

Forum Flash

Tuesday 4 May 2010

Henry Tax Review: An Update for not-for profit organisations

Despite the initial concerns of the NFP sector about the potential impact of the “Henry Tax Review” on the Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) arrangements for “charitable organisations”, there are important positive highlights from the review. The replacement of the 15% tax on super contributions with a simpler and fairer tax rebate is a change that has been actively advocated by ACOSS for a decade. This step will make it easier for low income earners to save for their retirement.

The proposal to reduce the payment gap by increasing the single Newstart rate and indexing it above inflation rate will benefit unemployed people who have to cope with increasing accommodation costs, especially in our big urban areas.

The Government is also not supporting changes to the income tax and GST concessions for the Community and Welfare Sector, so we retain the current arrangements.

In spite of these positive aspects, there are areas where the sector expected more positive action. Key examples are how the current tax system has inflated house prices and the proposal to reduce rental support to public tenants. The sector is also disappointed that the Government is not going ahead with the establishment of the Charities Commission. The purpose of the National Charities Commission was to monitor, regulate, provide advice to the sector and modify and modernise our definition of what is a charity.

Although the sector expected more clear support for low income Australians, the Henry Review will provide a welcome certainty to the welfare and community sectors.

Invitation to an important planning meeting on 6 May

Re National Equal Pay Day (10 June 2010, 11am Sydney Town Hall)

Please come to an important planning meeting. All members are invited and all are needed. All are welcome - New members can join at the meeting.

Thursday 6 May at 5pm WSCF, - Level 4, 146 Marsden Street, Parramatta

At the meeting we will make a plan to mobilise people from our workplaces, our communities and networks for the most important day in this campaign - Equal Pay Day. It's vital that ALL workplaces in the Western Sydney are represented at the meeting.

Please come along. Let us know you are coming equalpay@asu.org.au

Emily Mayo Organiser ASU NSW & ACT (Services) Branch Ph (02) 9310 4000 Fax (02) 9698 8936

emily@asu.org.au

www.asumembers.org.au

www.payup.org.au

Sydney Alliance - Training in August 2010

Alliance Building Institutes - Action for the Common Good

In partnership with the *Sydney Alliance (SA)*, WSCF offers its members **FREE** access to the Alliance Building Institutes training being run in August.

The Sydney Alliance is a new kind of citizens' coalition whose mission is to provide our community with a voice to express our common values and aspirations for a fair and just Sydney. The Alliance is broadly based across religious organisations, community organisations and unions establishing relationships that respect diversity while building a cohesive society. The Alliance is a non-party political organisation. Its primary purpose is the ability to act for the common good, to achieve social change and peace building in our communities.

Member organisations are encouraged to send individuals to participate as a means for understanding 'why' and 'how' of the Alliance. Organisations interested in exploring partnership of the Sydney Alliance are also encouraged to send Leaders to participate in the Institute and to get a feel for the coalition.

This two day institute is based on the philosophy and practices developed by the Industrial Areas Foundation in over 65 years of successful organising experience. These ideas are translated to an Australian context.

Topics at the Alliance Building Institutes include:

- Community organising: based on the history and tradition of our religious, union and community organisations
- Relational organising: individual relational meetings, listening assemblies, research, negotiation and action
- Strengthening our organisations: building a culture that is relational, action oriented and reflective/learning
- Using Relational Power in the public sphere to negotiate around common issues

Course Dates: 18 & 19 August **Wednesday & Thursday (all day)**

Venue: WSCF Training Room Level 4, 146 Marsden St, Parramatta.

Registrations: Sydney Alliance will take registrations

[Click here to download the Registration Form](#)

Workforce Development Interview

Jaye Toole, Training Coordinator (Interviewed by Miguel Ferreo)



Q. What has been your career path to your current job?

A long and complicated yet interesting one! I was involved in various community work based around being a 'stay at home' mum with three children i.e. playgroup and school canteens and various positions on the committees. I then recommenced paid work with Lifeline as a warehouse manager and developed training programs for the staff regarding safety and other hazard and risk management issues. I moved to the Red Cross and was there for a few years and then moved to a registered training organisation as an adult facilitator of competency based aged care and disability work.

This role also included managing other trainers, developing materials and more. I then went back fulltime training on a special dementia education project for 15 months and have been in my current position as Training Coordinator since October 2007. During this time I have studied and received a number of competency based vocational and training qualifications. I also have a Bachelor of Health, Ageing and Community Services and am currently studying for a Masters in Education (VET) which is a major in the vocational education and training.

Q. What in your opinion are the key workforce issues faced by the community sector?

I don't believe education is taken seriously enough or seen as professional development. This lack of support for people who are interested in receiving training leads them to self fund and then move on. Research indicates if you fund training for staff they are more likely to remain with your organisation. I think it's important for workers to understand about the sector, not just from the hands on perspective, but theoretically and historically. I also strongly believe that offering training could be used as an attractant for recruitment.

Q. What strategies the sector could develop to address these issues?

Having conversations with training providers and apprenticeship/traineeship centers. This would clarify and get rid of all the myths and rumours regarding training. Training can be offered effectively and reasonably priced in a number of ways.

Q. What is your advice to the Community Sector that could be helpful to face these issues?

Recognise, reward and value training as a way of developing your staff and up-skilling them to be prepared for the future. It is a successful way of looking at succession planning, especially as the community sector has many, small and autonomous projects where one person is working or small teams are working. Training and development are ideal ways of managing when staff leave and removes having vacant positions during recruitment and can support a path of strong internal promotions.

Joke Spot

Three things of life once gone never comes back - *Time, Words and Opportunity*

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