

ACNC Quarterly

September 2018

Introduction from the Commissioner

The ACNC is abuzz with activity as we prepare for the launch of the ACNC's new website, Charity Register and Charity Portal over the coming weeks. The team has been hard at work, preparing for a major transition designed to improve the speed and accessibility of the ACNC's online systems.

While progress has been steady, we understand that some charities are disappointed that the 2018 Annual Information Statement has not yet been made available. We anticipate that this will be available in October 2018, shortly after the launch of the ACNC website.

Due to the delayed release of the Annual Information Statement, I have exercised my discretion to extend the due date. All charities that have a due date between 31 December 2018 and 28 February 2019 will now have until 31 March 2019 to submit. This will allow ample time to complete your charity's annual reporting requirements.

Despite this extension, I encourage all charities to submit as early as possible and avoid leaving your annual reporting until just before the deadline – while our new system will be faster and easier to navigate, you are likely to need time to adjust to the upcoming changes in style and layout.

More information about the ACNC's IT redevelopment will be provided to all charities via a special edition of ACNC Quarterly, issued to the Address for Service for charities in late October. Further updates about the progress of our IT upgrade can also be found on the ACNC's social media channels.

In further exciting news, we've seen some great progress in red tape reduction. New South Wales Fair Trading has recently signed an agreement with the ACNC to reduce duplicate reporting for around 4,000 incorporated associations from 1 October 2018. This is a fantastic development, and I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the NSW Government for its commitment to red tape reduction for charities.

The report from the ACNC's mandated five-year legislative review has also been published, featuring 30 recommendations to strengthen the ACNC's regulatory legislative framework. I personally welcome the report's publication and the insight it provides into the views of the charitable sector.



Welcome to our newly registered charities

Just over 600 charities have successfully registered with the ACNC since June 2018 — welcome! These charities will provide education, health care, support for people living with disabilities, shelter and services for the homeless, animal protection and more.

We thank these charities, and your charity, for striving to make our communities better places.

To find out more about Australia's newest charities, visit acnc.gov.au/recentlyregistered.



ACNC legislative review

In August 2018, the report from the ACNC Legislative Review, titled *Strengthening for Purpose: Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Legislative Review 2018*, was published and tabled in Parliament.

The final report, produced by review panel Chair Mr Patrick McClure AO and review panel members Ms Sue McCluskey, Dr Matthew Turnour and Mr Greg Hammond OAM, makes 30 recommendations to strengthen the ACNC's legislative framework.

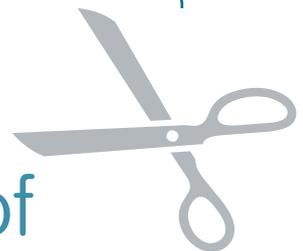
The recommendations centre on the ACNC's objects, functions and powers, the overall regulatory framework, and red tape reduction for charities.

The ACNC welcomes the report and its insights into the issues raised by the charity sector in Australia, and thanks the Review Panel, peak bodies, government agencies and charities for their contribution to the legislative review process.

Any further developments in the review of the ACNC legislation will be shared on the ACNC's website and social media channels if available.

The full review report is now available to download from the [Treasury website](#).

Red tape reduced for thousands of NSW charities



Thousands of charities will benefit from reduced red tape in New South Wales, after the ACNC and the NSW Office of Fair Trading recently signed an agreement to remove duplicate reporting for incorporated associations.

Around 4,000 NSW incorporated associations will now only be required to submit their annual financial reports to the ACNC, and then we will securely share the data with NSW Fair Trading. The new reporting arrangement is in line with Victorian, South Australian, Tasmanian and ACT reporting arrangements for charities, and will be available to NSW associations from the 2018 reporting period.

We hope to provide further updates on streamlined reporting arrangements and red tape reduction initiatives for other states in the coming months.

RMIT University charity sector research

A large research project is currently underway on the topic of mergers and amalgamations in the charity sector – designed to provide a sector-wide understanding of resource sharing arrangements and restructuring options undertaken by Australian charities.

This project is administered by RMIT University, and conducted by senior researchers from RMIT University, the University of Western Australia and Queensland University of Technology.

If you are a CEO or senior member of the governance team of an Australian charity, we encourage you to complete the 20-minute survey. The results from this research will provide invaluable insight into the restructures taking place in the Australian charity sector, their drivers and outcomes, and the lessons that can be learnt for all charities.

For more information or to complete the survey, visit the [RMIT University website](#).

Charities encouraged to join National Redress Scheme

The National Redress Scheme is providing support to those who have experienced institutional child sexual abuse by providing access to counselling, a direct personal response and a redress payment.

Non-government institutions are encouraged to join the Scheme – the more institutions that join, the closer Australia is to achieving equal access to redress for people who have experienced institutional child abuse.

The Scheme launched on 1 July 2018 and will run for 10 years. Joining the Scheme is voluntary and institutions have until 30 June 2020 to join.

To provide as much certainty as possible about anticipated costs for institutions, the Commonwealth

- covers the majority of the Scheme administration costs;
- covers the cost of Independent Decision Makers; and
- reviews and evaluates the Scheme.

If an eligible person accepts an offer of redress, the responsible institution, its officials (other than an official who is an abuser of the person) and its associates will be released from all civil liability for abuse of the person that is within the scope of the Scheme.

For more information, visit nationalredress.gov.au or contact redressinstitutions@dss.gov.au.

Charity Fraud Awareness Week

The ACNC is pleased to be involved in **Charity Fraud Awareness Week**, an international event to raise awareness and share best practice solutions to tackle fraud and financial crime in the charity and not-for-profit sector.

The campaign covers common types of charity fraud, how to spot the warning signs, how to protect charities and donors, and what to do if you need to report fraudulent activity.

This international initiative features insights from charities, professionals and regulators from across the world – including the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, New Zealand and more.

Stay tuned to the ACNC's website and social media channels from October 22 to October 26.



Get to know... Search Dogs Sydney

We spoke with Malcolm Johnson, Vice President of Search Dogs Sydney Inc., to discuss the work of the charity.

Q What does your charity do?

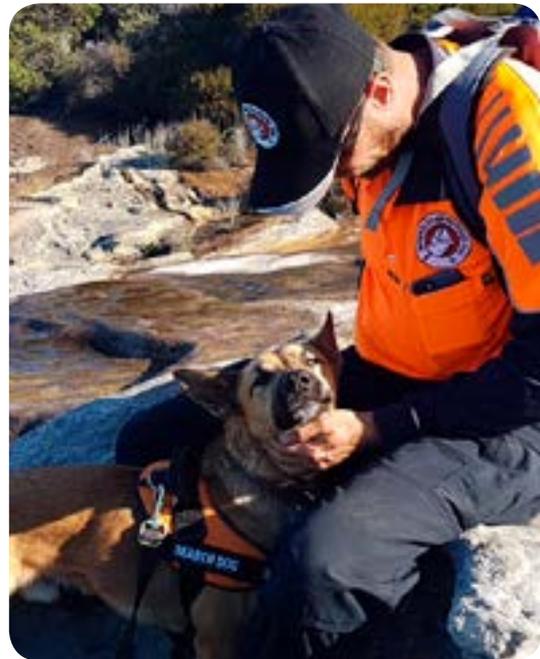
A Search Dogs Sydney Inc. was formed to allow a platform for volunteers and their canines, anywhere in NSW to train in canine search and rescue. At this time, we are the only volunteer organisation within NSW offering a training platform for all disciplines of canine search and rescue. We make a difference by assisting families in searches for long term missing relatives. We also have the capability to provide canine search teams to assist police and other agencies in active missing person searches, as well as being trained in urban searches such as building collapses.

Q What is the most rewarding part of running your charity?

A The most rewarding part of what we do is helping to make a difference. Whether it is working with the families of long-term missing persons, and being able to provide them an extra avenue to help them in an often long and painful process, supporting the police and other agencies whilst searching for someone lost in the bush, or working with an Urban Search and Rescue Task Force at a major incident - our team are highly trained to deal with any lost person scenario.

Q What is the biggest challenge faced by your charity?

A We are a very small group at present and fundraising is our biggest challenge. We receive no outside funding and we rely entirely on donations and sponsorships. We attend a large number of community education events throughout the year – all of which allow us to demonstrate the skills and abilities of our handlers, dogs and search technicians, while also educating the public on what we do and appealing for their help in any way they



can. As such we rely heavily on every local community we visit for their generosity.

Q Your charity was registered fairly recently, can you give any tips to other newly registered charities?

A Make sure to seek plenty of advice when setting up your charity. There is a seemingly endless amount of paperwork to be completed, and if your committee is new to it all it can seem quite daunting. The ACNC website has plenty of hints and tips to help also, and is a good source of information. Also, be sure to set up a solid framework for all policies and procedures right from the beginning. Be open and honest in all communications and be prepared to ask lots of questions.

Find out more about Search Dogs Sydney Inc. on their [website](#) and their [Facebook](#) page.

Interested in your charity featuring on the ACNC website? We would love to hear about your charity's impact – send a short email to charitychat@acnc.gov.au and let us know why you should be featured.

Education update

Webinars, guidance, external resources

We have been busy over the last few months, hosting four free webinars:

- Managing conflicts of interest
- Managing disputes
- Holding the Annual General Meeting
- Welcome to the board – advice for new charity board members

There are two further webinars scheduled for the remainder of the year, on the following topics:

- Fundraising – good practice
- Running a charity – being efficient and effective



To access recordings of our past webinars, or sign up for future webinar events, visit acnc.gov.au/webinars.

In addition to running our monthly webinars, we have been busy updating our guidance and resources in preparation for the launch of the new ACNC website in the coming weeks – we look forward to sharing the new look ACNC guidance in October 2018.



Helping you this quarter

Q What should I do if my charity's 2017 Annual Information Statement is overdue?

A Charities are required to submit their Annual Information Statement each year to maintain their registration with the ACNC. Failure to report may result financial penalties, and ultimately, the loss of charity status. If you haven't submitted your 2017 Annual Information Statement, log in to the ACNC Charity Portal as soon as possible to complete your reporting.

As the ACNC is preparing for a large-scale IT Upgrade, we encourage you to complete the form in the one session, wherever possible, or within 48 hours of starting the Annual Information Statement. This short timeframe will protect against the loss of data as we continuously transfer data in the lead-up to the launch of our new website and Charity Portal.

Connect with ACNC

Sign up to our email news updates at acnc.gov.au/signup

You can also interact with us and other charities on social media.



Facebook
acnc.gov.au



Twitter
[acnc_gov_au](https://twitter.com/acnc_gov_au)



LinkedIn
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