules Australia supports the community through sponsorship of the George Town History Quilt, Surf Life Saving Australia and the University of Tasmania Lectureship Program.

Aurora sponsors TasDance, is theatre and the Terrapin Puppet Theatre, junior football development, the Aurora Basketball in Schools Program, the Tasmanian Little Athletics Association and the Aurora Netball League. The company supports people in need through the Hardship Program administered by the Salvation Army and the No Interest Loans Scheme (NILS), which provides no interest loans to low-income earners. Through its 'Will to Give' program, employees make donations from their pay to selected charities. Work teams achieving safety goals receive bonus payments which are donated to a charity or community organisation chosen by the successful team.

Aurora also sponsors the Asthma Foundation and the Australian Lung Foundation and an awards program that raises the profile of environmental protection and management. Aurora runs a free program presented by employees to raise awareness of electrical safety among young children.

Transend has established a sponsorship with Greening Australia and Lenah Valley Primary School to enable students to learn about environmental conservation and rehabilitation at Tasmania's first Bushland Classroom and to develop a management plan for Haldane Reserve.

4.3 Tasmanian Government

Strong and inclusive communities are a priority for the Tasmanian Government. The Government's priority is to build the capacity of individuals and communities by promoting participation and engagement, improving access and encouraging equity. Across all agencies, the Government continues to make a substantial investment to support and enrich the lifestyle of all Tasmanians.

The following are just some of the many success stories flowing from Tasmanian Government policies, programs and initiatives designed to build stronger, sustainable and more inclusive communities in Tasmania.

4.3.1 Department of Economic Development

The Department of Economic Development (DED) works with the business and community sectors to achieve community development outcomes. It funds community not-for-profit organisations through the *Partnerships to Jobs* program to manage projects to increase employment opportunities for disadvantaged job seekers, including the long-term unemployed. The program has created more than 340 jobs for long-term unemployed people since July 2003.

Examples of funded projects include:

- TasCOSS Capacity Building project to assist community organisations to develop and manage employment projects
- Whitelion for its Supported Employment Project to assist young people in the justice system to secure employment
- Youth Futures' Accessing Opportunities program, which matches disadvantaged jobseekers in the Launceston area with employers and offers mentoring services to ensure a sustainable employment outcome.

Each year, Sport and Recreation Tasmania distributes more than \$2 million to Tasmanian organisations through grant programs that aim to improve opportunities for Tasmanians to participate in sport and recreation activities and strengthen the involvement of local communities. From 2007-08, the State Government is providing an additional \$1 million per annum for grants to community organisations to address barriers to participating in sport and recreational activities.

Clubwise provides training and education opportunities for volunteers in community sport and recreation clubs. The program operates in partnership with 23 LGAs and delivers workshops on a range of topics including grants, fundraising and sponsorship, promotion and marketing, committee and volunteer management, governance, working safely, schools and junior sport, organisational planning and grant writing.

Youth Futures – *Partnerships to Jobs*

On the road to new employment opportunities

"We have farmers calling us for workers because of the great job they do."

The Youth Futures employment program for young people who are homeless and in crisis, is giving disadvantaged jobseekers the skills and attitudes they need to turn their lives around and at the same time is addressing local labour shortages.



Youth Futures receives funding from the Tasmanian Government's Partnerships to Jobs program.

The program provides paid employment opportunities, offers tailored training, and transports young people to work, helping overcome many of the obstacles faced by disadvantaged jobseekers.

Youth Futures program coordinator Lisa Legg said it was difficult for employers to find people willing to do the hard, dirty and manual labour jobs, but the Youth Future teams were willing and able.

"At first, the farmers thought they were taking a risk employing Youth Future teams, but now we have farmers calling us for workers because of the great job they do," she said.

"Youth Futures is much more than an employment, training and transport service. It is about giving these young people hope, the life skills, experience and self worth to remain in employment."

More than 270 people have found work through Youth Futures which now operates five vans and transports around 500 disadvantaged people to more than 60 employers in Northern Tasmania.

4.3.2 Department of Education

Launching into Learning is designed to engage and support parents to build early literacy and school readiness before their children begin kindergarten. It operates in 44 schools in communities where families are living in disadvantaged circumstances. Schools participating in the program aim to connect and build relationships with 'hardest to reach families'.

The 'Schools as early years hubs' initiative will establish two early years hubs where the Educational Needs Index (ENI) is high. The hubs will bring together services that meet the needs of young children aged five and under and their families in areas such as childcare, health, early education and family support.

Teachers in high-needs schools will be supported when applying findings from current research into the nature of adolescent learning and applying evidence-based strategies for improving the educational outcomes of children at risk. High-performing teachers will be supported at these schools, which will become teaching hubs for pre-service teachers.

The Community Knowledge Network strategy to enable better access for all Tasmanians to services and programs is delivered by libraries, online access centres, adult education and archives. It finds collaborative ways to address community learning including second chance learning and job readiness skills, literacy and information needs, especially in rural and regional Tasmania.

Skills Tasmania funds and implements new programs to increase the skills of the disadvantaged and long-term unemployed, and build a skilled pool of apprentices and trainees in key trade areas.

Huon LINC offers people flexible access to services and programs, and opportunities to re-engage or continue with education and training, and be equipped for work or enterprise. It provides opportunities to volunteer and offers early and adult literacy activities including the State Library's *Rock and Rhyme* and *Reading Together*. *Reading Together* supports family literacy by encouraging parents to participate in their children's pre-reading development. It also encompasses adult literacy awareness and support for adult literacy students using trained volunteer literacy tutors. The program is offered in 19 locations across the State.

The Tasmanian Communities Online program has resulted in more than 18 per cent of Tasmanians having used an online access centre. A survey in 2006 showed more than 50 per cent of access centre clients come from households with an annual income of less than \$30,000. Centres have been established in areas of high unemployment and are now well-distributed across regional areas but transport costs remain a barrier to access for some community members. Free access is now being provided for business use of computers (including email, job-seeking and using government information and services) for holders of a Health Care Card, Pensioner Concession Card or Gold Repatriation Card. Centres also offer a range of informal courses, many of which are free, as well as accredited business and IT training delivered in partnership with TAFE Tasmania, making the centres community learning hubs in many smaller communities.

4.3.3 Department of Health and Human Services

The Tasmanian Affordable Housing Limited is an independent organisation that brings together the combined resources of the Tasmanian Government, the community sector and private investors. Over four years, up to 700 new affordable homes will be head leased for Tasmanians on low-incomes, complementing the State's public housing stock of about 11,500 properties.

The Affordable Housing Strategy includes construction of 402 public housing properties, upgrades to 28 properties, and upgrading or replacement of six disability homes. DHHS also delivers programs including the Private Rental Support Scheme and Private Rental Tenancy Support Service to assist people with low-incomes establish and maintain tenancies in the private rental market.

DHHS is implementing reforms to the child protection system as identified in *A Way Forward*, a 12-point action plan based on a comprehensive review of child protection services in Tasmania.

cu@home is an intensive two-year home visiting program to increase parenting capacity among first-time Tasmanian parents aged 15-19.

Through the Disabilities Services Quality and Safety Framework, the Living Independently Project, and the Disability Services and National Disability Services Joint Working Party, increased DHHS funding has improved access to specialised disability services, the quality and effectiveness of services and the linking of service design to the needs of the community.

The Primary Health Services Plan aims to ensure services are safe, high quality and sustainable. The plan will strengthen the department's capacity to provide services such as health promotion, illness prevention the management of chronic conditions in community health centres and rural health facilities.

The Primary Health Service is aligned to three major hospitals throughout the State with a further clustering of services at a district level to provide a network of services that balances accessibility with sustainability, and providing the economies of scale associated with larger groupings of services.

DHHS has established new dental treatment and education facilities and measures to improve access to general dental services for Tasmanian adults and children.

Programs under the *Australian Better Health Initiative* include contribution to a national social marketing campaign focusing on nutrition and physical activity, expansion of the School Canteen Accreditation program, continuation of the Move Well, Eat Well program for schools and implementation of programs on nutrition and physical activity for local communities.

4.3.4 Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources

DIER supports the Community Road Safety Partnerships (CRSP), which develops partnerships with Local Government and community networks to address road safety at a 'grassroots' level by addressing high-risk road user behaviours. CRSP works alongside the community in the consultation, planning and delivery of sustainable road safety initiatives at the local level.

The Core Passenger Services Review will increase social inclusion and community connections and has been undertaken with comprehensive community consultation.

The Tasmanian Transport Infrastructure Investment Strategy 2007-08 outlines the Tasmanian Government's infrastructure investment priorities for Tasmania's land transport network to facilitate a safer and more efficient transport system and support broader social and economic outcomes.

4.3.5 Department of Justice

The Department of Justice is currently implementing stage three of the Prison Infrastructure Redevelopment project to provide for sustainable correctional facilities into the future. The facilities have been designed to allow for integrated offender management, which includes delivery of rehabilitative and other programs to inmates.

Safe at Home, an integrated, pro-prosecution, victim-centred response to family violence, aims to protect the most vulnerable in the community. Other reforms aimed at meeting the needs of the community are the Review of the *Family Violence Act 2004*, the *Corrections Act 1997* and the Community Service Order scheme.

An additional \$650,000 per annum has been allocated for Community Corrections to allow better supervision of offenders on parole and probation and to give more attention to addressing the triggers for re-offending.

U-Turn Program

"I have never succeeded with anything in life before... this has really helped me."

U-Turn participant

U-Turn is a diversionary program for young people aged 15-20 who have been involved in, or who are at risk of becoming involved in, motor vehicle theft. The program provides a structured, 10-week automotive training course in car maintenance and body work delivered in a workshop environment.



Participants work on repairing damaged vehicles which are presented to victims of motor car theft.

Being given a car through the program was a life affirming experience for recipient Kirsten.

"I was hoping something good would happen for me and now it has, I am ecstatic and very grateful," she said.

There are also positive outcomes for participants and their families.

Aaron, who excelled on the course and graduated in September 2007, received a three-month employment scholarship with Hazel Bros. and Jacob, who graduated in December 2007, said participating had given him a huge boost.

"I have never succeeded with anything in life before, now I have, this has really helped me," he said.

U-Turn was initially piloted in Tasmania over a 24-month period, with funding from the National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council and the Australian Government's National Crime Prevention Program.

The program is delivered in Moonah by Mission Australia under contract to Tasmania Police, and is funded by the Tasmanian Government.

4.3.6 Department of Police and Emergency Management (DPEM)

DPEM is the lead agency in the Inter-Agency Support Teams (IAST) project, which involves relevant State and Local Government service providers who work collaboratively to develop practical, multi-agency responses such as re-engagement with education to support children and young people with multiple and complex problems, and their families.

DPEM supports Police and Community Youth Clubs (PCYCs) which provide low-cost, positive, sporting, recreational, social and cultural programs in a safe environment, primarily for 'at risk' young people. PCYCs operate in 12 communities throughout Tasmania and have more than 4,000 members.

In 2006-07, PCYCs programs and activities included:

- Families Together – for families to connect by participating in activities together
- REC LINK – Hobart PCYC – sporting activities and social service support to homeless and marginalised youth
- Mobile Activity Centres – providing outreach services to communities without a PCYC
- 'The House' program – providing alternative education with participants regularly using the Clarence PCYC for activities
- Traffic Education Program – a Bridgewater PCYC program designed to reduce the number of young people committing traffic offences, including motor vehicle stealing.

Early Intervention and Youth Action Units (EIYAU) in each police district have provided a more effective approach to at risk children and young people. Officers from the EIYAU now conduct the majority of formal and informal cautions to ensure a consistent approach and appropriate outcomes for young offenders.

4.3.7 Department of Premier and Cabinet

DPAC's Community Development Division (CDD) provides grants programs including Main Street Makeover, Multicultural Small Grants and grants to festivals, Women's Development, National Youth Week, Youth Advisory Services and Local Government Seed Funding.

CDD also coordinates community input into relevant government decisions. It provides support and advice to councils chaired by the Premier including the Premier's Disability Advisory Council and the Premier's Local Government Council, and for consultative committees including the Positive Ageing Consultative Committee (PACC), the Council on the Ageing (COTA), and the Tasmanian Advisory Council on Multicultural Affairs (TACMA).

A key focus of CDD is mentoring and creation of community leaders for the future. Women Tasmania's *Girls in Real Life* mentoring program has increased career and lifestyle choices for female students in participating schools in Southern Tasmania. Students are matched with adult female mentors who meet with the students on a one-to-one basis throughout the year. Similarly, *Just Us Girls* is a pilot project involving the Cradle Coast Authority Stronger Learning Pathways Project, Parklands High School and

Young Professionals Network. It links 22 teenage girls with inspirational young women from the Burnie area to build self-belief and fire their imaginations about their futures. It is hoped the project will provide a model for application in socially disadvantaged schools.

The *Disability Framework for Action 2005-2010* recognises that improving living conditions for people with disability is not a matter for one government agency alone. It requires all agencies to make their policies, practices, programs and services inclusive of people with disability. A key undertaking of the *Disability Framework* is the Companion Card Program, which enables people with disability who need the support of a companion carer to attend community venues and activities without paying a second admission fee.

The *Tasmanian Plan for Positive Ageing* recognises the health and wellbeing of older Tasmanians is determined by a wide range of factors including income, social status, community participation, social support networks, education, employment, social environments and access to services. The Seniors Bureau coordinates Seniors Week to promote positive and successful ageing by celebrating the important contribution Tasmanian seniors make to the community.

The Tasmanian Seniors Card aims to encourage seniors to remain actively involved in their community once they have stopped working or significantly reduced their hours of work. It promotes social and financial inclusion in Tasmanian communities by providing economic discounts to seniors. The Seniors Card Directory of organisations offering discounts was distributed to more than 50,000 Tasmanian households in February 2007.

Aboriginal work placement programs secured appointments within the Tasmania Government for 21 Aboriginal people in 2006-07. Fifteen people secured short-term or contract employment from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Register. Five trainee Aboriginal field officers employed under the Parks and Wildlife Service Structured Training and Employment Project graduated in August 2006. Three National Indigenous Cadetship Program cadets, sponsored by Tasmanian Government agencies, graduated from the University of Tasmania in December 2006, including the first Tasmanian Aboriginal lawyer to graduate in 12 years. Four Aboriginal people were recruited for the Murrayfield Training Project and a further nine young Aboriginal people for the second Aboriginal Green Corps team, hosted by the Tasmanian Aboriginal Land and Sea Council.

The Work Placement Program, run by the Public Sector Management Office and Multicultural Tasmania, allows newly arrived humanitarian entrants and other migrants to experience Australian workplace culture. Participants are mainly University of Tasmania or TAFE Tasmania students and the program runs during semester breaks. Participating agencies are encouraged to provide mentoring to participants. In 2007, approximately one third of the 22 participants received offers of employment.

The joint Australian and Tasmanian Government *Sportivalé* sports carnival in 2007 was attended by 400 humanitarian refugees from diverse backgrounds and increased interaction and connectedness between the migrant community and broader community, and within different migrant communities.

The Office of Children and Youth Affairs (OCYA) provides a voice and avenues for greater youth participation in the Tasmanian community by funding the Youth Network of Tasmania and the Tasmanian Youth Forum. The Youth Forum biennial youth participation conference in September 2006 was attended by 56 young people from 30 youth committees and organisations from across Tasmania.

The Tasmanian Government has also funded a new model of the forum to enable it to be more effective in engaging youth and providing a voice for more young people in the structures and processes of government.

Cape Barren Road Program

"The program has shown us how much we can achieve."

The people of Cape Barren and Clarke Islands in the Furneaux Group have been forging their own path since the islands were handed back to the Aboriginal community in 2005.

As part of the return, the Tasmanian Government, with the endorsement of the Flinders Council, agreed to transfer responsibility for road maintenance from the Flinders Council to the Cape Barren Island Aboriginal Association (CBIAA).

A one-off capital grant was allocated to purchase road maintenance plant and equipment, and funding is provided by the Tasmanian Government.

This created additional employment on the Island with the formation of a road gang for which training was provided. The CBIAA is now able to maintain the road network to a satisfactory level and use the machinery and equipment for other land management activities on Cape Barren Island.

The program has provided improved access to a number of beaches with increased opportunities for cultural gatherings and activities and allowed a bridge within the township which had been closed for approximately two years to be re-opened.

Road crew members Chris and Tim say the project has had many benefits.

"The additional employment on the Island created as a result of the road works program is of great importance to the community as it provides another form of employment and skill development," they said.



OCYA has responsibility for the Tasmanian Early Years Foundation, which was established to ensure the social inclusion and wellbeing of our youngest Tasmanians. The Foundation aims to ensure every Tasmanian child is given the best possible start in life for a healthy, happy and positive future. In partnership with the Tasmanian community and through a grants program, it provides opportunities

to support children and their families and raise awareness and a commitment to the early years of childhood.

CDD works with the community and Local Government to develop stronger communities in Tasmania. The Local Government Seed Funding grants program assists Tasmanian councils with youth policy and participation development.

The Partnership Agreements Program between the State and Local Government involves more than 3,000 initiatives in local communities.

Working in partnership across all spheres of government reduces overlap, and increases networks and mutually agreed outcomes, making it possible to achieve more than through any one level.

Women in Business Micro-credit Program

"The Women in Business Micro-credit program supports women's inclusion by stimulating economic initiative, reducing poverty, overcoming exclusion from financial providers, and developing women's capacity."

In 2006, Trevallyn's Sharon Cannell decided to take the plunge and start a small business specialising in landscaping. With

qualifications in horticulture and a growing desire to improve her personal situation, she applied for a loan under the Tasmanian Government's Women in Business Micro-credit Program.

The Micro-credit Program began in August 2005 (the International Year of Micro-credit) and provides business mentoring and an interest-free loan of up to \$3,000 to women in receipt of a Health Care card to start or grow their own micro-enterprise.

The loan Sharon received through the program helped her purchase equipment and insurance to launch her business. Being in small business has boosted Sharon's confidence and self esteem and her children are also very proud of their mother's new role.

The Micro-credit Program is run by the Department of Premier and Cabinet, the Department of Economic Development and the NILS (No-Interest Loans Scheme) Network. To date, 50 women have received micro-credit loans and the program has a zero default rate on loans.



For example, the first Tasmanian bilateral State-Local Government partnership in 1999 included the two spheres of government working together to increase the very low education retention rates at that time in the Circular Head community. That initiative included State schools, Local Government and private schools and the University of Tasmania and achieved outstanding results. The results of the partnership are ongoing and have included increased participation and retention rates in schools, increased opportunities for participation in education and training by adults, young people and businesses in the community, and the promotion of the benefits of lifelong learning and celebration of community learning achievements.

The Main Street Makeover program, coordinated by the Local Government Office, supports Councils in improving their towns and building community pride and confidence. The program can increase social inclusion by creating physical spaces that promote community exchanges and enhance access for community members with disability or mobility difficulties.

4.3.8 Department of Primary Industries and Water (DPIW)

Service Tasmania shops provide customers with accessible and up-to-date information and services across the three tiers of government over the counter, phone and internet. *Service Tasmania* makes it easier for Tasmanians, especially those in rural and regional areas, to do their everyday business with government. *Service Tasmania* shops in rural townships also serve as gathering places and enhance the sense of community. Accessibility to government services in times of emergency or crisis is supported by *Service Tasmania's* regional and rural shops.

The *Women in Rural Industries* program seeks to build the capacity of rural women to deliver successful business outcomes and to increase the number of women in representational roles in primary industries. Examples of projects facilitated under this program include:

- *Rural Futures* in partnership with the CWA, Rural Youth and Tasmanian Women in Agriculture
- Regional Women in Business Week and the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation Rural Women's Award that assists rural women to build their profile and business outcomes.

FarmBis is jointly funded by the Tasmanian and Australian Governments to assist primary producers in developing their skills by attending eligible training activities. It covers up to 60 per cent of the course, travel, accommodation and childcare costs. More than 60 accredited training providers are registered with the *FarmBis* Program. They deliver courses on topics such as leadership, integrated management, book keeping, market competitiveness, quality assurance, Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point, legal requirements, occupational health and safety, risk management and integrated pest management.

FarmPoint is a 'one-stop-shop' website that catalogues links to existing government information websites with a focus on farming. It includes information on drought conditions, live news and weather feeds, a range of business and agricultural information and an internet search facility. A complementary initiative is a *FarmPoint* computer training program, developed jointly with the Department of Education and TAFE Tasmania. It enables eligible primary producers to take advantage of online information and gives them capacity for improved business management. For a nominal cost, farmers can access a

minimum six hours training and receive training materials and an ex-departmental computer.

The department offers volunteering opportunities including involvement with the Fishcare, Wildcare and the Devil Recovery Program. Volunteers receive departmental training and have the opportunity to be involved in worthwhile community activities.

DPIW provides technical and business support to producers in Tasmania's drought affected areas through seminars, workshops and IT resources on drought-related topics. The Rural Financial Counselling Service is jointly funded by the Tasmanian and Australian Governments.

During natural disasters, such as the 2006 bushfires on the East Coast, departmental staff were actively involved in disaster and recovery activities in support of affected communities.

4.3.9 Department of Tourism, Arts and the Environment

Arts Tasmania's *Tasmania Performs* works to improve performing arts infrastructure and develop touring opportunities in communities around the State. Tasmanian Living Artists Week and Tasmanian Living Writers Week provide opportunities for communities to be exposed to a range of artists and writers and be involved in events and activities.

Arts Tasmania also provides increased opportunities for Tasmanians to participate in local arts programs and events through a specific grants program to support innovative and creative community arts projects that bring long term benefits to those involved. This could include support for programs involving people with disabilities.

The Parks and Wildlife Service's Community Engagement Framework aims to improve community participation in Tasmania's reserve management system.

4.3.10 Department of Treasury and Finance

Treasurer Michael Aird established the Demographic Change Advisory Council as the key advisory body on demographic change issues likely to affect the Tasmanian community and economy over the coming years. Issues include population ageing and the possible decline in the number of people in Tasmania's workforce and the number of younger Tasmanians in general, such as those of school age.

The Government provides a wide range of concessions primarily designed to assist low-income, disadvantaged and senior Tasmanians to access services and participate in educational, social and recreational activities. The department is reviewing concessions to ensure they are accessible, well-targeted and provide the best support to people most in need.

Main Street Makeover – Dorset municipal area

"The projects improve the appearance of our towns and their attractiveness for locals and visitors."

Scottsdale's King Street streetscape project has not only improved parking, pedestrian safety and access, especially for people with disability, it has also increased community pride and confidence and stimulated other community activities.



The project was assisted by a \$250,000 grant to Dorset Council through the Tasmanian Government 2005-06 Main Street Makeover program and was supported by the Council with a contribution of approximately \$100,000 in funding and other in-kind support.

Like other Main Street Makeover projects, it has been a very effective community based project with the Dorset Council involving the local community throughout the process. There is evidence of very positive flow-on benefits, and positive feedback from Scottsdale residents includes comments on the improved morale of shop owners who have undertaken maintenance and painted facades.

The Tasmanian Government has committed a total of \$5 million in grants of up to \$250,000 through the Main Street Makeover program over the past three years to help projects being undertaken by Councils. Another \$1 million has already been committed for 2008-09.

Projects in 31 locations are now being assisted by the funding.

4.4 Local Government

The Tasmanian Government supports Local Government's increasing role in community development in Tasmania through a variety of grants.

Local Government provides local and regional leadership and supports community recreational and cultural needs. It also provides a wide range of community services and facilities including the venues for many community events.

Local Government is a contributor to community capacity building through a diversity of programs. The following are responses provided by Councils to the Taskforce on community development projects that are making a difference locally, many of them funded jointly by Local Government with the Tasmanian and/or Australian Governments.

Brighton Alive - Brighton Council

"This program is the single most important initiative in recent times to enable the community to move forward and progress."

Brighton Alive, an initiative of Brighton Council, encourages residents to work together to build a stronger and healthier community.

The program focuses on promoting and supporting healthier lifestyles by increasing awareness of, and participation in, physical and recreational activity. It has been effective in developing networks within the community and a cooperative approach.

Bridgewater Police Station Youth Justice Officer, Constable Jill Gray, said programs such as arts, golfing, fishing, and surfing enabled young people to have brand new experiences.

"For some of the kids it was the first time they had ever seen a beach." she said.

"My role as youth justice officer includes dealing with some of the more 'at risk' young people in the area and many of the young people I deal with benefit from a sense of community which is what Brighton Alive represents and provides."



4.4.1 Glenorchy City Council

The social development focus of the Glenorchy City Council is its Community Safety Plan. The plan recognises the socio-economic stresses facing Glenorchy as a community and aims to reduce the possibility of anti-social behaviour. One of the early successes of the first safety plan was the development of programs to prevent isolation and loneliness among older people such as *Eating with Friends* and an *Older Adults Sport and Recreation Program*.

Eating with Friends is a partnership involving the Council, Glenorchy Meals on Wheels, the State Nutrition Unit, Department of Veterans Affairs, the Tasmanian Association of Community Houses and Community Outreach within the Department of Health and Human Services. The project started as a pilot in West Moonah where people enjoyed a shared meal hosted by the West Moonah Community House and local volunteers. This model has since been replicated across Glenorchy and other areas and there are now over 20 *Eating with Friends* groups supporting more than 400 older people.

The PULSE Youth Health Centre is a multi-service, one-stop resource centre for young people. It provides a range of free health and wellbeing services to people aged 12-24, primarily in the Glenorchy area. The PULSE team comprises nurses, an alcohol and drug worker, social workers, creative arts worker, a youth worker and visiting doctors. PULSE also has open access Tuesday to Friday afternoons and a fully equipped music room and recording studio.

4.4.2 Hobart City Council

The Hobart City Council Community Programs Unit develops and implements an extensive range of events, projects, activities and programs. Examples include two alternative education programs - ALTed for 16-18 year olds and EdZone for 13-16 year olds. Both programs are delivered in partnership with the Department of Education with teacher and youth worker support and are aimed to assist students to reconnect with schooling.

The Youth Action Resource Centre (ARC) responds to the needs of young people on a program and individual basis by providing a safe, youth friendly environment for all young people between 12 and 25 regardless of their gender, social situation, sexual orientation or philosophical beliefs.

4.4.3 King Island Council

The King Island Cultural Centre was established in April 2006 with assistance from the local Lions Club and a series of community working bees. It has made solid links with community and arts bodies, developing two significant community arts projects, establishing the space as an exhibition centre with artists' residencies and working with local artists to develop products for sale. The centre engages individuals and groups in a variety of projects. It also allows locals to have access to a range of interstate and even international artists who are keen to share their skills and experiences as well as immerse themselves in the King Island culture.

Circus Infurieux - Flinders Council

"The impact of this kind of work is amazing... there is an instant wow factor that gives a sense of pride to the young performer."

Flinders Council has recently appointed Jon Hizzard as a youth officer to encourage young people to participate in recreational activities. One of these activities, the youth-based circus troupe, Circus Infurieux, has provided fun, excitement and a range of impressive skills for the young people of Flinders Island.



Approximately 15 troupe members, including a unicycle hockey team, are learning to use various circus equipment.

The program aims to develop confidence in young participants and Circus Infurieux has performed at Launceston's Punchbowl Primary School and at the Tasmanian Principals Association conference. Last year it also featured on ABC-TV's Stateline Tasmania program.

The circus project is based at the Flinders Island District High School and Jon said the gym facility was superb and offered a fantastic training space.

"I am also able to offer the students this program as part of their school day and I use the 'if you have an idea let's try it' approach," he said.

"The troupe is all about performance and participants say it gives them a focus. They think it's awesome."

With assistance from Tasmanian Regional Arts, Circus Infurieux is involved in a skills exchange with Ulverstone's Slipstream Circus.

"It is an excellent chance for the Infurieuxs to meet other likeminded young people their own age, as well as giving the trainers of both troupes the opportunity to work together," Jon said.

"The Infurieuxs perform to family and friends, and this helps to shape a positive identity within the community."

4.4.4 Kingborough Council

The Kingborough Youth Council-initiated Bee You! project addresses body image issues, which profoundly affect young people's perception of themselves and their mental health. The project began with a workshop with grade eight students from Kingston High School, which looked at range of body image issues. A professional puppet maker worked with 12 students to design and produce 12 larger than life puppets which illustrate that everyone is different. When worn by the students, the impressive puppets stand around two metres high. The grade eight students designed stickers, badges and posters with the theme of an image of a bumble bee with the slogan "Bee You!".

The project was supported by the Office of Children and Youth Affairs in the Department of Premier and Cabinet and has been a highly successful example of collaboration with staff from the Council, Kingston High School, PULSE Youth Health Service, The Link Youth Health Service, Clare House, Community Health, Maranoa Heights Community Centre and the Nutrition Unit working together.

4.4.5 Latrobe Council

In 2005, the Latrobe Council formed a partnership with the Department of Education to upgrade the Latrobe Memorial Hall and supper rooms. Approximately \$350,000 was spent upgrading the supper rooms, kitchen, stage and main hall. The department and Council jointly manage the facility. Latrobe High School manages the day-to-day operations and has a management committee acting as a liaison body between stakeholders to encourage public interest to promote the use of the facility and provide advice on general operations and maintenance issues. Several performances have been held in the hall including Slice of Saturday Night, the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, Tasdance and school musicals.

4.4.6 Meander Valley

The Meander Valley Council runs a number of innovative youth programs in partnership with local community volunteers. The Youth Activity Program for social activities for 12-17 year olds involves parents and community volunteers. The CO-PILOTS community mentoring program brings adult volunteers and 'at risk' young people together. To support its community volunteers working with youth, the Council is piloting a training program called Working Well With Young People.



5. WHAT WE NEED TO DO

'Community leadership is the courage, creativity and capacity to inspire participation, development and sustainability for strong communities.'

Sir Gustav Nossal

The Stronger Communities Taskforce prepared this first report over a period of three months – hence the subtitle: Starting the conversation. Drawing on the wealth of published material available, the generous input of all those who met with its representatives and responded in writing and its members' own experience, the Taskforce is confident that the first steps forward it proposes will contribute to the ongoing task of strengthening Tasmanian communities.

5.1 Goals

The goals of the Stronger Communities Taskforce are to:

- strengthen Tasmanian communities
- increase social inclusion and community connection.

The Taskforce will provide advice to the Minister for Community Development consistent with these goals.

5.2 Summary findings

While Tasmania has experienced growth, some individuals and communities have not shared in the good fortune and remain economically and socially disadvantaged and disconnected.

The Stronger Communities Taskforce is focussing its energies on this challenging area and will work to develop initiatives to reconnect people to communities and to strengthen our communities and promote effective partnerships and coordination across all sectors – community, government and business – building on the high levels of community participation, volunteering and community-based organisations.

5.3 Guiding principles

In developing the first steps forward, the Taskforce took into account the following:

- New approaches need to take account of uniquely Tasmanian circumstances and be locally managed to respond to local needs and opportunities.
- Good working partnerships, long term timetables, well-targeted initiatives and coordination across the community, business and government sectors are essential.
- Initiatives need to be backed by sustained investment and be delivered in geographic communities or communities of interest based on identified needs.
- Capacity building programs must involve the participating community in the development, delivery and evaluation of initiatives.
- Initiatives will involve successful partnerships with good communication to reduce duplication.
- Programs of assistance and support must be directly related to need.
- Accountability processes will be implemented for all initiatives and will include ongoing monitoring, review and evaluation.

5.4 First steps forward

5.4.1 Planning for a better future

5.4.1.1 Social inclusion strategy

The Taskforce welcomes and supports the development of the Government's social inclusion strategy and believes it has an important contribution to make to the community development component. This report is a resource on which the strategy can be built.

5.4.1.2 Collecting evidence

The Taskforce supports the need for sound evidence in community development planning and outcomes measurement.

This report identifies the key characteristics of the Tasmanian community and identifies several major research projects and new data collections which will add substantially to our knowledge about community connection, social inclusion, volunteering and the communities themselves.

The Taskforce will work with others to monitor progress in these areas and assist in promoting the availability and use of new information as it becomes accessible.

It is clear that many communities want easy to access data about themselves. Fortunately, Census data is available at Local Government Area level, with some basic data available down to Census Collection District (CCD) but data from many other collections are only available on a national or statewide basis.

More data needs to be available at the local level and data collected as part of government administrative processes needs to be more generally available. However, this would be subject to legislative changes, community consultation and acceptance.

Further research is required to identify good examples of community capacity building and areas of greatest need. This could be developed through a user-friendly website for communities and organisations to report on successful programs and link directly to the people behind the programs.

Further analysis of existing data is also required to assist the Taskforce in developing well-targeted, long-term programs to promote social inclusion and increase community capacity. More consultation is required with the ABS on the use of Census data, as well as other social and economic survey data, to identify areas for action.

- Community profiling is an important planning tool. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has agreed to work with the Taskforce to develop a template to assist community organisations in this task. The template will include recommended contents, data sources and a guide to interpretation of the data.

5.4.2 Making a difference

5.4.2.1 Community capacity building

There is a clear need for sustained investment in community capacity building.

There are excellent examples within Tasmania and elsewhere of the benefits of sustained investment in community development, where communities are in the driving seat and are able to draw on appropriate expertise and support.

Some communities do not have the know-how to plan and seek available assistance for community development projects. There is also clear evidence that some communities suffer greater disadvantage than others. Their problems are, in part, reinforced by their inability to tap into these streams of assistance.

The challenge for the Taskforce is to ensure sustained action in communities of need to strengthen their ability to initiate, replicate and expand on successful community development programs in other communities. More analysis is required to effectively target and focus capacity building programs.

- The Taskforce suggests an extended program aimed at increasing the capacity of communities be developed and possibly put to tender in 2008-09. The program would enable delivery of a range of initiatives to meet the requirements of participating communities as defined by those communities. Ideally the communities themselves would manage the initiatives, with access to appropriate expertise and assistance.

The tender specifications would need to be carefully developed by the Tasmanian Government with reference to successful models operating elsewhere, and could use the skills and knowledge of the ABS, Local Government and relevant community organisations.

The program would provide participating communities with assistance to build capacity and, in addition to providing funding, would support them while they test and reinforce that new capacity. The program would be reviewed and evaluated at each stage of its development and implementation in consultation with participating communities.

In most instances, implementation of this initiative is dependent on communities attracting the necessary funding and establishing essential partnerships.

5.4.2.2 Sharing experiences

The Taskforce believes a geographically dispersed, electronically linked 'Big Event' highlighting community success stories has the potential to be a powerful vehicle to connect people to communities and communities to each other around the State.

Local organisations and individuals would develop a linked local program to demonstrate how they 'make a difference' by connecting people in their community. Participating centres would be electronically connected to encourage idea sharing and take advantage of interactive components at different sites.

Ideally, the project would start in early 2009 and culminate early in 2010.

Implementation of this initiative is dependent on funding being available and establishing essential partnerships.

5.4.2.3 Reconnecting to community

The Taskforce knows many people experience unwelcome isolation in the community.

Reconnecting isolated and lonely people with their communities is one of the challenges the Taskforce needs to address. In preparing this report, the Taskforce was told of people who would like to be more a part of their community but were unaware of the opportunities available to them. The first task is to work out how best to identify and assist these people to reconnect to their communities.

While some actions can be planned and taken in respect of people who are isolated in their homes but in contact with government or non-government service providers, the Taskforce needs to give further consideration to the problem of lonely and isolated people who are more disconnected from their communities.

- The Taskforce suggests a project to increase the inclusion of marginally connected people be developed, together with further investigation into how to reconnect very isolated people. This is a matter for further investigation by the Taskforce as it continues the conversation.

5.4.2.4 Building the business connection

The business sector has been identified as an important component of a strong community, contributing to community identity, wealth and capacity. Where the business sector is strong and active, there is usually a strong and cohesive community.

The lack of a strong business community can inhibit community development and capacity building. Businesses provide the people who support and comprise the boards and committees of community organisations.

There are a number of programs currently run by the Department of Economic Development which can impact communities of interest to the Taskforce and could be models for further development.

For the Tasmanian Government to rely on third parties in the community sector to deliver services on its behalf it will be essential that these organisations are able to operate in a business-like manner, with high standards of governance, fiscal management, project management and accountability.

It is in our interests to foster much stronger links between the business sector and the community sector in Tasmania as a means of building management capacity and governance skills in those organisations.

The Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Tasmanian Small Business Council have expressed an interest in being involved in the work of the Taskforce.

- The Taskforce suggests there should be further consultation to extend business connections to communities lacking a strong local business sector.

5.4.2.5 Developing leaders

Stronger communities invest in community capacity to solve community problems, to seize opportunities and to develop leadership.

Community leaders value sharing resources and encourage everyone to work together in pursuing shared objectives. Developing a depth of leaders in communities is essential for building capacity and sustainability by ensuring that communities do not rely on a few willing people.

The Taskforce is aware of several leadership programs in which people from community organisations participate. It is also aware of Local Government initiatives to assist community organisations develop or obtain organisational and administrative skills.

- Given the value of these programs, the Taskforce will develop further proposals for increased local access to these and other programs to develop leadership and extend skills in local communities.

5.4.3 What government can do

5.4.3.1 Better cross-agency and inter-government co-operation

The State Government must continue to improve coordination and reduce fragmentation in its relationship with the community sector.

The Tasmanian Government has already made much progress toward coordinated service delivery for communities through *Service Tasmania* and Partnership Agreements between the State and Local Government.

However, a recurring theme of input to *The State of Our Community Report* was the need for continual improvement in cross-agency cooperation and coordinated whole-of-government action to avoid duplication of effort and fragmentation of resources. Anecdotal evidence suggests people often give up once they start being passed from department to department or because of complex processes and long lead times for grant programs.

Positive examples mentioned in this report include work undertaken by the Department of Police and Emergency Management, the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Education in relation to family violence and early years programs. The relatively recent move by these three agencies to adopt the same regional boundaries, which also coincide with Local Government boundaries, was also cited as a great benefit to service delivery.

The Taskforce suggests the *Service Tasmania* model could be extended on a smaller scale and at relatively low cost to government through the State and Local Government Partnership Agreement process and the development of cross-agency and cross-sectoral policies and programs.

- Promotion of better cross-agency and inter-government cooperation will form part of the Taskforce's ongoing work.

5.4.3.2 Better communication

Government communication needs to take account of community literacy.

Communication between all levels of government, the non-government sector and the community is only partially successful. One of the most common issues raised is that the community often does not know what resources are available, from the wide range of grants, to physical facilities and events and training programs. Other issues include increasing general awareness of the proportion of the population with very low literacy skills (approximately 50 per cent). Community information should be presented in plain language, making more effective use of print and non-print media and less red tape would make working with Government easier.

- The Taskforce will consider this issue further and investigate potential next steps.

5.4.3.3 Simpler funding processes

Government grant programs should be streamlined and simplified.

Fragmentation of available resources, long lead times and delays in decision-making mean funding mechanisms can be inefficient, time consuming and stressful.

Communities need to be made aware of all funding options available to them at all levels of government.

- The Taskforce suggests a review of Tasmanian Government grant funding to streamline requirements and minimise the administrative burden of application for community organisations.



6. ACRONYMS AND GLOSSARY

Acronyms

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACCT	Area Consultative Committee Tasmania
CCD	Census Collection District
CDD	Community Development Division
COTA	Council on the Ageing
CRSP	Community Road Safety Partnerships
CWA	Country Women's Association of Tasmania
DED	Department of Economic Development
DCAC	Demographic Change Advisory Council
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services
DIER	Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources
DPAC	Department of Premier and Cabinet
DPEM	Department of Police and Emergency Management
DPIW	Department of Primary Industries and Water
EIYAU	Early Intervention and Youth Action Units
ENI	Educational Needs Index
ERP	Estimated Resident Population
IAST	Inter-Agency Support Teams
NAPS	National Anti Poverty Strategy
NILS	No-Interest Loans Scheme
NRM	Natural Resource Management
SIPS	State Infrastructure Planning System
PCYC	Police and Community Youth Clubs
SEIFA	Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas
SCT	Stronger Communities Taskforce
TACH	Tasmanian Association of Community Houses
TACMA	Tasmanian Advisory Council on Multicultural Affairs
TALENT	Third Age Learning Network of Tasmania
TCCI	Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
TCF	Tasmanian Community Fund
Youth ARC	Youth Action Resource Centre

Glossary

Community capacity

Commitment, resources and skills that can be used to build on strengths and address community problems and opportunities.

Community development

Sustained effort to increase involvement and partnership among members of a community to achieve common objectives, involving local people, community organisations, government, business and philanthropic organisations working together to achieve agreed outcomes.

Community strengthening

Efforts to increase connection, engagement and partnerships in communities to enhance social, economic, cultural and environmental objectives.

Social capital

Networks, together with shared values and understandings which facilitate cooperation within or among groups.

Social cohesion

Social ties and community commitments that bind people together.

Social exclusion

Lack of participation in society because of a lack of resources customarily available to the general population and a combination of linked problems, such as unemployment, discrimination, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime and family breakdown which can be transmitted from one generation to the next.

Social inclusion

An approach that builds social and economic participation for all individuals, groups and communities.

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8. APPENDICES

1. Stronger Communities Taskforce terms of reference
2. Australian Bureau of Statistics Data
3. Tasmania *Together* community survey
4. Map for Tasmania – Vinson. *Dropping off the edge: the distribution of disadvantage in Australia.*

Appendix 1

Stronger Communities Taskforce terms of reference

Purpose

To advise the Minister for Community Development on:

- the state of our communities
- strategies to make Tasmania more inclusive
- promotion of community development goals.

Background

People are healthier, happier and more productive when they are actively engaged in their communities. The Government's community development focus is on improving the quality of life for all Tasmanians by building stronger communities and increasing social inclusion. Community development is fundamental to the achievement of important Tasmania *Together* goals, which reflect what the community wants for the social, economic and environmental future of all Tasmanians.

Tasmania *Together* is a community-based vision for the State and a long-term plan. It is what the community hopes to achieve by 2020 through all sectors – business, community and government – working together. It is a long-term plan, not a quick fix solution, and an important driver for planning community development.

The Stronger Communities Taskforce will bring together all sectors of the community to work together to investigate the current state of our community, develop strategies and encourage action to build stronger communities and increase social inclusion. It will work to encourage community ownership through active engagement with a wide range of stakeholders; provide an opportunity for new ideas and outcomes to flow from a wider range of participants; and encourage the development of new and effective partnerships with the non-government sector.

Membership

The membership of the Stronger Communities Taskforce includes people appointed for their knowledge and experience in the community sector, in business, government and in community development.

The Taskforce consists of:

- Tom O'Meara (Chair)
- Glynis Flower
- Professor Gail Hart
- Michael Kent

- John Klug
- Lynn Mason
- Lin Farrington
- Peter Fish
- Darren Mathewson
- Kathy Schaefer
- Lisa Wardlaw-Kelly
- Ivan Webb.

The Taskforce will work closely with the Minister for Community Development and the Director of the Community Development Division of the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

The Community Development Division provides secretariat support to the Taskforce.

Methodology

The Stronger Communities Taskforce brings together people from the community and business sectors and the three tiers of government to work together in partnership to achieve new outcomes.

In addressing its terms of reference, the Taskforce will consult regularly with key stakeholders including the Local Government Association of Tasmania, Unions Tasmania, TasCOSS and its member organisations, State Government agencies, the Parents and Friends Associations, community service associations, Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Tasmanian Small Business Council, Volunteering Tasmania, the Tasmanian Youth Forum (formerly Tasmanian Youth Consultative Committee) and Tasmanian Aboriginal organisations.

The Taskforce will also consult with community development advisory committees, including:

- Premier's Local Government Council
- Positive Ageing Consultative Committee
- Tasmanian Advisory Council on Multicultural Affairs
- Tasmanian Women's Council
- Tasmanian Early Years Foundation
- Premier's Disability Advisory Council

as well as:

- Tasmania *Together* Progress Board
- Tasmanian Community Fund Board.

Relevant Tasmania *Together* goals are:

- Goal 1
A reasonable lifestyle and standard of living for all Tasmanians.
- Goal 2
Confident, friendly and safe communities.
- Goal 5
Vibrant, inclusive and growing communities where people feel valued and connected.

The Taskforce will review data and significant action taken in relation to community development since the commencement of Tasmania *Together*. It will report to the Minister on the state of our communities in the context of increasing social inclusion with reference to current barriers, as well as strategies to strengthen the communities.

It is intended that much of the data will be gathered by written responses received from stakeholders or by interviewing stakeholders directly.

Once the report is finalised the Taskforce will consider what further strategies and actions should be considered from a community development perspective.

Deliverables

Phase 1

- The State of Our Community Report 2007.
- Analysis and identification of priorities and areas for action.
- Recommendations and proposed strategies for action.

Phase 2

- Ongoing activity and implementation of the report's recommendations and strategies for action.

Phase 3

- Review and evaluation at the end of three years (2009-10).

Appendix 2

Australian Bureau of Statistics data

1. Our People

The Estimated Resident Population (ERP) of Tasmania as at 30 June 2007 for Tasmania was 493,341 people, which was 2.3 per cent of the total Australian ERP for same period of 21,017,222. The State (along with South Australia) has the oldest population of all the states and territories, with a median age of 39.0 years. Tasmania experienced the largest increase in median age over the last 20 years, increasing by 8.5 years from 30.5 years in 1986 to 39.0 years in 2006.

Tasmania has also had the second largest percentage decrease (after New South Wales) in population aged zero to 14 years (down 0.4 per cent) and the lowest increase in the number of people aged 15-64 years (0.7 per cent). In 2006, Tasmania had the lowest male/female sex ratio, with 97.5 males per 100 females.

The age structure of net interstate migration makes a significant contribution to changing the overall age structure of the State. The following graph shows a considerable lack of 15-29 year olds, stemming from the tendency over the past 20 years for people in this age group to leave the State. This loss, and a tendency for Tasmania to be a net importer of people in older ages, has affected the age structure of the State as a whole and has been largely responsible for the more rapidly increasing median age of the population than elsewhere in Australia.

Tasmania's household composition is slightly different from that of the Australian average. Tasmania has close to the same proportion of family households (67.3 per cent) compared with the figure for Australia (67.4 per cent). However, the proportion of couple families with children for Tasmania is 41.4 per cent compared with 45.3 per cent for Australia as a whole. Couple families without children at 40.5 per cent is higher for Tasmania than the Australian figure of 37.2 per cent and Tasmanian sole parent families (16.7 per cent) is slightly higher than the proportion for Australia of 15.8 per cent.

(Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2007, 'Census QuickStats: Tasmania', viewed 13 December 2007, <http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/ABSNavigation/prenav/ViewData?method=Place%20of%20Usual%20Residence&subaction=-1&producttype=QuickStats&areacode=6&action=401&collection=Census&textversion=false&breadcrumb=L&period=2006&javascript=true&navmapdisplayed=true&>)

Figure 1: AGE AND SEX DISTRIBUTION, TASMANIA AND AUSTRALIA, 2006

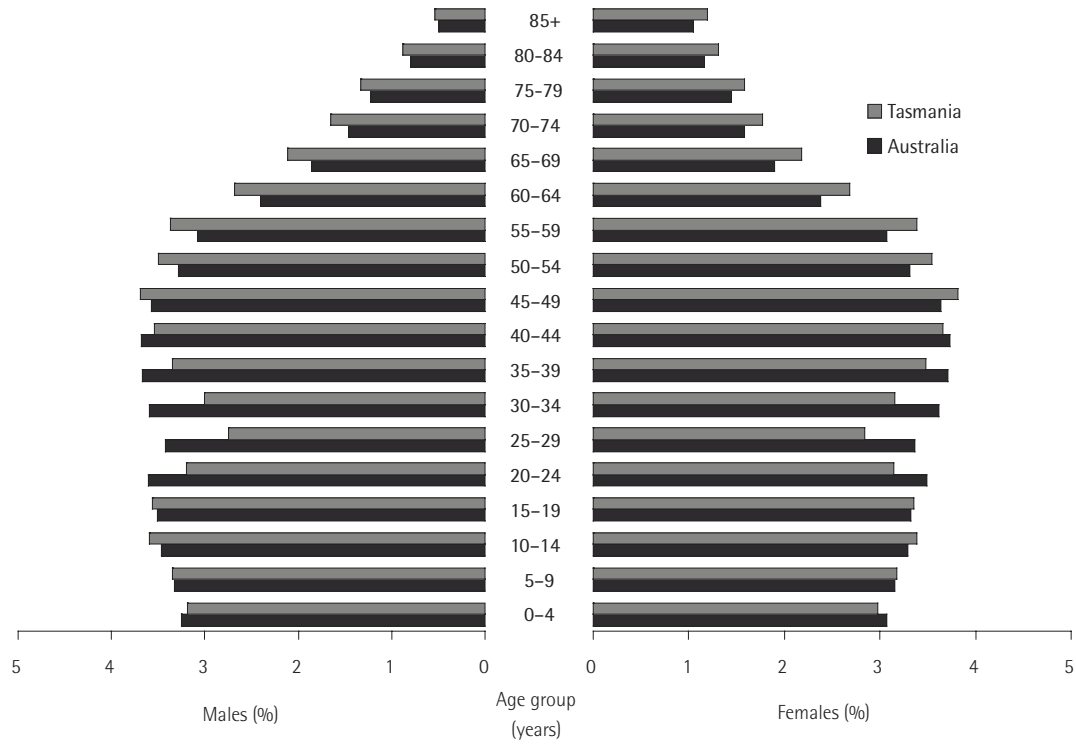
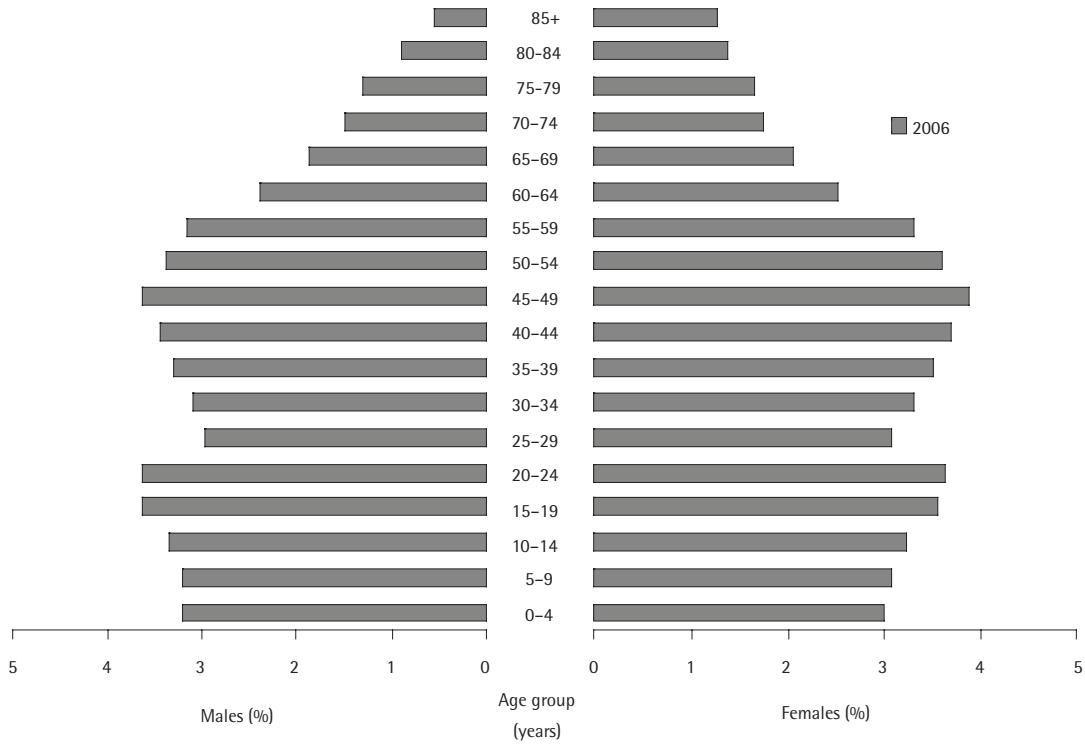
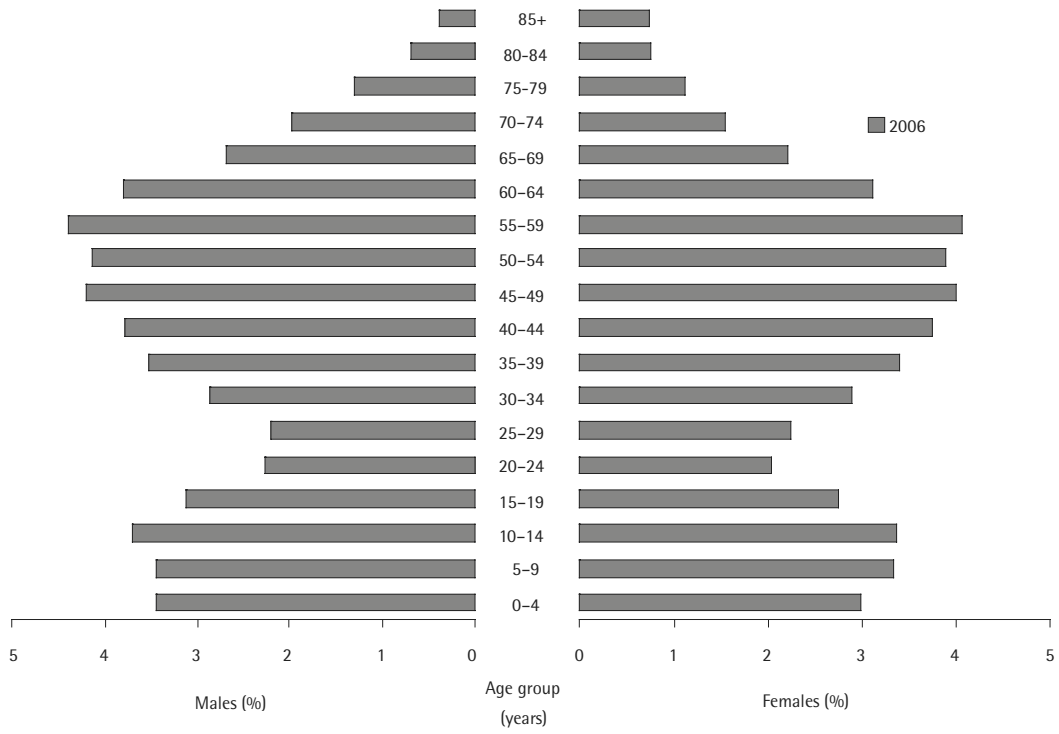


Figure 2: AGE AND SEX DISTRIBUTION BY TASMANIAN STATISTICAL DIVISIONS, 2006

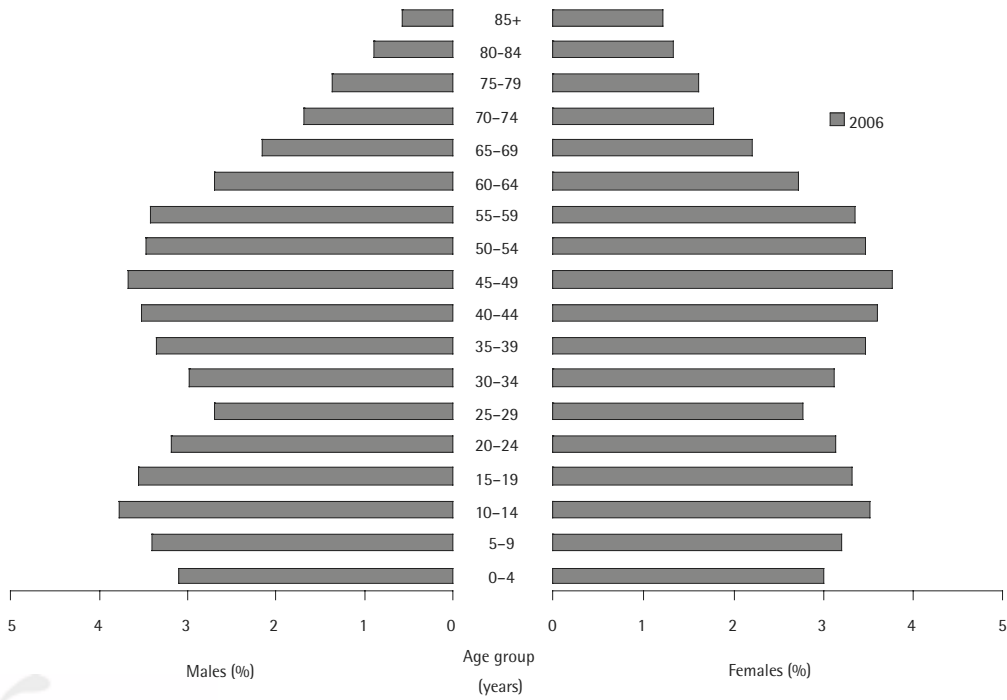
Greater Hobart



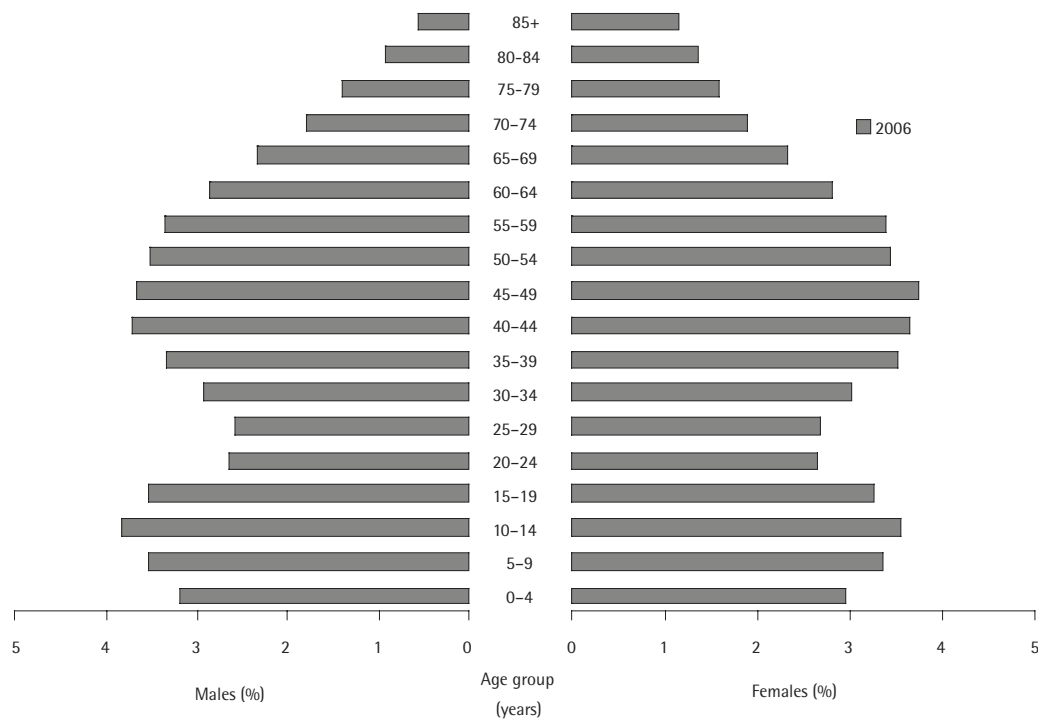
Southern



Northern



Mersey-Lyell



(Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2007, *Population by Age and Sex, Australia, 2006*, Cat. No. 3235.0)

Over the next 20 years, the proportion of Tasmanians under the age of 15 is projected to decline by approximately 14 per cent while the proportion of people aged 65 years and over could grow by almost 80 per cent.

In addition to the decline in the proportion of younger people in the population, the actual number is projected to decline. Over the next 10 years, the number of primary school-aged children (aged between five and 12 years) is projected to decline by about 480 each year.

(Source: Demographic Change Advisory Council 2007, *Demographic Change in Tasmania: challenges and opportunities*, p.19.)

Tasmania now has the oldest population, equal with South Australia, of any state or territory in Australia. Currently in Tasmania, there are around 8,600 people aged over 85 years. This number is projected to grow to 16,500 over the next 20 years and to 32,800 over the following two decades.

(Source: Demographic Change Advisory Council 2007, *Demographic Change in Tasmania: challenges and opportunities*, p. ix.)

In 2006, it was estimated that around 131,000 (which is 36 per cent of the adult population) participated in volunteering activities in about 5,000 organisations across all sectors. Tasmania's volunteering participation rate is higher than the national rate with participation slightly higher in Tasmanian regional areas compared with the capital city. With the ageing of the population and declining numbers of younger people, there is the potential challenge of an increasing demand for voluntary services and a decreasing pool of volunteers on which to draw.

(Source: Demographic Change Advisory Council 2007, Demographic Change in Tasmania: challenges and opportunities, p.29.)

On Census night, 8 August 2006, 10.6 per cent of persons usually resident in Tasmania reported they were born overseas, compared with the Australian average figure of 22.2 per cent. The least diverse statistical division in Tasmania is Mersey/Lyell with only 8.5 per cent of the population born overseas and 94.6 per cent of the population speaking only English at home.

Table 1: Country of Birth and language spoken at home, by Tasmanian Statistical Division, 2006

	Mersey/ Lyell	Northern	Southern	Greater Hobart	Tasmania	Australia
Born overseas (%)	8.5%	10.2%	10.6%	12.0%	10.6%	22.2%
English only spoken at home	94.6%	92.6%	93.4%	89.9%	92.0%	78.5%

(Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2007, 'Census QuickStats: Tasmania', viewed 30 November 2007, <http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/ABSNavigation/prenav/ViewData?method=Place%20of%20Usual%20Residence&subaction=--pe=QuickStats&areacode=6&action=401&collection=Census&textversion=false&breadcrumb=L&period=2006&tjvascript=true&navmapdisplayed=true&t>)

2. Employment

From the 2006 Census, the five largest industry sectors employing Tasmanians are retail trade (11.9 per cent); health care and social assistance (11.4 per cent); manufacturing (10.3 per cent); public administration and safety (8.4 per cent); and education and training (8.3 per cent).

(Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2007, Census Tables Industry of Employment by Occupation, Tasmania, Cat. No. 2068.0.)

In October 2004, there were 214,000 Tasmanian residents aged 15 years or older in either full or part time employment. By October 2007 this had increased to 228,600 in either full or part time employment.

The unemployment rate for Tasmania has declined from 6.3 per cent in October 2004 to 5.7 per cent in October 2007. During the same period the unemployment rate for Australia has declined from 5.3 per cent to 4.3 per cent. The average unemployment rate for the 2006-07 financial year was 5.7 per cent for Tasmania and 4.5 per cent for Australia. The Mersey/Lyell statistical division had the highest average unemployment rate for 2006-07 of 7.7 per cent. The lowest unemployment rate for the year was 4.8 per cent in the Greater Hobart/Southern region.

The workforce participation rate for Tasmania has improved marginally from 59.0 per cent in October 2004 to 60.8 per cent in October 2007. During the same period the participation rate for Australia has increased from 63.6 per cent to 65.0 per cent. The average participation rate for Tasmania for the 2006-07 financial year was 60.3 per cent, compared with 64.8 per cent for Australia. The Northern Tasmanian Statistical Division had the lowest average participation rate in 2006-07 (59.8 per cent). The highest participation rate was 60.8 per cent in the Mersey-Lyell region.

The labour force participation rate for people aged 15 to 19 years is also lower in Tasmania than the rest of Australia, particularly for those not attending full-time education, where the rate for Tasmania is 85.2 per cent, compared with 89.6 per cent for all of Australia in October 2007. Young Tasmanians who are attending full-time education have a participation rate which is much closer to the rate for all of Australia, at 46.8 per cent for Tasmania and 47.3 per cent for all of Australia.

(Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2007, Labour Force, Australia, October 2007, Cat. No. 6202.0.)

Table 2: Australia and Tasmanian Regions Labour Force status (2006-07)

	Statistical Region	Average unemployment Rate (%)	Participation Rate (%)
2006-07	Greater Hobart/Southern	4.8	60.4
2006-07	Northern	5.5	59.8
2006-07	Mersey-Lyell	7.7	60.8
2006-07	Tasmania	5.7	60.3
2006-07	Australia	4.5	64.8

(Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2007, Labour force status, 2006-07 financial year, Tasmanian Statistical Divisions, ABS data available on request.)

In September 2006, Tasmania had the highest percentage in Australia of people who had been unemployed for 12 months or more, at 2.1 per cent of all unemployed people, compared with 0.8 per cent for all of Australia. Tasmania also had the highest rate of workers who want, and are available for, more hours than they currently have (underemployment rate). In September 2006 this rate was 6.2 per cent for Tasmania and 5.0 per cent for all of Australia.

(Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2007, Labour Market Statistics, October 2007, Cat. No. 6105.0.)

3. Economic resources

The trend in Tasmanian average weekly earnings as a proportion of the national average weekly earnings has been inconsistent over the period August 2000 to August 2007. Incomes in Tasmania have been rising, but not at the same rate as for Australia as a whole. In August 2007, Tasmanian average weekly earnings were \$761.70, which was 87.0 per cent of the national figure of \$875.10. Tasmanian average weekly earnings were at 90.7 per cent of national earnings in 2004.

Table 3: All employees, total average weekly earnings, August 2000 – August 2007 (\$/week)

	August 2000	August 2001	August 2002	August 2003	August 2004	August 2005	August 2006	August 2007
Tasmania	553.50	584.50	608.90	629.10	687.90	713.90	721.50	761.70
Australia	643.70	672.10	696.20	735.50	758.60	802.60	838.90	875.10

(Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2007, *Average Weekly Earnings, Australia, August 2007*, Cat. No. 6302.0)

Pay equity between for men and women in Tasmania has improved from 82.7 per cent of average male full time adult ordinary time earnings in August 2000 to 90.3 per cent in August 2007. There is a greater gap in earnings when all employees are included, due to the greater number of women in part-time employment.

Table 4: All employees, full time adult ordinary time earnings, 2000 – 2007, by sex.

	August 2000	August 2001	August 2002	August 2003	August 2004	August 2005	August 2006	August 2007
Male	786.60	796.90	842.20	866.30	911.90	943.90	996.50	1044.10
Female	650.30	704.70	743.10	761.20	786.20	822.30	863.20	942.70

(Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2007, *Average Weekly Earnings, Australia, August 2007*, Cat. No. 6302.0)

In 2005-06, 31.5 per cent of all Tasmanian households reported that their principal source of household income was government pensions and allowances, compared with 26.1 per cent for all of Australia. At least part of this difference may be due to the larger percentage of older people in Tasmania, as well as Tasmania's higher unemployment rate. Related to this, average income and net household worth are lower in Tasmania. Despite this, Tasmanians are more likely than other Australians to own their home outright.

Table 5: Economic resources of households, 2005-06

	Capital cities		Balance of State		All Households	
	Tas.	Aust.	Tas.	Aust.	Tas.	Aust.
Principal source of household income (% of households)						
Wages and salaries	57.3	62.9	49.7	53	52.8	59.3
Government pensions and allowances	26.1	23	35.3	31.5	31.5	26.1
Equivalised disposable household income (\$/week)						
Mean income	597	678	510	582	546	644
Median income	545	593	457	513	486	563
Household net worth (\$)						
Mean household net worth (\$)	455,702	591,028	372,786	514,034	406,638	562,859
Tenure type (% of households)						
Owner without a mortgage	36.1	32.1	41.5	38.1	39.3	34.3
Owner with a mortgage	35.8	36.5	32.5	32.4	33.8	35
Renter	26.1	29.5	23.7	26.8	24.7	28.5

(Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2007, *Household Income and Income Distribution, Australia, 2005 - 06*, Cat. No. 6523.0)

In 2006, Tasmania had the highest proportion of all state and territories of people aged 15 to 74 at the lowest level for each of the literacy and numeracy scales. There has also been an apparent increase in the proportion of Tasmanians at the lowest level of the prose and document literacy scales between 1996 and 2006, but this change is not statistically significant.

Table 6: Adult literacy and life skills, Tasmania and Australia, 2006

Scale	Skill levels 1 & 2		Skill levels 3 - 5	
	Tasmania	Australia	Tasmania	Australia
	%	%	%	%
Prose literacy	49.0	46.4	51.0	53.6
Document literacy	50.7	46.8	49.3	53.2
Numeracy	51.2	52.5	43.8	47.5
Problem solving	73.0	70.1	27.0	29.9
Health literacy	63.4	59.5	36.6	40.5

(Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2007, *Adult literacy and life skills survey, summary results*, Cat. No. 4228.0)

4. Community participation

The data shows that there is very good community connection in Tasmania with over 5,000 community groups and a higher than the national average participation rate for volunteers. Tasmania's participation rate of 36 per cent is higher than the national participation rate of 34.1 per cent. Participation is slightly higher in Tasmanian regional areas (37.4 per cent) compared with the capital city rate of 34.2 per cent.

Table 8: Community participation, Tasmania and Australia, 2006

	Tas.	Aust.
	%	%
Has actively participated in groups in the last 12 months:		
- Social groups (e.g. sports group, arts group)	58.9	62.7
- Community support groups (e.g. welfare associations, health promotion and support etc)	33.3	33.3
- Civic and political groups (e.g. political party, consumer organisation, body corporate or tenants association)	18.4	18.6
Participated in social activity in last 3 months - type of social activity:		
- Visited or was visited by friends	92.2	92.5
- Went out with or met group of friends - outdoor activities	71.7	76.7
- Went out with or met group of friends - indoor activities	68.5	73.3
- Spent time in internet social activity	15	20.2
- Other informal social activities	37.3	41.8
Has participated in a community event in last 6 months	71.4	64.4
Has worked to provide service or activity in local area	28.2	24.5
Feels able to have a say within community on important issues:		
- All / Most of the time	36.7	29.1
- Some of the time	26.2	24.6
- Little / None of the time	37.1	46.3
Personally knows someone in an organisation to ask for information	76.2	71.5

(Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2007, *General social survey: summary results, Australia, 2006, Cat. No. 4159.0*)

5. SEIFA index

Socio-Economic Indexes For Areas (SEIFA) is a suite of four indexes, derived from the Census of Population and Housing, that summarise a number of variables associated with socio-economic disadvantage. These are relative measures of disadvantage and do not provide a measure of the magnitude of disadvantage.

The four indexes are:

- Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage
- Index of Relative Socio-Economic Advantage/Disadvantage
- Index of Economic Resources
- Index of Education and Occupation.

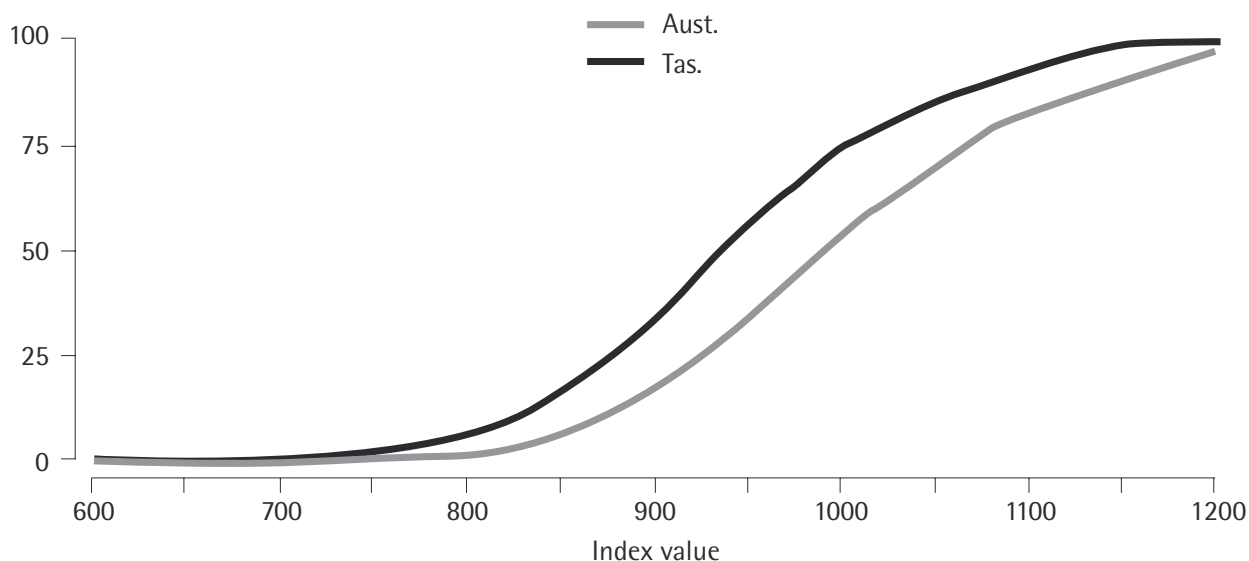
A high score on the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage occurs when an area has few families of low income and few people with little training and in unskilled occupation. A high score on the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Advantage/Disadvantage indicates that an area also has a relatively high proportion of people with high incomes or a skilled workforce.

The Index of Economic Resources reflects the economic resources of families within an area, with areas with high scores having a higher proportion of families on high incomes, a lower proportion of low-income families and more households living in large houses. The Index of Education and Occupation is designed to reflect the educational and occupational structure of the community. An area with a high score on this index would have a concentration of people with higher education qualifications and of people in more skilled occupations.

It is important to note that the indexes can only be used to order areas in terms of disadvantage, not to compare the absolute level of advantage between areas. An area with an index of 1,200 is more advantaged than an area with an index of 600, but it is not twice as advantaged.

The graph below shows the comparison of Index of Relative Socio-Economic Advantage/Disadvantage values for Tasmania and Australia. The interesting point to note is that Tasmania is more disadvantaged than Australia at all points. In 2001, it was the most disadvantaged state for three of the four indexes.

Index of relative advantage/disadvantage



Note: % is cumulative percentage of people living in CDs below index value.

Gini coefficient

The Gini coefficient is a measure of statistical dispersion most prominently used as a measure of inequality of income distribution or inequality of wealth distribution. It is defined as a ratio with values between 0 and 1. Thus, a low Gini coefficient indicates more equal income or wealth distribution, while a high Gini coefficient indicates more unequal distribution. 0 corresponds to perfect equality (everyone having exactly the same income) and 1 corresponds to perfect inequality (where one person has all the income, while everyone else has zero income).

The Gini coefficient for Tasmania indicates that there is considerable income equality in Tasmania. Research in the USA has indicated that income inequality leads to lower trust, which in turn leads to lower civic engagement (Uslaner and Brown 2005).

Gini Coefficients, Australia and Tasmania, 2000-2004					
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Tasmania	0.265	0.258	n.a.	0.276	0.266
Australia	0.310	0.311	n.a.	0.309	0.296

(Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2007, *Australian Social Trends, 2007*, Cat. No. 4102.0)

Appendix 3

Tasmania *Together* community survey

Survey Questions

Topic A: Quality of life.

1. Thinking about your own life and personal circumstances, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your life as a whole?

Very satisfied	1
Satisfied	2
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3
Dissatisfied	4
Very dissatisfied	5

2. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with.....?

[each question asked separately]

Your standard of living?

What you are currently achieving in life?

Your family relationships?

Your other personal relationships (such as friends or work colleagues)?

Your level of happiness?

Very satisfied	1
Satisfied	2
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3
Dissatisfied	4
Very dissatisfied	5

Topic B: Feeling part of the community

3. [Introductory statement to be read out by interviewer]

From time to time people receive support from others, for example small favours - such as looking after pets, running errands, helping with chores or minding children for short periods, or for things like emotional support, advice, financial help such as loaning money, or help in a time of crisis.

3.a Have you received support from any of the following sources in the last 12 months? [ask for yes/no response to each item]

(a) Family

(b) Friends

(c) Neighbours

(d) Community services (e.g. charity services such as Meals on Wheels, or government services such as Community Nursing etc)

Yes/No

[The next question is only to be asked of the respondents who answered yes to one or more of the items above. Only those respondents who reported having received a particular type of support e.g. community services, are to be asked about their satisfaction with that type of support, e.g. persons who did not receive support from their neighbours, will not be asked about their satisfaction/dissatisfaction with support from their neighbours.]

3.b How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the level of support you receive from the following sources?

[each asked as separate question]

(a) Your family?

(b) Your friends?

(c) Your neighbours?

(d) Community services (e.g. charity services such as Meals on Wheels, or government services such as Community Nursing etc)

Very satisfied	1
Satisfied	2
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3
Dissatisfied	4
Very dissatisfied	5

4. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your opportunities to socialise with others outside your household?

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Very satisfied | 1 |
| Satisfied | 2 |
| Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied | 3 |
| Dissatisfied | 4 |
| Very dissatisfied | 5 |

[If the response is either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied, ask the following question:]

4a. Are any of the following things preventing you from socialising as much as you would like)?

Work pressures

Child care responsibilities

Other caring responsibilities

Lack of own transport

Irregular or expensive public transport

Difficulties as a result of a disability or long term health condition

Can't afford to

Language barrier/difficulties

Lack of friends

No family ties

Other

Topic C: Inclusiveness and acceptance of diversity.

Now we are going to ask you some questions on how accepting you think Tasmanians are of others.

5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that Tasmanians are accepting of people from different ethnic groups and religions?

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Strongly agree | 1 |
| Agree | 2 |
| Neither agree nor disagree | 3 |
| Disagree | 4 |
| Strongly disagree | 5 |

6. To what extent do you agree or disagree that Tasmanians are accepting of people's sexual orientation (e.g. if required, heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual)?

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Strongly agree | 1 |
| Agree | 2 |
| Neither agree nor disagree | 3 |
| Disagree | 4 |
| Strongly disagree | 5 |

Appendix 4

Map for Tasmania – Vinson. *Dropping off the edge: the distribution of disadvantage in Australia.*

