



# Volunteer Census - Final Report

31 October 2018

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# About Us

**Community Information & Support Victoria (CISVic) is the peak body representing local community based not-for-profit agencies.**

**We advocate to government and other peak bodies on behalf of our members.**

**We support our members to offer services to community members who need help, especially the vulnerable and disadvantaged.**

**We offer training and support to our volunteers and paid workforce, so they can learn new skills and help others in the community.**

Our membership is made up of agencies from across metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria. They assist people experiencing personal and financial difficulties by providing information, referral and support services.

## Description of volunteers

The CISVic workforce is diverse. Though volunteer positions and roles vary, each volunteer contributes to the provision of support for those in our community who are disadvantaged. Volunteers bring their own skills, knowledge and life experiences to the work they do. The ratio of volunteers to paid staff is 10:1 demonstrating that without volunteer participation, there is no way that we could provide the services and support that we do.

## Why we did the Volunteer Census

The Volunteer Census was conducted to provide an up-to-date picture of our volunteer base. We wanted to identify who our volunteers are and highlight their strengths and impact. We also aimed to explore areas of practice where we are doing well and where we can collectively improve and further develop.

# Methodology

The Volunteer Census was comprised of two distinct surveys: one for volunteers (see Appendix 1) and one for agency representatives (see Appendix 2). All volunteers and agency representatives in the CISVic membership were invited to participate. Participants could complete the survey physically or online. Six hundred and twenty-four volunteers completed the volunteer survey.

A further 34 agency representatives undertook the agency survey, representing nearly two-thirds of our entire agency membership. Not all respondents in both surveys answered every question.

Data collated in the census was cleaned to ensure a robust analysis to only include organisations that offer community-based information and support to ensure these responses did not alter the overall results.

## National Standards for Volunteer Involvement

In 2015, Volunteering Australia introduced the new National Standards for Volunteer Involvement (Standards) to provide a framework of best practice for supporting the volunteer sector.

The Standards provide good practice guidance to organisations with volunteers, including risk and safety management. This, in turn, improves the volunteer experience for all.

There are eight Standards addressing the key areas of volunteer involvement. In this report we have considered how our agencies and CISVic align with the Standards. The following symbols feature throughout the report to indicate where we achieve these alignments.

 <b>1: Leadership and Management</b> <p>The governing body and senior employees lead and promote a positive culture towards volunteering and implement effective management systems to support volunteer involvement.</p>	 <b>2: Commitment to Volunteer Involvement</b> <p>Commitment to volunteer involvement is set out through vision, planning and resourcing, and supports the organisation's strategic direction.</p>
 <b>3: Volunteer Roles</b> <p>Volunteers are engaged in meaningful roles which contribute to the organisation's purpose, goals and objectives.</p>	 <b>4: Recruitment and Selection</b> <p>Volunteer recruitment and selection strategies are planned, consistent and meet the needs of the organisation and volunteers.</p>
 <b>5: Support and Development</b> <p>Volunteers understand their roles and gain the knowledge, skills and feedback needed to safely and effectively carry out their duties.</p>	 <b>6: Workplace Safety and Wellbeing</b> <p>The health, safety and wellbeing of volunteers is protected in the workplace.</p>
 <b>7: Volunteer Recognition</b> <p>Volunteer contribution, value and impact is understood, appreciated and acknowledged.</p>	 <b>8: Quality Management &amp; Continuous Improvement</b> <p>Effective volunteer involvement results from a system of good practice, review and continuous improvement.</p>

To view a copy of the Standards visit: <https://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/policy/national-standards-and-supporting-material/>

# Executive Summary

For 50 years volunteers have been providing critical support to fellow community members who felt they had nowhere else to turn. Community information and support services, formerly Citizens Advice Bureaus, were founded and run through the goodwill of dedicated and socially conscious volunteers. Through their work they provided a listening ear, help for those in need and directed people to appropriate agencies for further support.

In 1973, from first available records, the Victorian community information and support sector had a volunteer workforce of 384 across 25 agencies. Fifty years on, CISVic now has a membership of 58 agencies with a volunteer workforce of 3028.

We have taken this opportunity to take stock and explore how we as a sector engage and support our volunteer workforce.

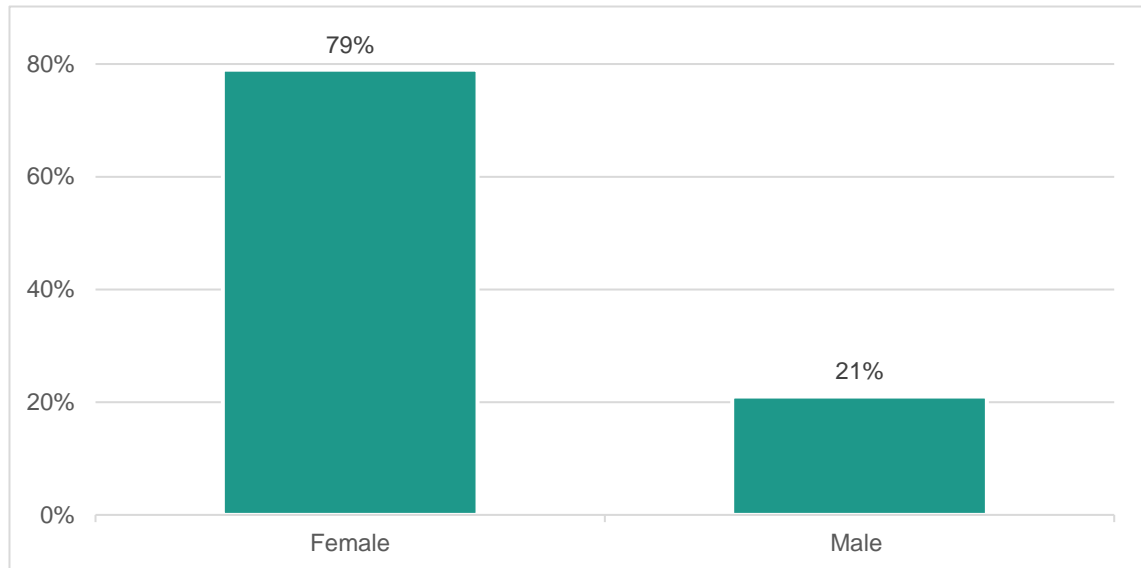
## Key Findings:

- Volunteering in our agencies has positive influences on volunteers' wellbeing.
- Our volunteers are well supported by their agencies.
- Agencies' practices and procedures are aligned with The National Standards for Volunteer Involvement.
- Agencies and CISVic could be doing more to measure and account for the impact of our volunteers' contribution.
- CISVic need to improve its communication of the development and training opportunities available for volunteers.

# Who are our Volunteers? Sample Description

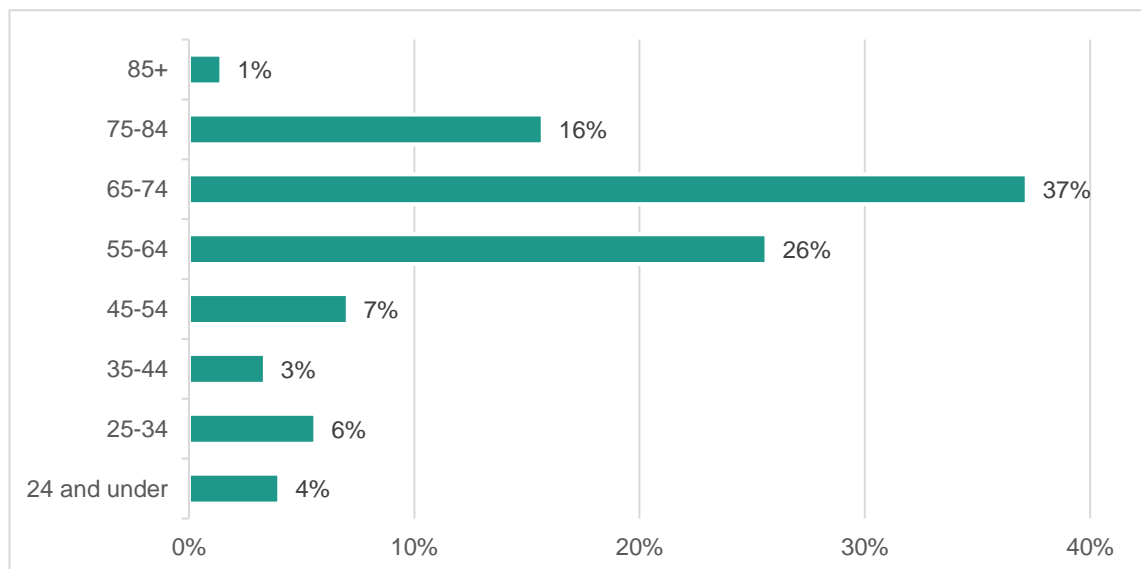
The sample consisted of 624 volunteers. This group represents 20 per cent of our volunteer workforce.

**Figure 1: Gender of volunteers**



The majority (79%) of volunteers were female.

**Figure 2: Age of volunteers**



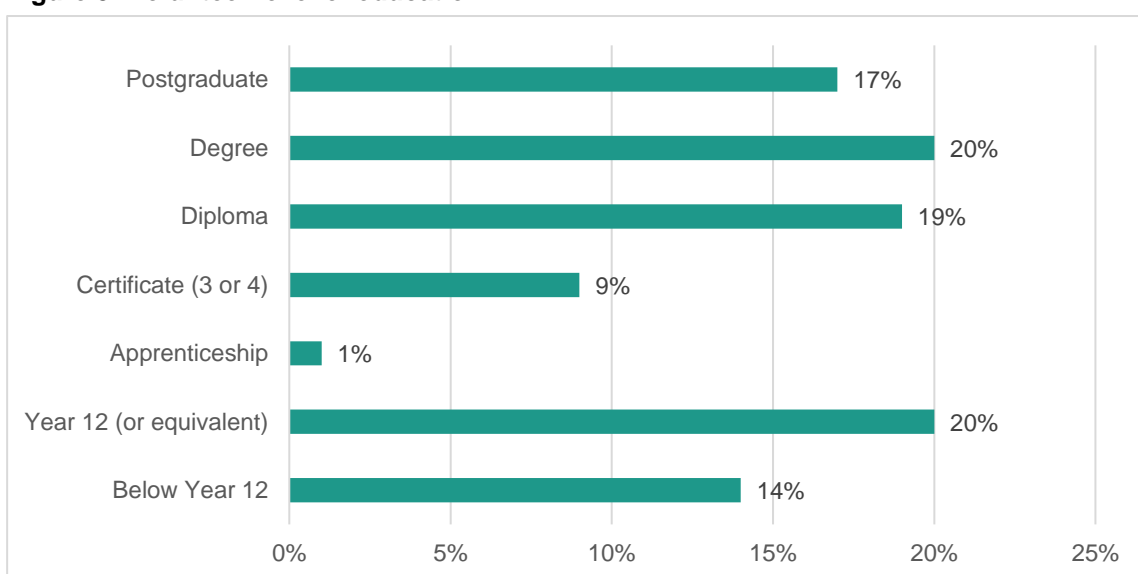
The age range of the volunteers was diverse. The most frequent (37%) age group was 65-74 years old.

**Table 1: Volunteer self-identifiers**

	Culturally or linguistically diverse	Having a disability	Speak a language other than English	Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
	18%	0.3%	26%	10%

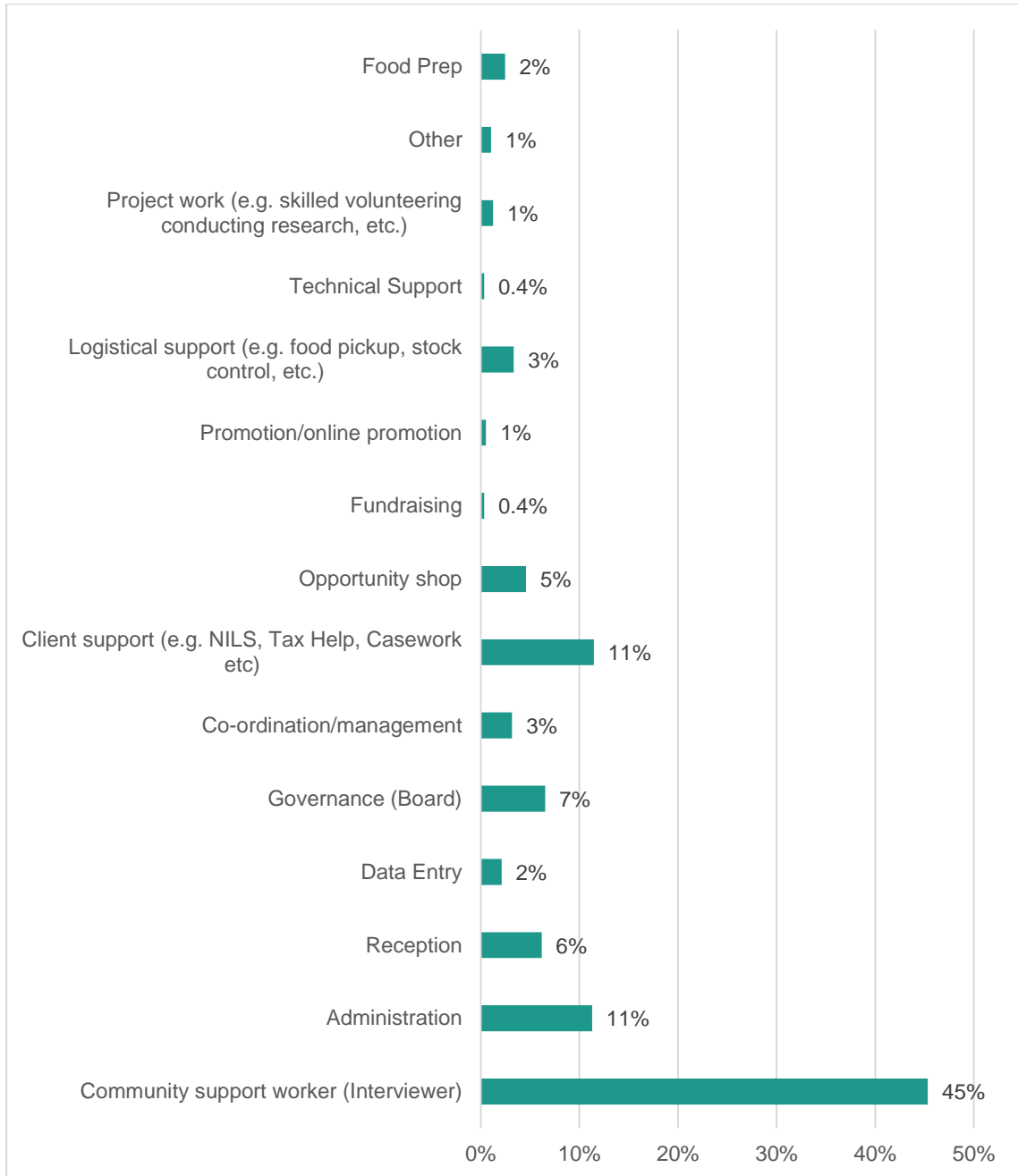
Over a quarter of volunteers (26%) speak a language other than English and nearly a fifth (18%) identify as being culturally or linguistically diverse.

**Figure 3: Volunteer level of education**



The level of education in the volunteer sample is diverse. The most frequent responses were Degree (20%) and Year 12 (or equivalent) (20%).

**Figure 4: Primary role within agency**

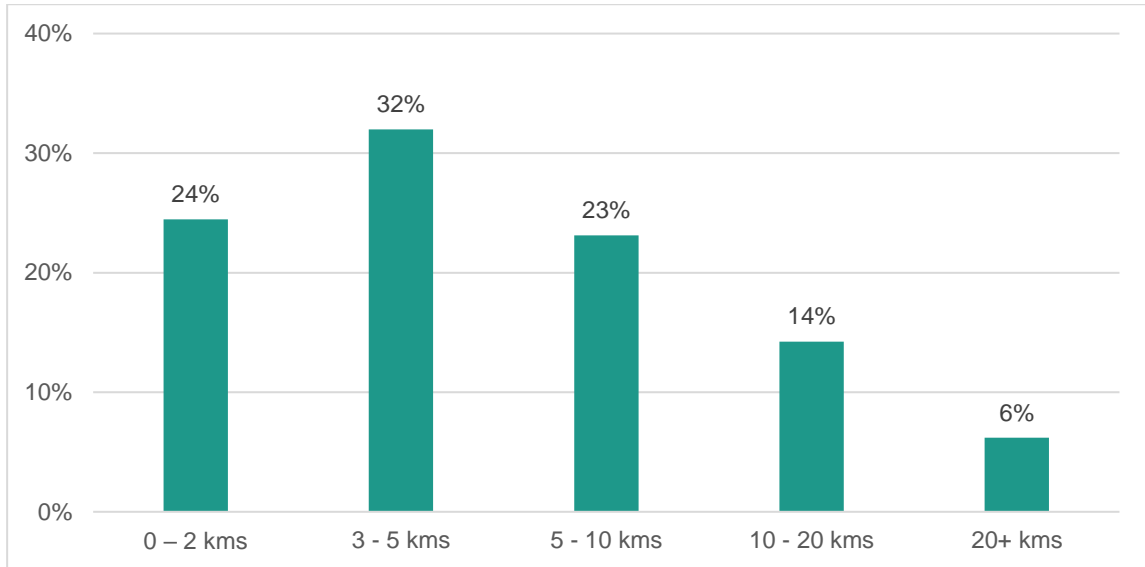


Community support worker was the most frequently (45%) reported primary role, followed by Client support (11%).

Over half of volunteers held multiple roles. On average, 23.7 hours are volunteered monthly per individual.

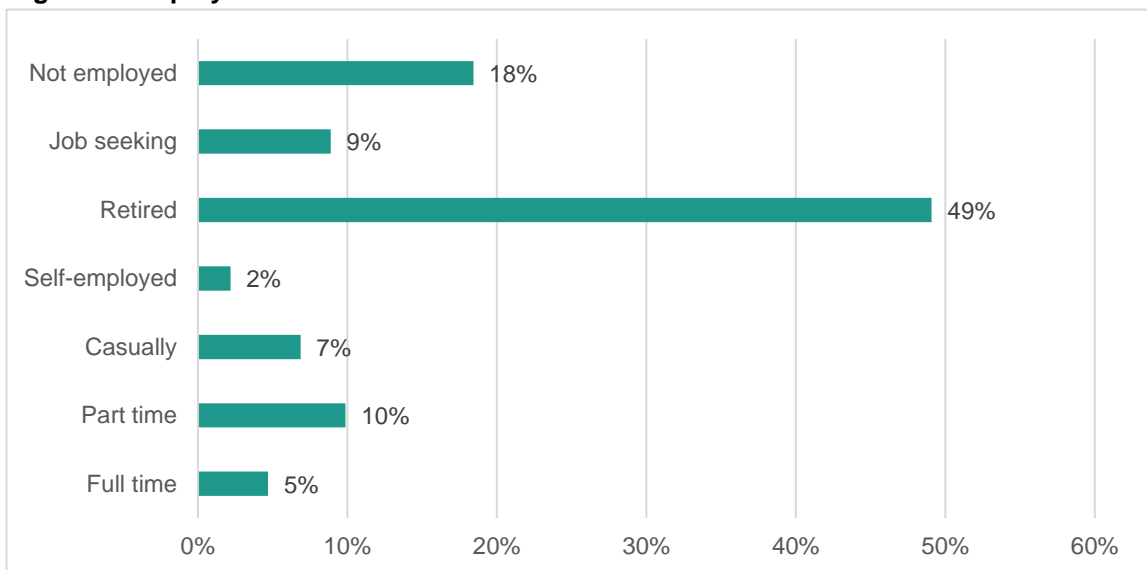


**Figure 5: Distance lived from agency**



More than half (56%) of volunteers lived less than 5km from their agency.

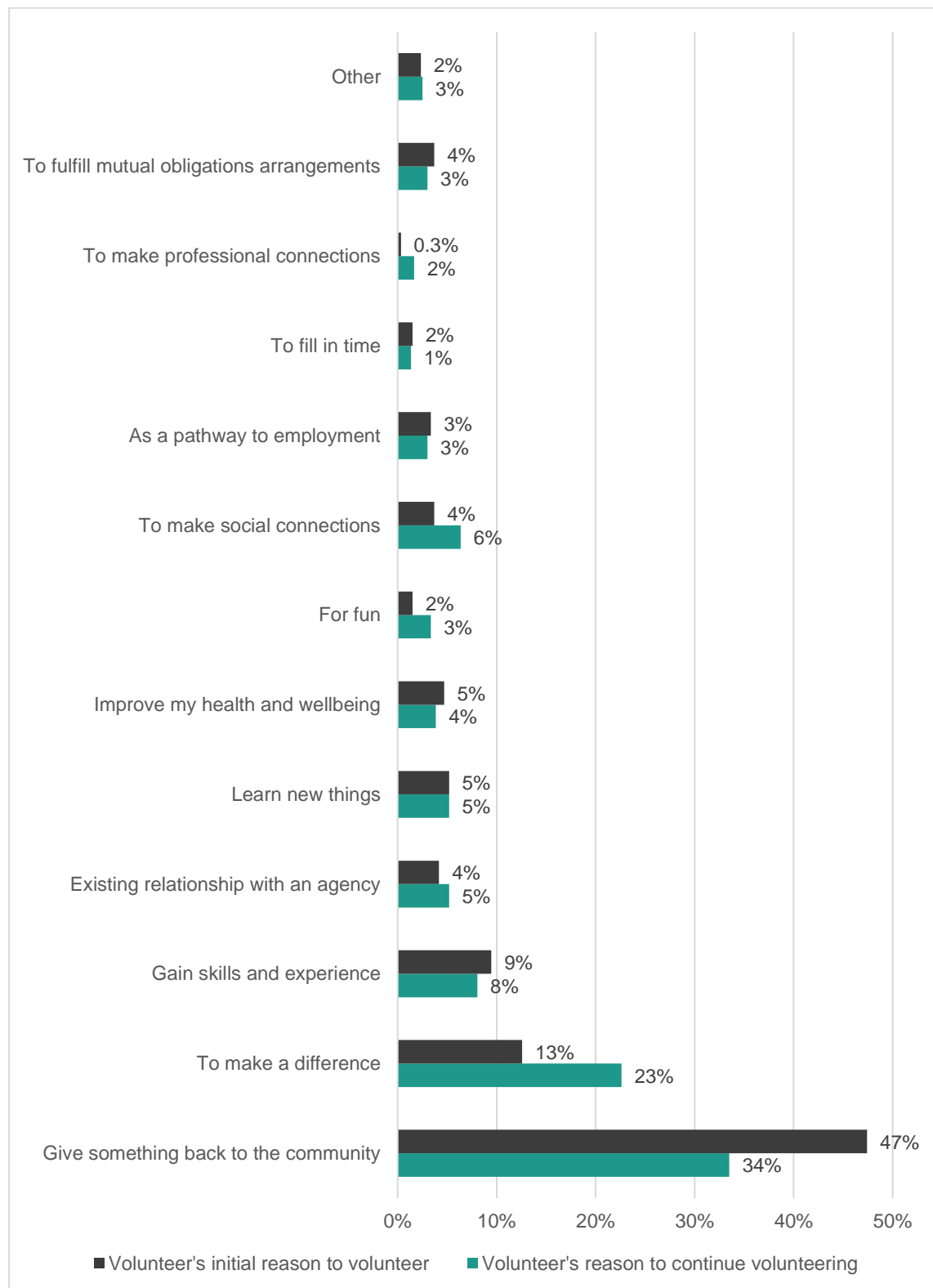
**Figure 6: Employment status**



Nearly half (49%) of volunteers were retired.

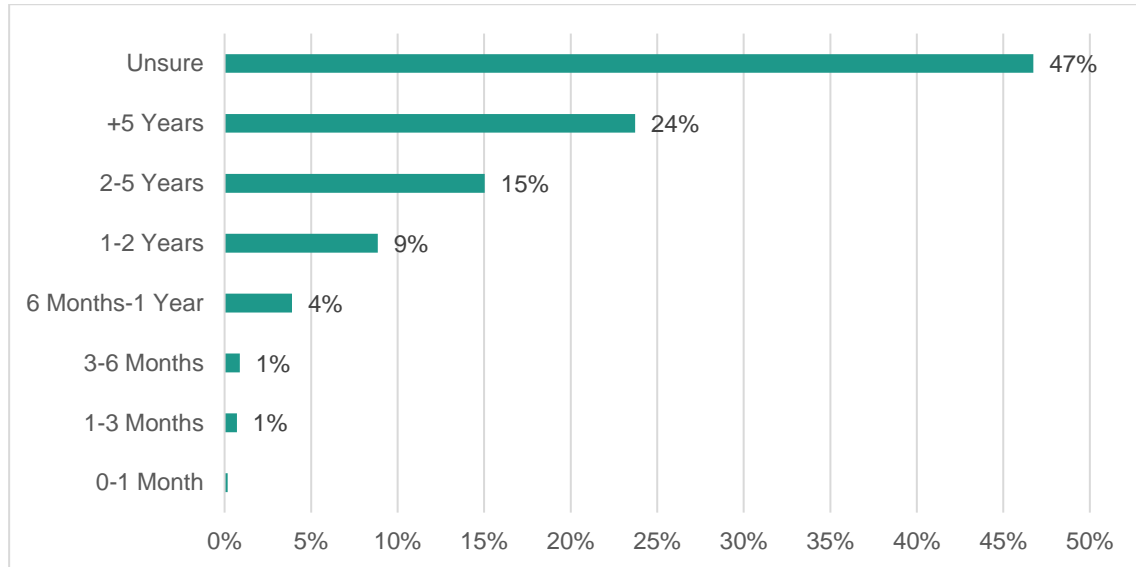
# Volunteer Roles

**Figure 7: Main reason to initially volunteer and to continue to volunteer (n = 597)**



The main reason the volunteers started volunteering was that it allowed them to give something back to the community (47%). This was also the top reason volunteers continue to volunteer (33%).

**Figure 8: Length of time volunteer intended to stay in their role (n = 656)**



The responses of how long volunteers intended to stay in their role were diverse. The most frequently reported answer was “*unsure*”. The second most common response was “*5+ years*”, with nearly a quarter (24%) choosing this answer.

## Why volunteers had chosen their role

Volunteers were asked why they chose their role. Across the responses there were five main reoccurring themes. These are, in order of frequency: Established skillset and upskilling, Alignment with personal interests, values and goals, Contribution to community, Role availability and need, and Social connections.

### Established skillset and upskilling

The most common theme among volunteers’ answers was that they had chosen the role which was most suitable to their current skillset. In this theme, some volunteers also added that they had chosen the specific role as they had wanted to gain skills, awareness and experience in the area.

“As it was a similar field of work that I previously worked in a few years back, and it allows me able to any apply my professional expertise to the role.”

“This role seemed to suit my current skill set and offered opportunities to gain experience as well as new skills.”

“It was an opportunity to develop new skills and build on existing experience and knowledge.”

### Alignment with personal interests, values and goals

The second most common theme reported by volunteers was that the chosen role aligned with their values, interests and/or goals. This theme includes the type of work that interested the volunteers, as well as how the commitment of the position would fit in with their lifestyle.

“I like encouraging people to grow and seeing people develop a passion for helping others and making a difference in other people's lives.”

“I have been in a similar situation where I really appreciated the help that was given to me.”

“It was the most meaningful area for me. I wanted to be with people face to face.”

“Able to perform on my availability.”

### Contribution to community

Another frequently reported theme was the desire to contribute to their local community.

“I wanted to give something back to the community.”

“To give back to the community by helping and making a difference in the lives of people in need.”

“I felt being a Community Support Worker was a practical way I could be of help in the community.”

### Role availability and need

Many volunteers also commented that they had taken up their role as it was what was being offered. In this theme some volunteers also elaborated that there was a need in agencies for the roles they had up taken.

“No real choice. It is the main role for all.”

“I was asked and have never been sorry that I accepted.”

### Social connection

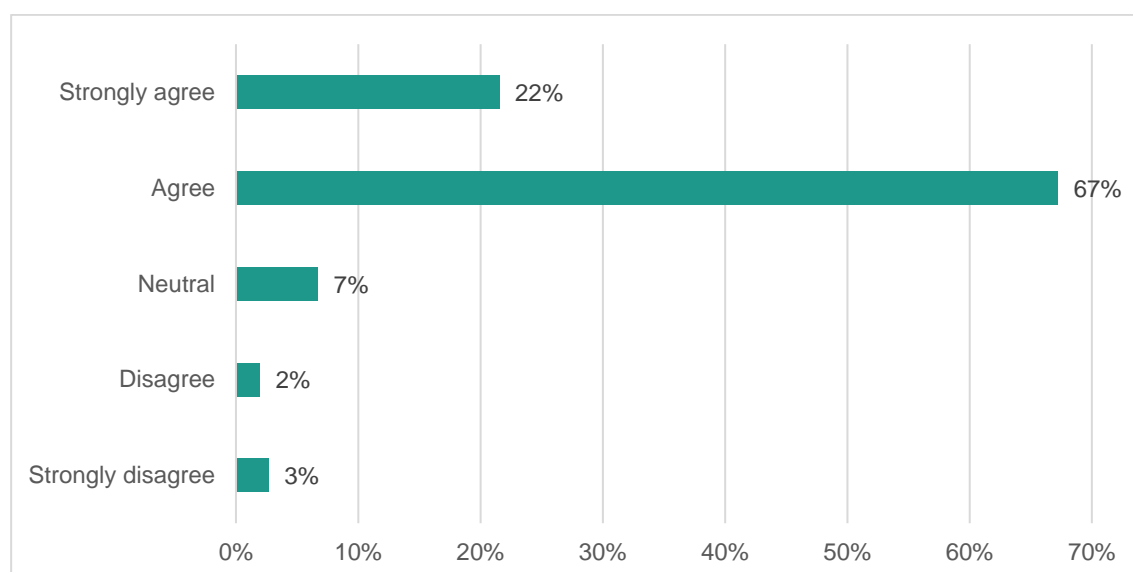
Lastly, another reoccurring theme across volunteer answers was that their chosen role allowed them to make social connections with both staff and wider members of the community.

“Because it gives me a chance to interact with the staff and participants whilst being active.”

“It involved direct interaction with people from the community.”

“To meet people and socialise with them.”

**Figure 9: Views on whether volunteer role met expectations**



The vast majority of volunteers (89%) either agreed or strongly agreed that their role has met their expectations. Only five per cent of volunteers believed that the role did not meet their expectations.

## Impact the role has had

Volunteers were asked what impact their role has had on them. Of the five hundred and sixty-four responses provided, there were five reoccurring themes across the answers. They are, in order of frequency: Personal satisfaction and self-worth, Awareness and understanding, Skills and confidence, Social connections and Appreciation.

### Personal satisfaction and self-worth

The most frequently reoccurring theme across the responses provided by volunteers was the increased feelings of satisfaction and self-worth through their role. Many volunteers attributed this impact to their ability to contribute to their community and to the lives of fellow community members.

“The volunteering has given me back my sense of worth and "can do" feeling. Having been so unwell I have had a lot of "you can't do that", so it's nice to be able to do and be of use somewhere.”

“It has helped me to enjoy my senior years in a worthwhile and constructive way. It gives me satisfaction when I know that I have made a difference to a client's day.”

“I feel that it contributes to my wellbeing. I like to think that I have made some contribution to a client's wellbeing even if it is only in the moment.”

“It has given me a sense of satisfaction that I am able to help other people in need of support socially.”

### Awareness and understanding

The second most reoccurring theme in volunteer responses was that their role had given them an increased awareness and understanding of the challenges and adversities community members face. Volunteers also commented on having developed a greater awareness and understanding of the sector, other community services and the limited government resources.

“It has opened my eyes on so many issues. A main issue that has shocked me is how many people in the area need assistance, and not just a once off, but as an ongoing situation. How many people are homeless and live in what's considered crisis situation.”

“It's increased my awareness of how poverty affects people. That government social security pensions are often too low to live on. Some people live in generational poverty.”

“Opened my eyes to people living in hardship and need. Made me less judgemental hopefully than previously.”

### Social connections

Another common theme was the positive social connections volunteers had made through their role.

“I have made new friends and enjoy contact with our customers.”

“Other volunteers are like-minded. Enjoy being around like-minded people.”

“I enjoy the opportunity to meet co-volunteers as well as interacting with the community and visitors.”

“I need a little socialisation. Working here gives me that. It energises me to be active in other parts of my life.”

### Skills and confidence

Through their role, many volunteers also commented that they had developed new skills and had increased confidence.

“(I) have gained valuable knowledge, skills and experience in working with vulnerable clients.”

“Developed confidence in the role and working with clients.”

“I have learned new skills that will allow me to apply for a broader range of jobs.”

### Appreciation

Lastly, many volunteers expressed in their answers that through their role they had gained a sense of appreciation of their own privilege.

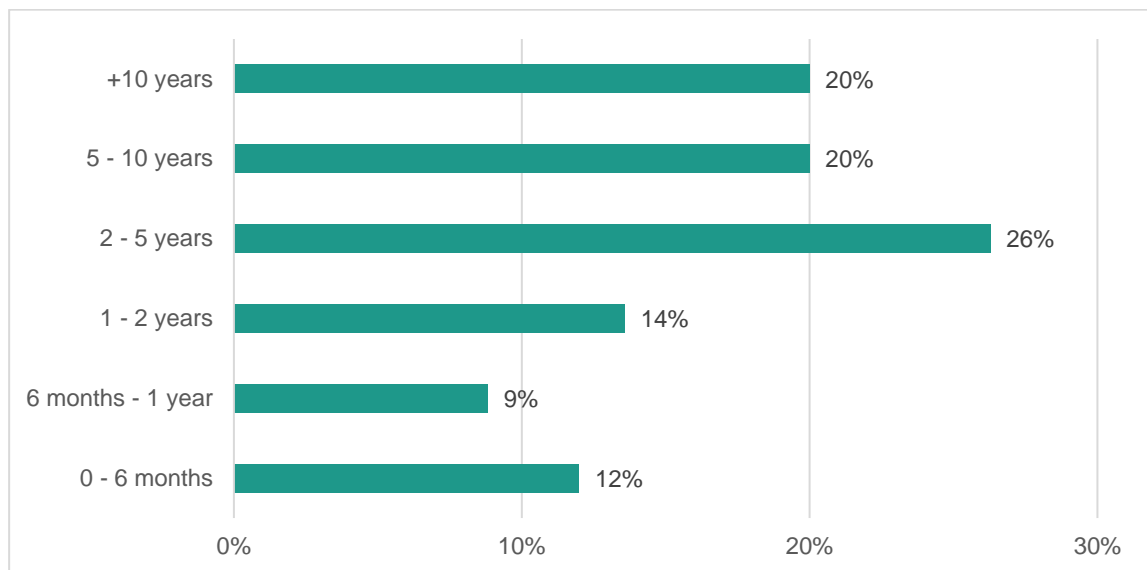
“Made me appreciate how lucky I am and the challenges confronting some people.”

“It has made me appreciate my life a lot more. I feel so lucky and certainly feel I have nothing to complain about in my own life.”

“Sometimes it is easy to see how readily I could end up in the shoes of the client and I've learned to appreciate the life I've been privileged to have - this is made manifestly clear after each volunteering session.”

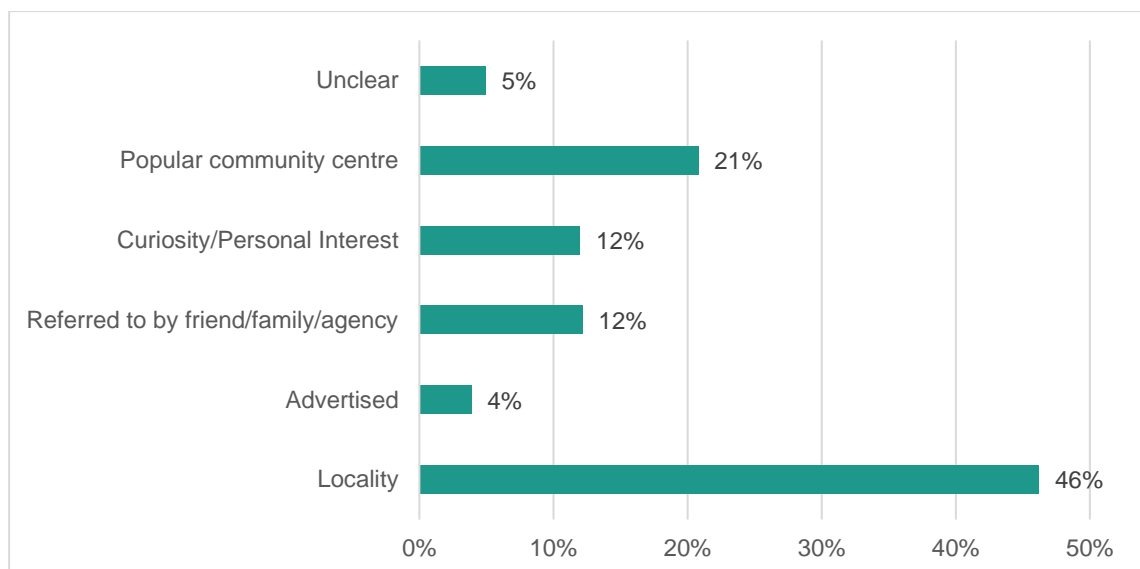
# Experience within the Agency

**Figure 10: Duration of volunteering at agency (n = 567)**



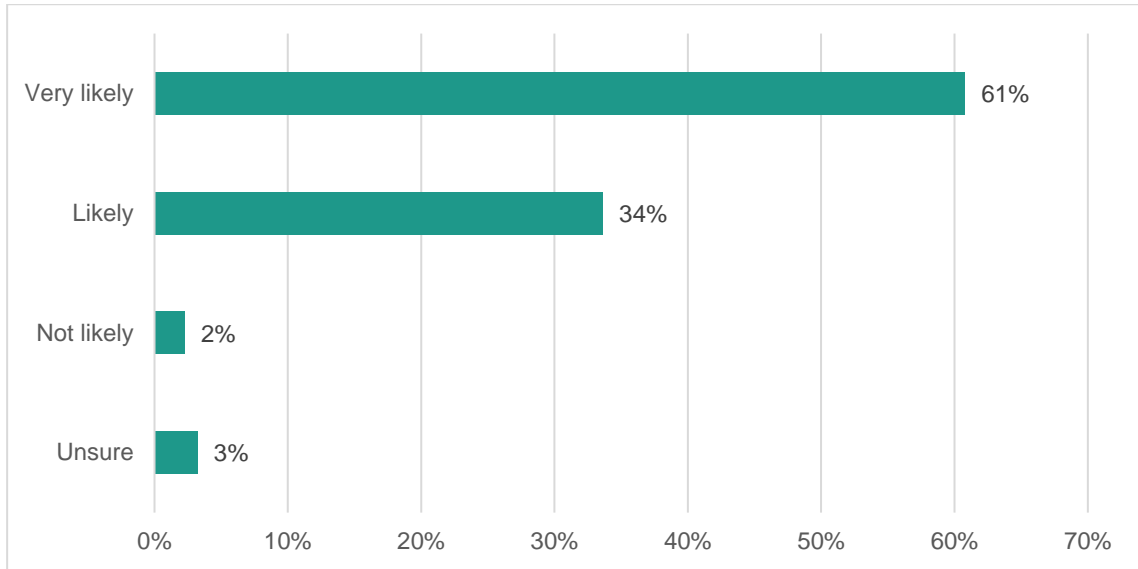
The length of time respondents have been volunteering at their agency varies vastly from less than six months to more than ten years. The most common response (26%) from was between two and five years. A further 20 per cent answered that they had been volunteering for more than ten years.

**Figure 11: Volunteer reason for choosing agency (n = 567)**



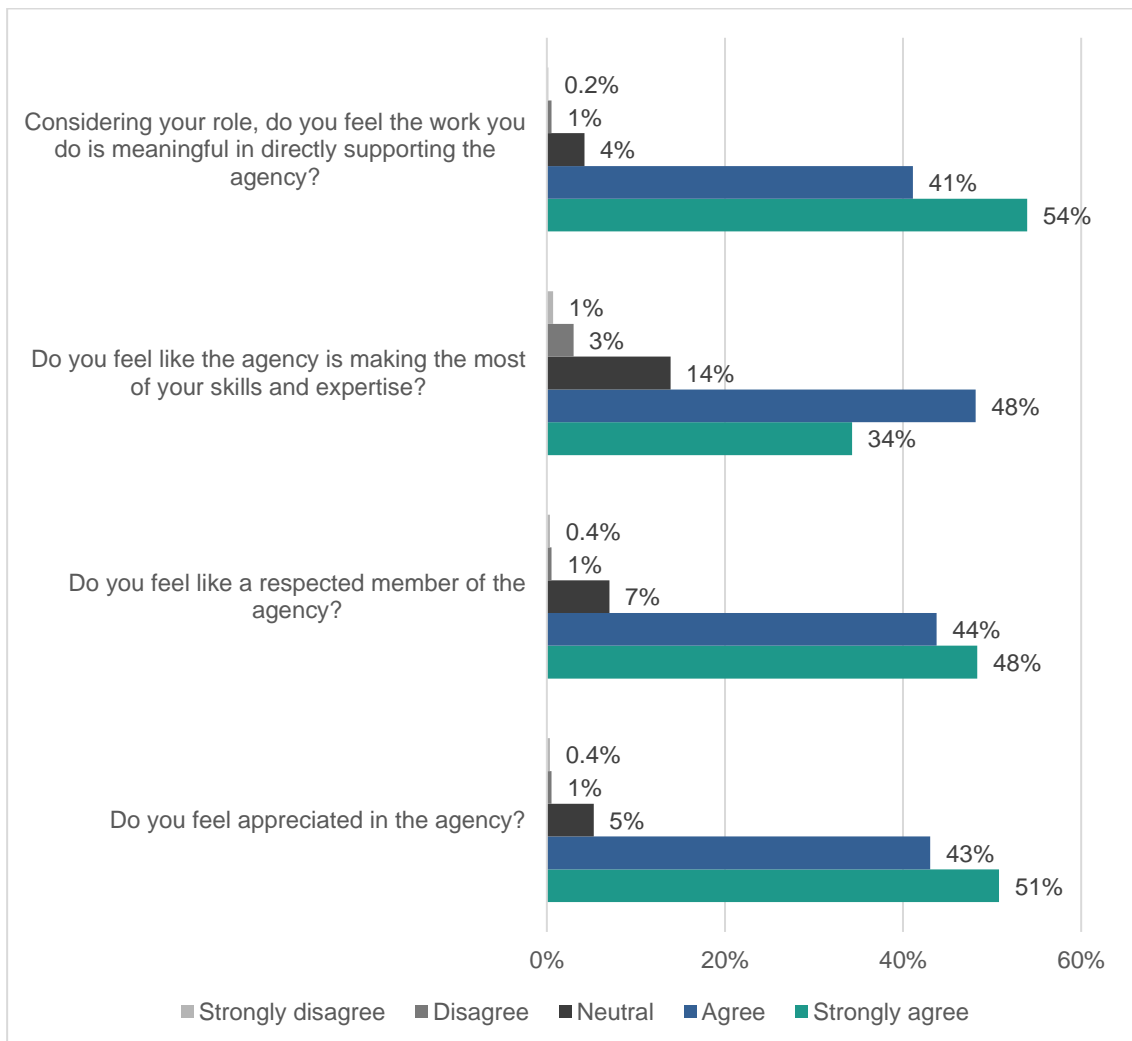
Nearly half (46%) of volunteers responded that they had chosen their respective agency due to the agency's locality. A further 20 per cent of volunteers chose their agency due to the agency's popular reputation.

**Figure 12: Likelihood of recommending volunteering at agency (n = 523)**




Overall, nearly all volunteers (95%) were likely or very likely to recommend volunteering at agency to others.


**Figure 13: Volunteer views about participation in agency (n = 596)**






Overall, volunteers reported positive beliefs of their involvement in agencies. Notably, nearly all volunteers (95%) believed that their work was meaningful in directly supporting the agency. To a lesser degree, volunteers believed agencies were making the most of their skills and expertise.

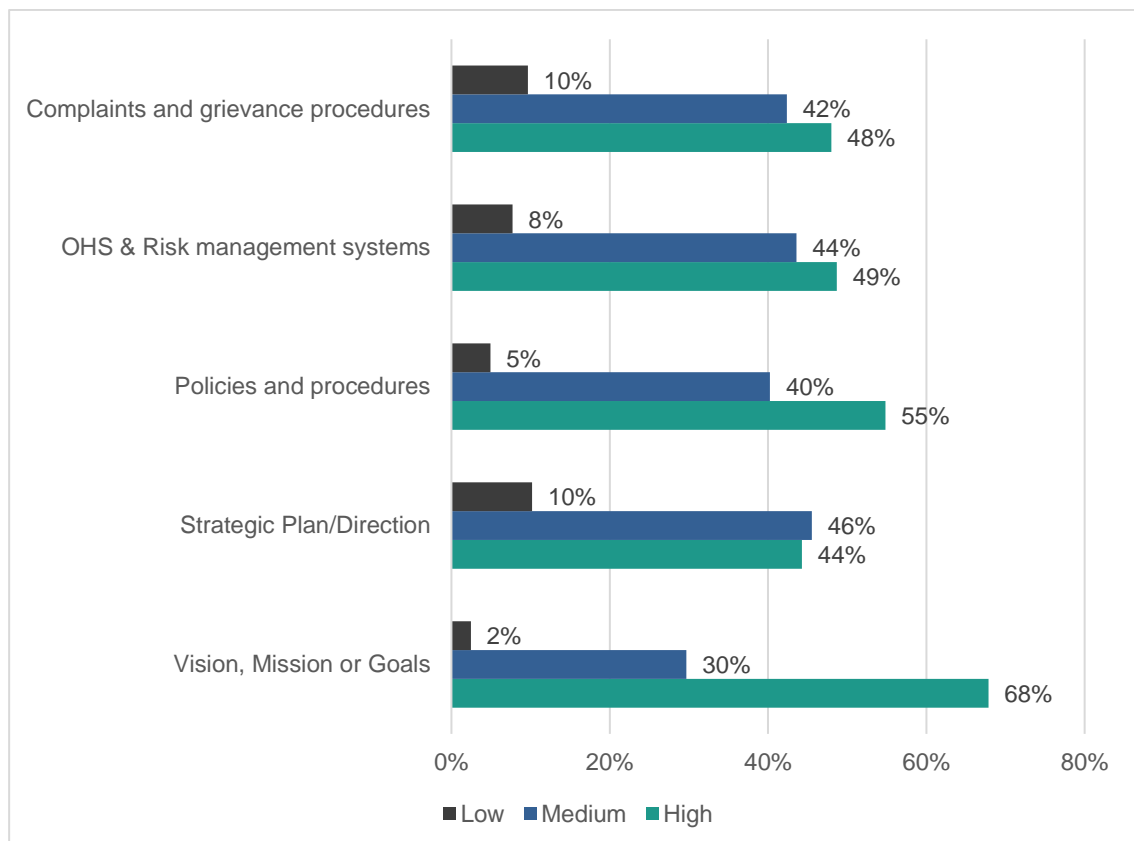
- 

2.2 Volunteer involvement is planned and designed to contribute directly to the organisation's purpose, goals and objectives.
- 

7.2 Volunteers are informed about how their contributions benefit the organisation, service users and the community
- 

7.3 The organisation regularly acknowledges contributions made by volunteers and the positive impact on the organisation, service users and the community

**Figure 14: Volunteer understanding of agency's approach (n = 569)**



The area which volunteers reported having the strongest understanding of was their agency's vision, mission or goals. Over two-thirds (68%) of volunteers reported having a high understanding of this agency area.

Volunteers responded to a lesser degree having an understanding of their agency's strategic plan and direction.



1.2 Policies and procedures applying to volunteers are communicated, understood, and implemented by all relevant staff across the organisation.



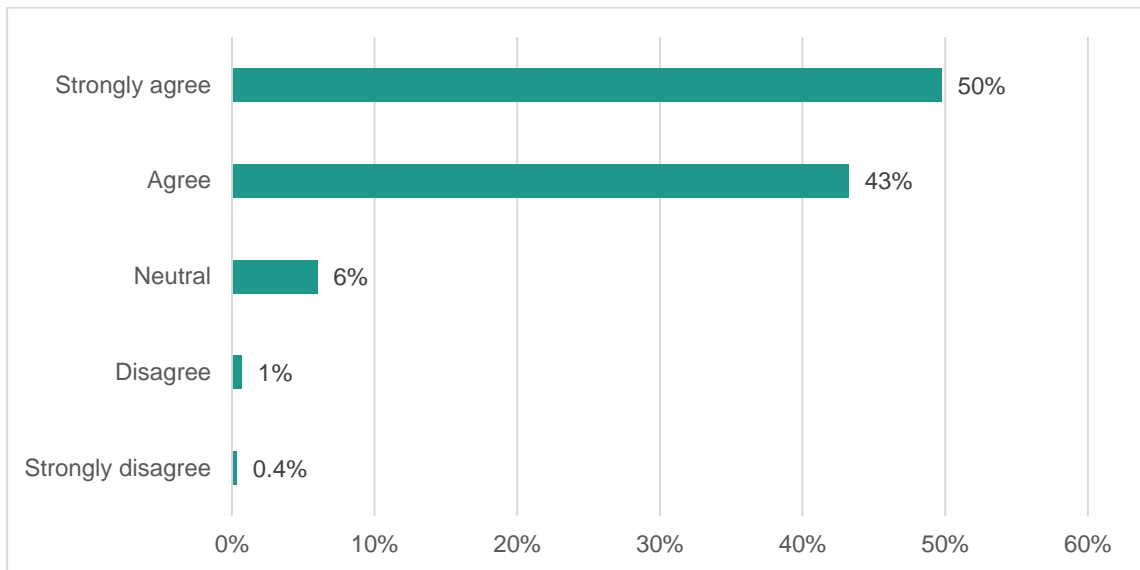
2.1 The organisation publicly declares its intent, purpose and commitment to involving volunteers



6.3 Volunteers have access to complaints and grievance procedures.

# Supports within the Agency

**Figure 15: Volunteer perception of being supported (n = 596)**

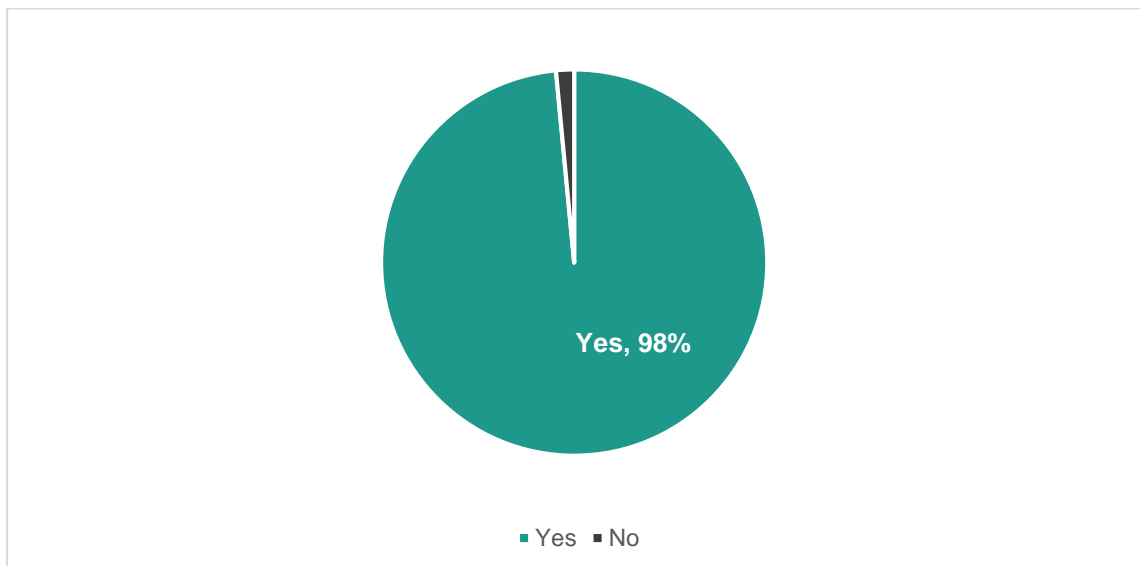


Nearly all volunteers (93%) agreed or strongly agreed that they felt supported in their agency.



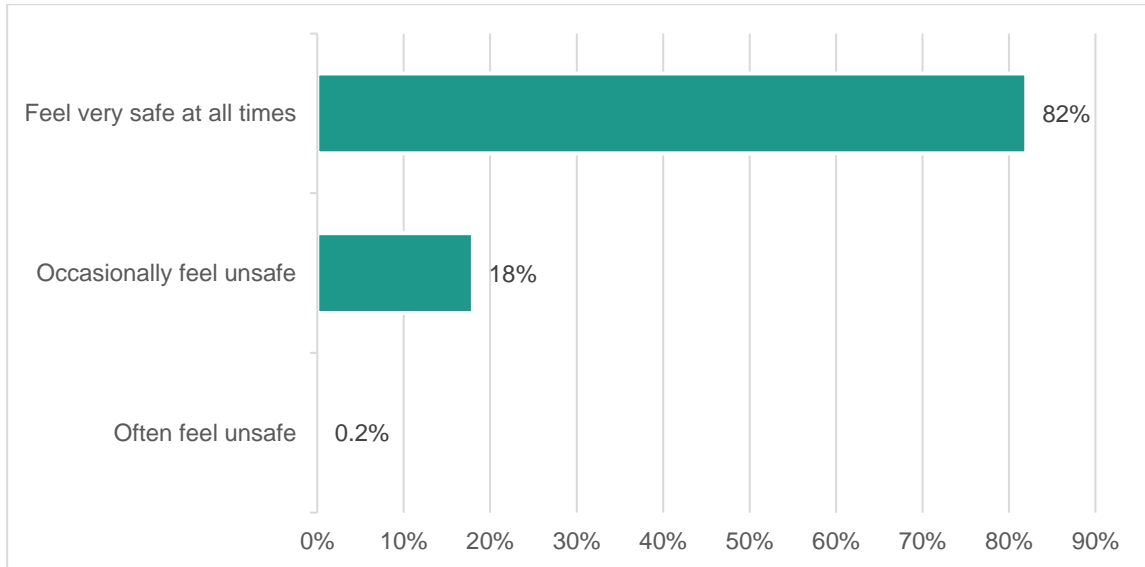
5.2 Volunteers knowledge and skills are reviewed to identify support and development needs.

**Figure 16: Volunteer access to support person (n = 569)**



Nearly all (98%) of volunteers responded that they know who they can speak to if they have any issues relating to their role.

**Figure 17: Volunteer feelings of safety (n = 569)**

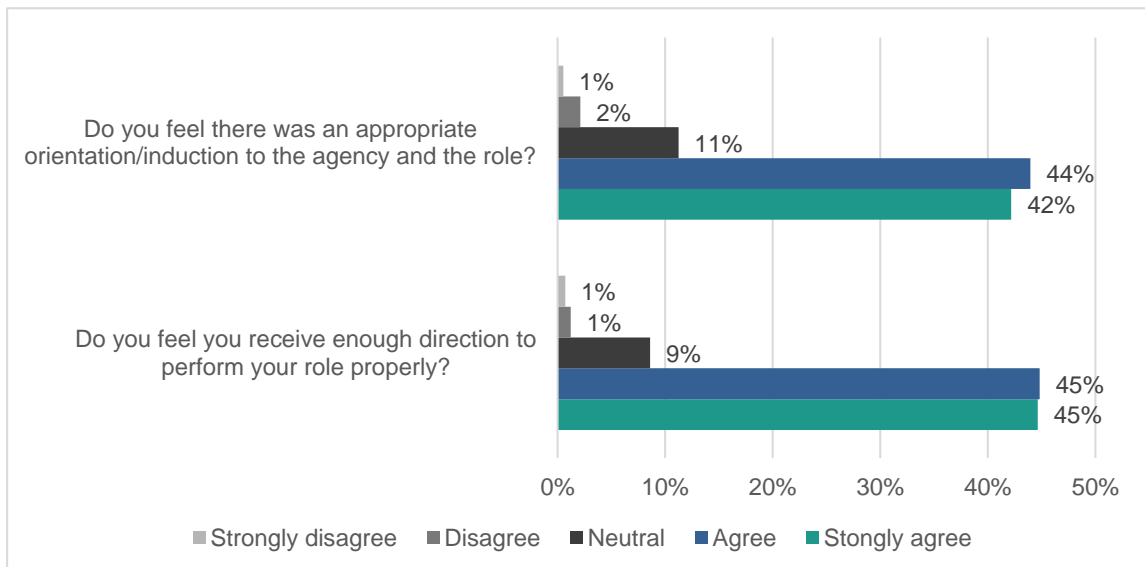


The clear majority (82%) of volunteers responded that they feel very safe at all times when performing their role. Only one volunteer (0.2%) answered that they often feel unsafe.



6.2 Processes are in place to protect the health and safety of volunteers in their capacity as volunteers.

**Figure 18: Volunteer access to induction and guidance (n = 596)**



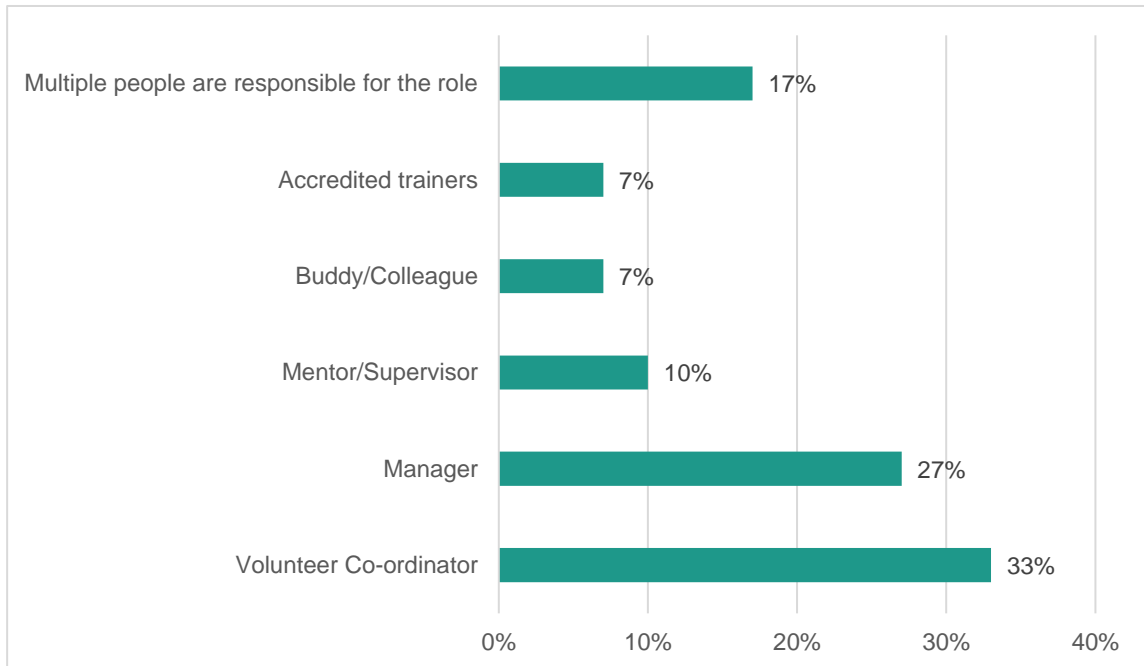
Overall, volunteers feel they were given appropriate and sufficient direction and guidance in their role. Nearly all (90%) of respondents answered that they agree or strongly agree that there was appropriate orientation of induction to the agency and the role.

A further eighty-six per cent responded that they agree or strongly agree that they received enough direction to perform their role properly.



6.2 Processes are in place to protect the health and safety of volunteers in their capacity as volunteers.

**Figure 19: Person responsible for induction and orientation of new volunteers (n = 30)**

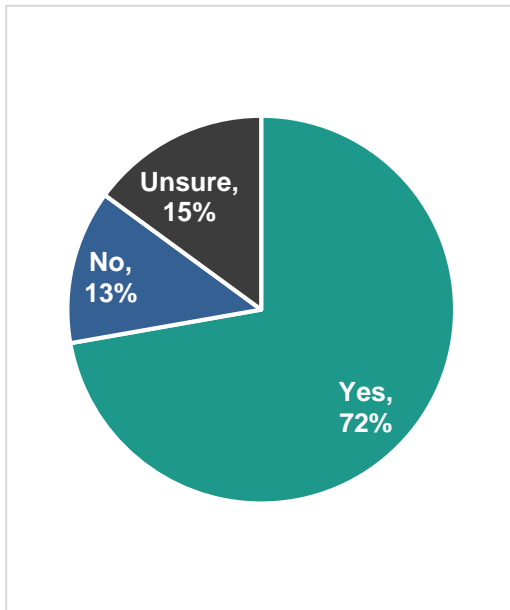


The person/s responsible for inducting and orienting new volunteers varied across agencies. This role includes informing volunteers of the agency's policies and procedures and ensuring they understand what is expected of them in their new role. The most common response across agencies was the Volunteer Coordinator (33%), followed by the Manager (27%). No agency reported having no formal induction/orientation procedure.

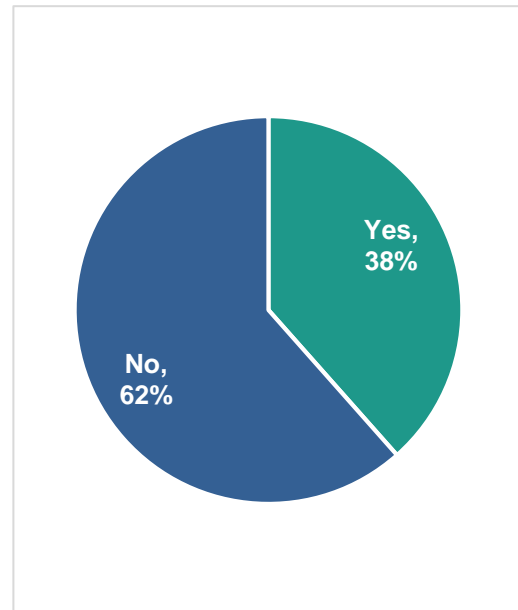


1.2 Policies and procedures applying to volunteers are communicated, understood, and implemented by all relevant staff across the organisation.

**Figure 20: Volunteer awareness of roles and opportunities (n = 596)**



**Figure 21: Volunteer uptake of roles and opportunities (n = 481)**



The majority (72%) of volunteers were aware of further roles and opportunities they could take up in their agency. Over a third (39%) of volunteers had taken up these opportunities.

### What can CISVic do better?

Agencies were asked if there were unlimited resources, what type of volunteer support would they want? Twenty-five agencies chose to respond to the question with some offering multiple answers.

The most common response among the agencies related to more paid positions to support volunteers' work. Most frequently this was named as the wish for a Volunteer Coordinator, however some agencies also listed other specialist roles, such as social workers or a funding officer.

"Minimum 3 days per week Volunteer Co-ordinator to do: recruitment, induction, communications, records management, volunteer appreciation, volunteer training."

"A fully paid full time manager / coordinator."

Another common response among agencies was the desire for more training. Some agencies further elaborated on their answer, commenting that training needs to be more localised for their volunteers.

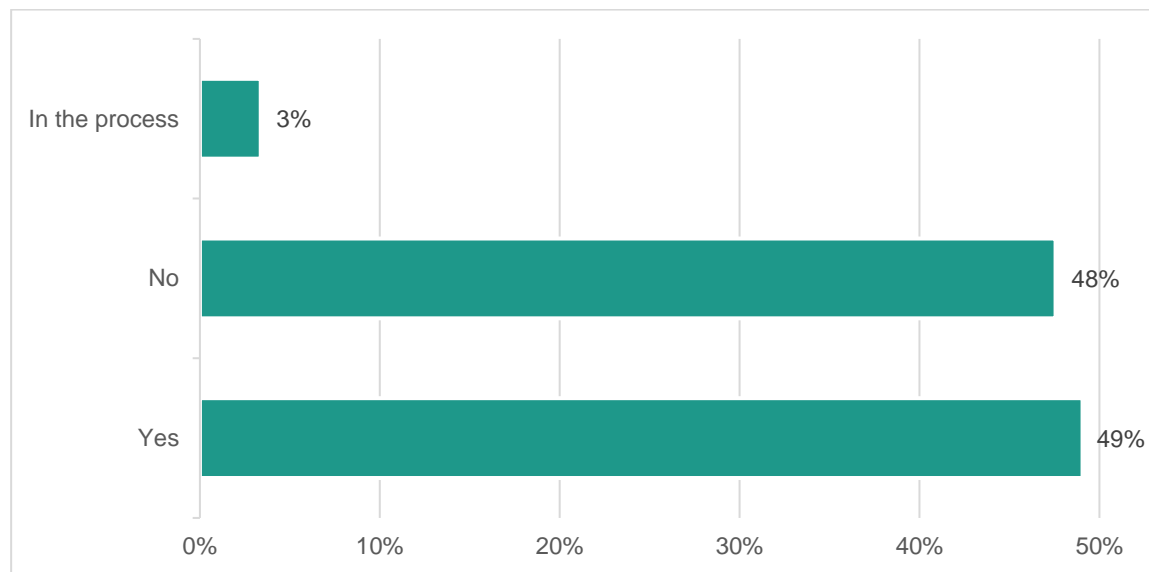
"More funding to provide in-house training."

Five agencies also responded that they were either unsure, satisfied with the resources they received, or the question was not applicable to their agency.

# Volunteer Training

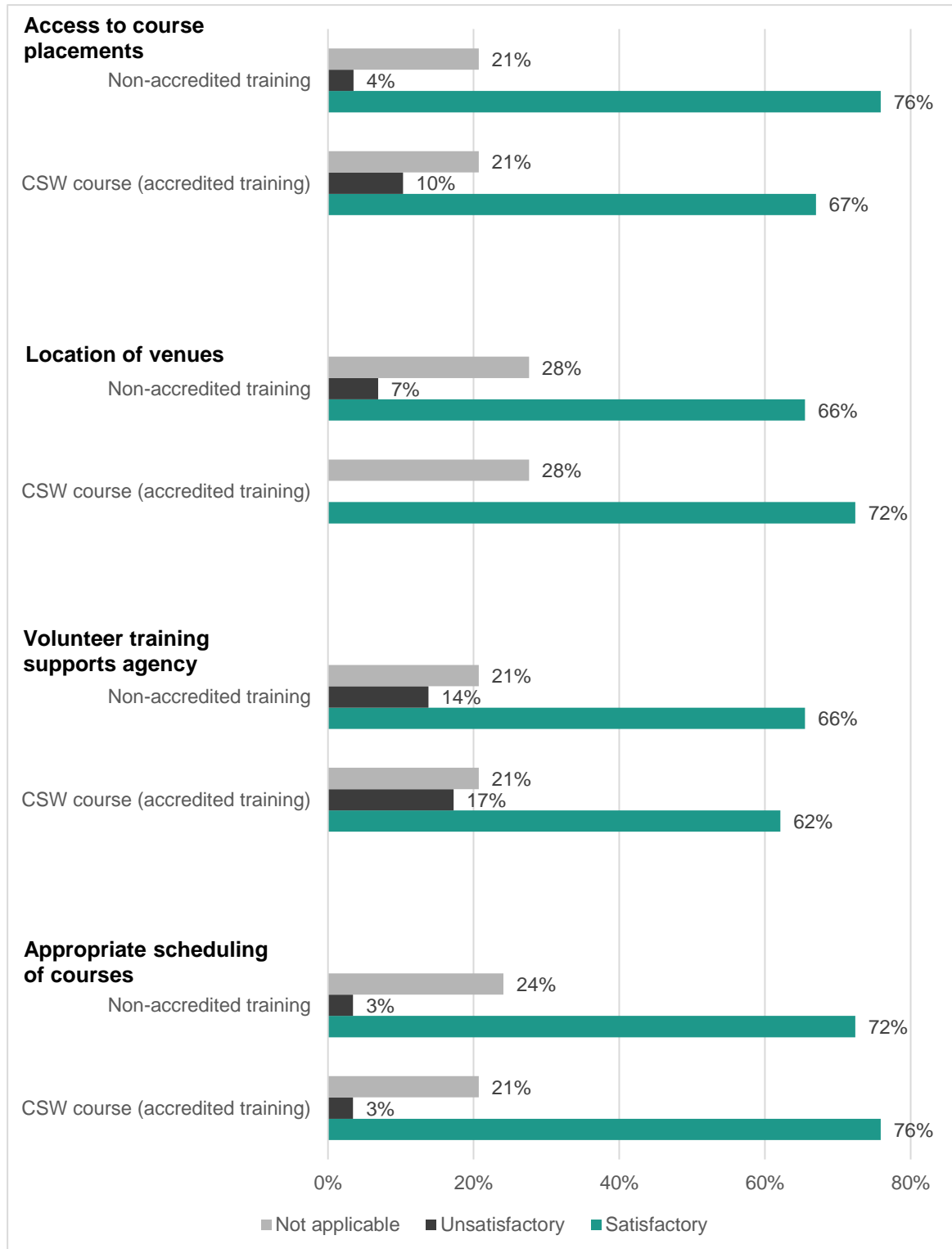
All volunteers who are engaged in the delivery of face-to-face support with community members are required to complete the Community Support Workers Course (with exception to volunteers of our associate member agencies). This nationally accredited training helps skill volunteers in assessing client needs and delivering appropriate services. Along with the accredited course, volunteers are offered a suite of training that continues to enhance their capacity to provide appropriate services to the community.

**Figure 22: Volunteer completion of the CISVic Community Support Workers Course (n = 532)**



Volunteers responded relatively evenly in relation to whether they had (49%) or had not (48%) completed the CISVic Community Support Workers Course. A small portion of volunteers (3%) also reported that they were still in the process of completing the course.

**Figure 23: Agency satisfaction with CISVic training (n = 29)**



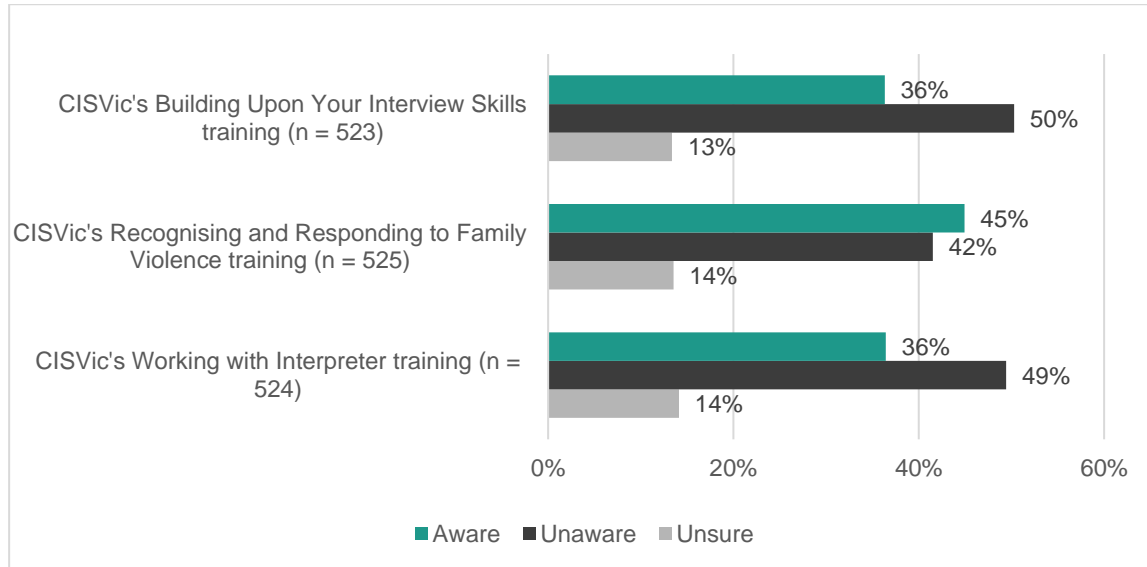
Overall, agencies reported they were satisfied with the training CISVic offered

Though overall positive, the aspect of training delivery where agencies reported the lowest level of satisfaction was the location of venues. Some agencies added further comments indicating that more diverse locations for training sessions are needed.

Other agencies also added that *“(It’s) difficult to manage availability of volunteers and availability of courses”* and *“Many volunteers have been with us for a considerable time and have a wealth of experience so do not always see the need for more training”*.

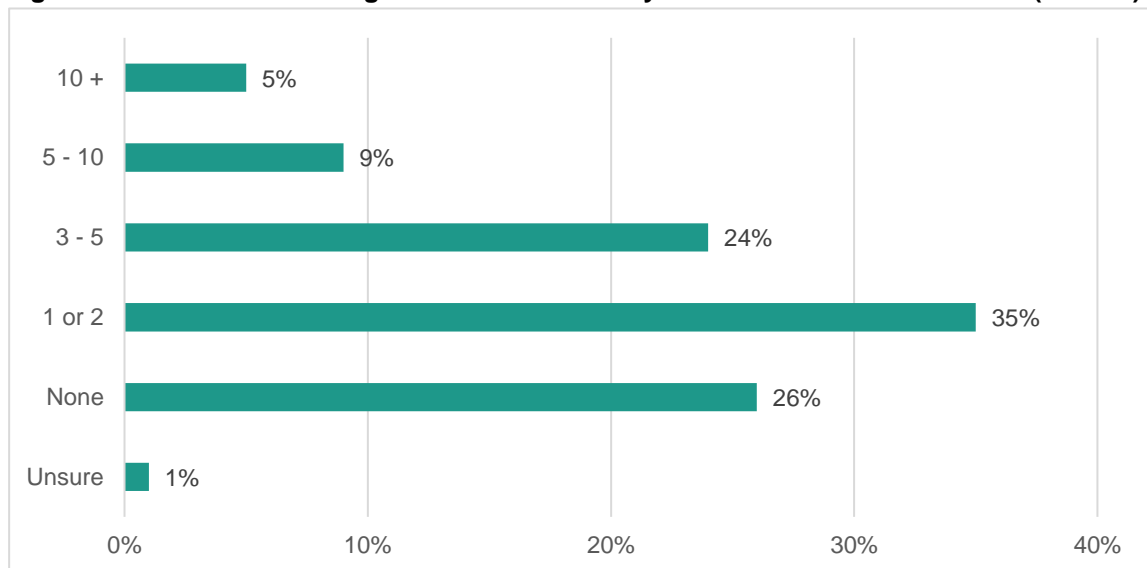


**Figure 24: Volunteer awareness of CISVic training**



Overall, most volunteers were unaware or unsure of the non-accredited training offered by CISVic. The answer which yielded the lowest responses of volunteer awareness (37%) was the CISVic Working with Interpreter training.

**Figure 25: Number of training sessions attended by volunteers in last 12 months (n = 532)**



Over half (59%) of volunteers responded that they had attended between one and five training sessions over the last year. The most commonly reported answer (35%) was '1 or 2' training sessions. Just over a quarter (26%) of volunteers reported that they had not attended any training.

### Volunteer training needs

Five hundred and thirty volunteers provided feedback about what training would better support their role. Types of answers varied across the responses, with four main themes reoccurring. In order of frequency, they were: Training modalities, Client needs, Administration and governance, and Working with clients.

Further, nearly two-thirds (62%) of volunteers responded that they were unsure, happy with the training they currently received or believed additional training was not applicable to their role.

### Training modalities

Training modalities was the most frequently reported answer, with volunteers commenting on the type of method they would like training to be delivered.

The most common response in this category was the need for increased sector networking. Volunteers expressed that they would like opportunities to engage with other organisations and support services they can refer clients to. Several volunteers also listed a preference for volunteer networking and team case discussions.

“Opportunities to spend some time in other agencies of the network instead of feeling disconnected from the network, as it is always the same person representing our organisation at CISVic meetings”

“More localised information applicable to our community”

The second most common answer in the training modalities theme was the need for refresher courses.

“It is so long since I did my training ... that I am not up to date with the current CISVic course.”

“To keep having continued updates of general subject applicable to our work”

Many volunteers also expressed the need for more ‘hands-on’ courses and increased in-house training about the specific services and procedures within their agency.

“Trainees need to have practical experience at the same time they undergo the course”

“Within the agency - training on various procedures for different services. Currently we learn on the job and sometimes it can be quite unnerving going into an interview and being asked about certain services we don't know the procedures for”

### Client needs

The second most popular theme of training needs was client needs. The most frequently reported answer was mental health training, followed by homelessness/housing, family violence and, drug and alcohol. Other topic areas listed include financial assistance and legal information.

“Mental health awareness training would be beneficial in carrying out the role of community support worker”

### Administration and governance

A further reoccurring was administration and governance training needs. In this category, IT training was frequently reported. This includes technical instructions with computers, cash registers and computer programs.

“To become more relaxed with use of computer.”

Many volunteers also reported the need for governance, service coordination and management training.

“Governance issues in the NFP sector”


“More database management training and practice”

### Working with clients

Volunteers also expressed that they would like training in working with clients. The most frequent response was surrounding communication techniques and counselling skills.

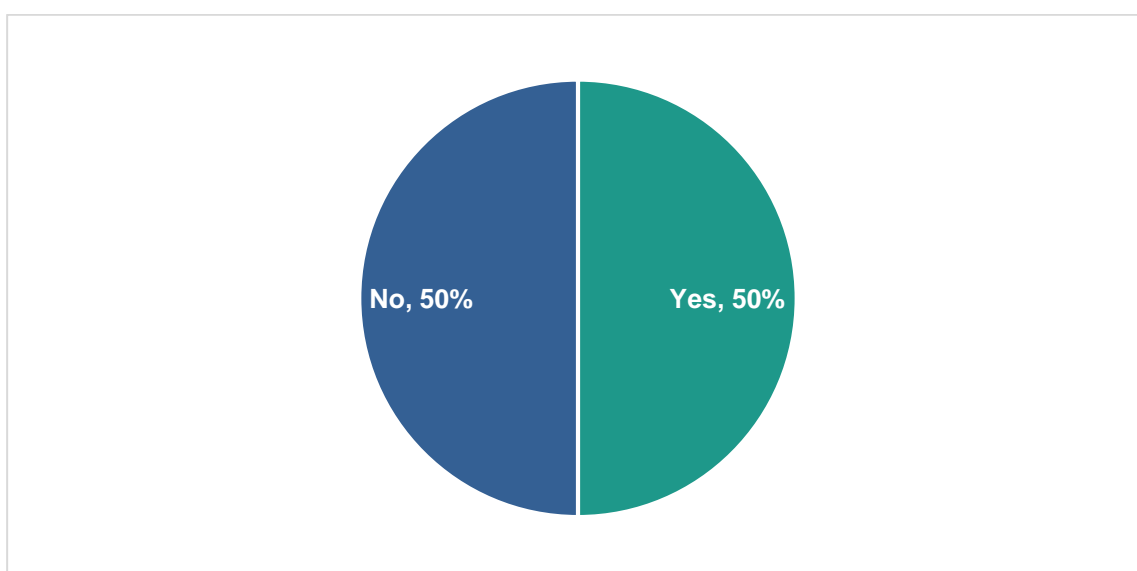
“More counselling courses”

A further reoccurring response among volunteers was for training in dealing with conflict.



5.3. Volunteers knowledge and skill needs relevant to their roles are identified, and training and development opportunities are provided to meet these needs.

**Figure 26: Existing process to identify skill needs for volunteers (n = 30)**



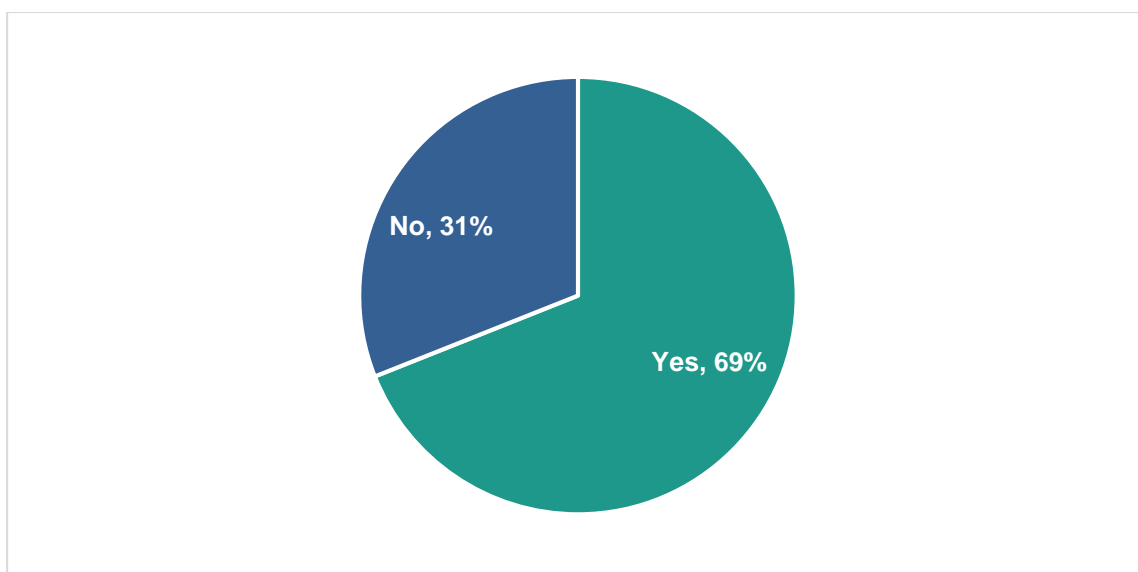
Only 50 per cent of agencies reported having a process to identify skill needs for volunteers. Some agencies choose to elaborate on how often they underwent the process. The most common responses were “*annually*” and “*on a needs basis*”.

## Volunteer Recognition

Across agencies, the average number of hours worked per individual volunteer was 21 hours per month. When asked, on average, how many hours per month does each of their volunteers contribute, agencies gave varying responses ranging from two to 112 hours per month.

Across the agencies, volunteers collectively contributed 16,523 hours monthly. On average, 501 hours are volunteered per agency per month.

**Figure 27: Agency practice of recording volunteer hours (n = 29)**



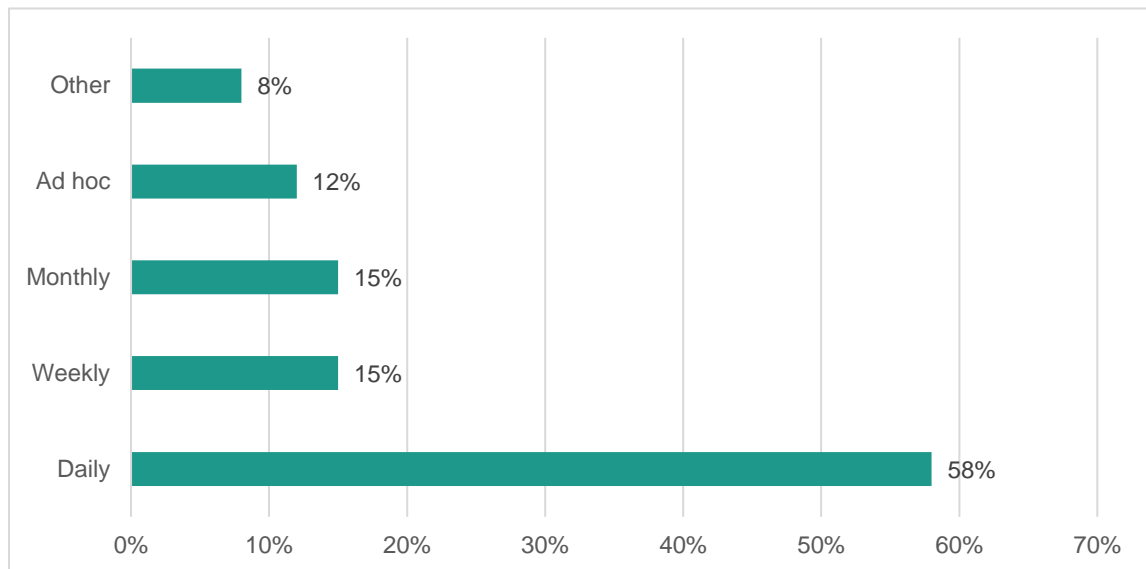
The majority of agencies (69%) reported that they record volunteer hours

Some agencies further elaborated on who recorded the hours, with the most frequent answer being that it was the responsibility of the volunteer to record their hours through a log/sign-in book or timesheets.



1.4 Volunteer involvement records are maintained.

**Figure 28: Frequency of recording volunteer hours (n = 26)**



Over half (58%) of agencies reported they recorded volunteer hours daily. One agency also noted that their total volunteer hours were recorded in the Annual Report.

Agencies were also asked how they used the information gathered about volunteer hours. The most popular (39%) answer given was for reports to financial stakeholders and when applying for funding.

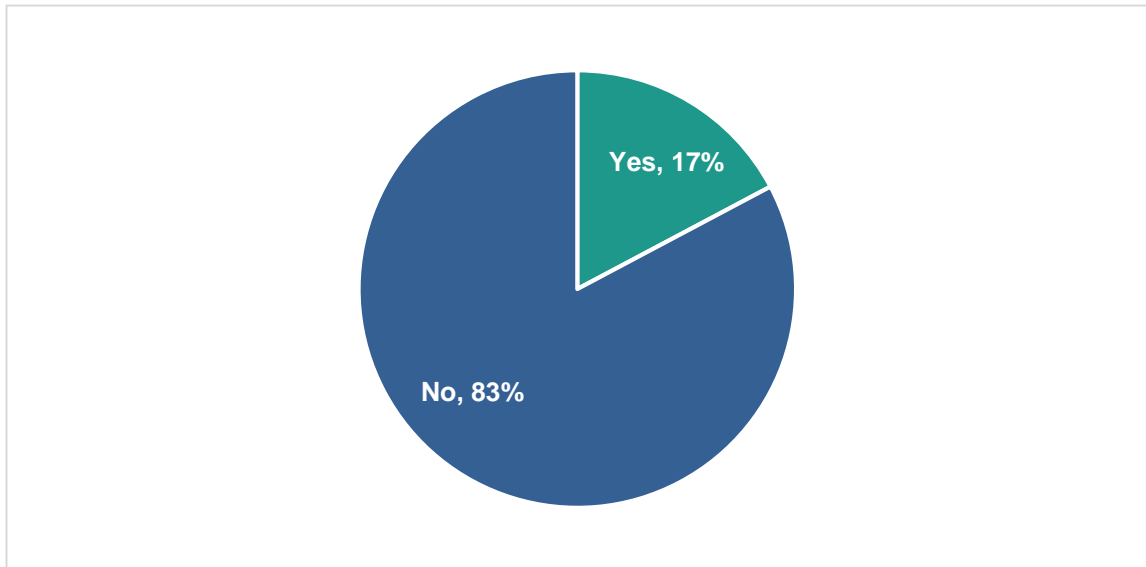
The second most common response (31%) among agencies was for other reporting purposes, such as, reports to the Board of Management or Committee of Management, and in the newsletters and Annual Reports.

Some agencies (14%) also listed that they use the information for in house recording purposes, such as tracking hours over the years and monitoring whether volunteers are active or not. Two respective agencies also listed they used the information “almost never” and “to ensure volunteers are keeping up with community info and involvement”.



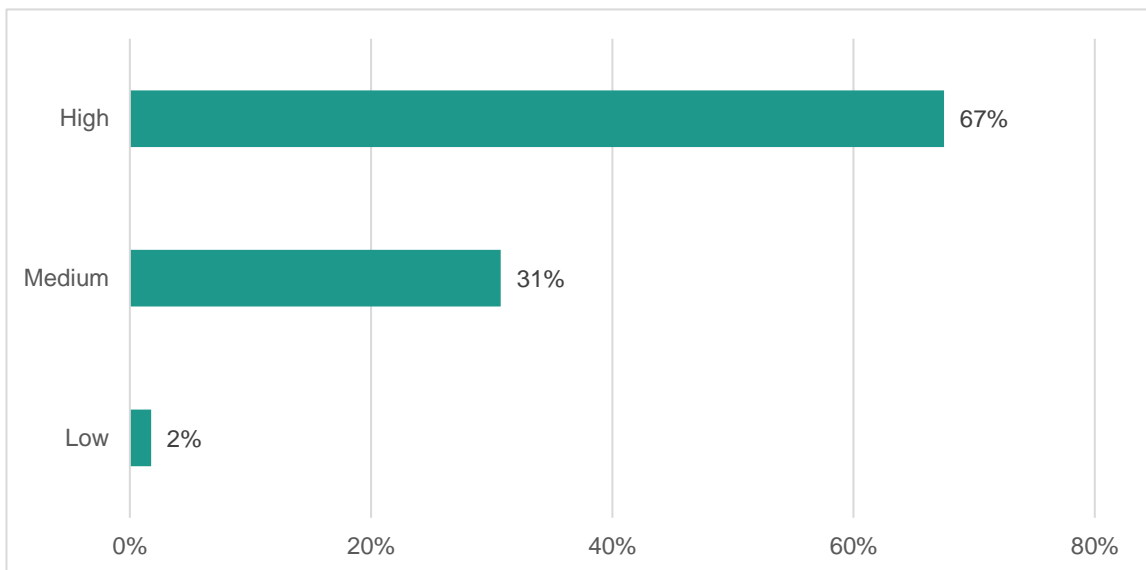
7.1 The governing body and employees understand how volunteers benefit the organisation, service users and the community.

**Figure 29: Agency use of Return on Investment (n = 29)**




Return on Investment (ROI) measures the dollar value benefit provided by volunteers against the cost of programs provided, taking into account the cost otherwise of the volunteers' labour. Only 17 per cent of our agencies reported that they utilise ROI measures.

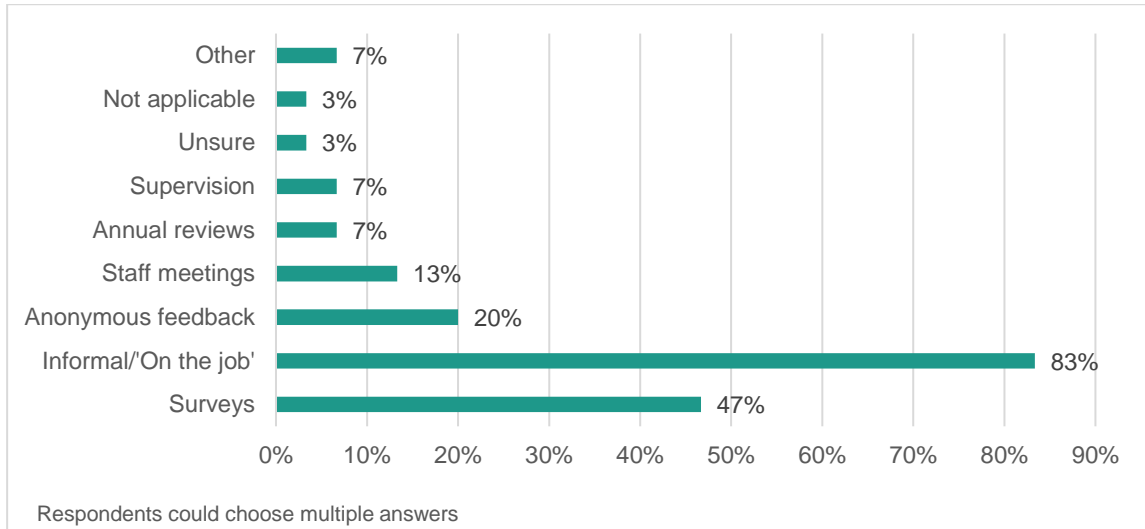
**Figure 30: Volunteer understanding of their contribution**



Sixty-seven per cent of volunteers indicated their understanding of the benefit their volunteer contribution has on the agency as high.


 7.2 Volunteers are informed about how their contributions benefit the organisation, service users and the community

**Figure 31: Agency processes for volunteer feedback (n = 30)**



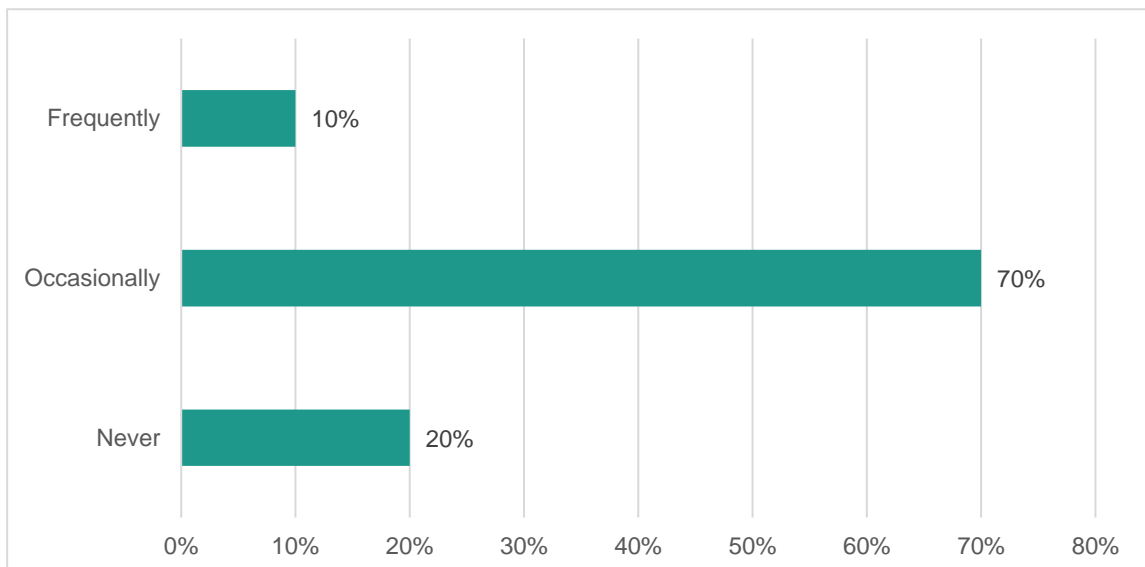
The vast majority of agencies (83%) reported using informal or 'on the job' processes to gain feedback. Less than a quarter (20%) of agencies utilised anonymous feedback methods.

Two agencies also reported that they respectively use performance appraisals and agency communications to gain feedback.



8.4 Opportunities are available for volunteers to provide feedback on the organisation's volunteer involvement and relevant areas of the organisation's work.

**Figure 32: Frequency of volunteering leading to paid employment**



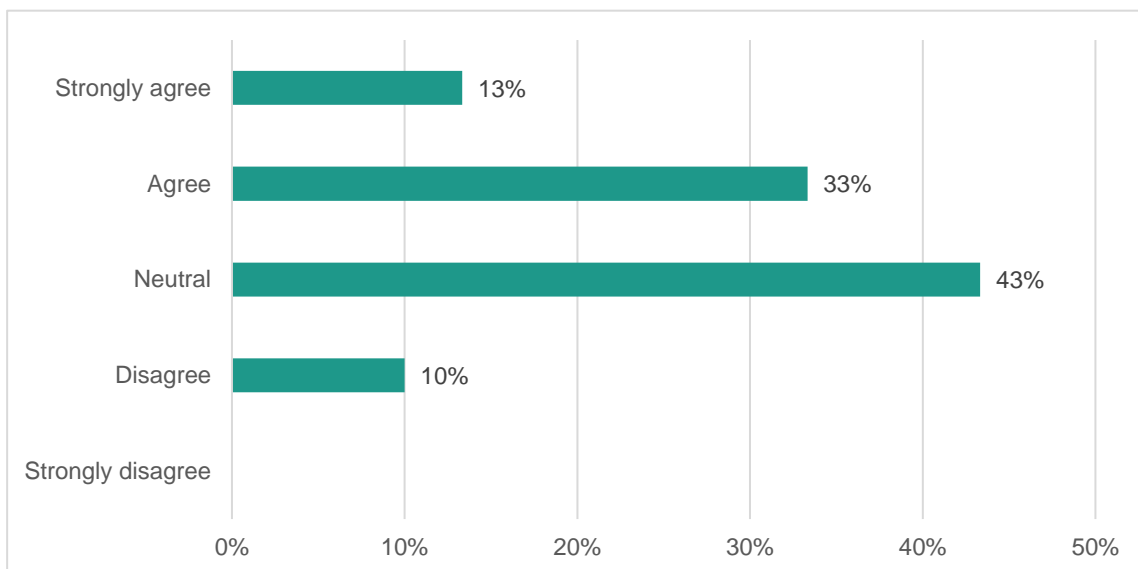
The majority (80%) of agencies reported that volunteering provides a pathway to paid employment within the agency either occasionally or frequently. Twenty-eight agencies gave information on how often this occurred. Reportedly, volunteering provided a pathway to

employment within the agency on 68 occasions in the last 12 months. The responses ranged from zero to twelve occasions.

“(I would like) more pathways to employment” - Volunteer

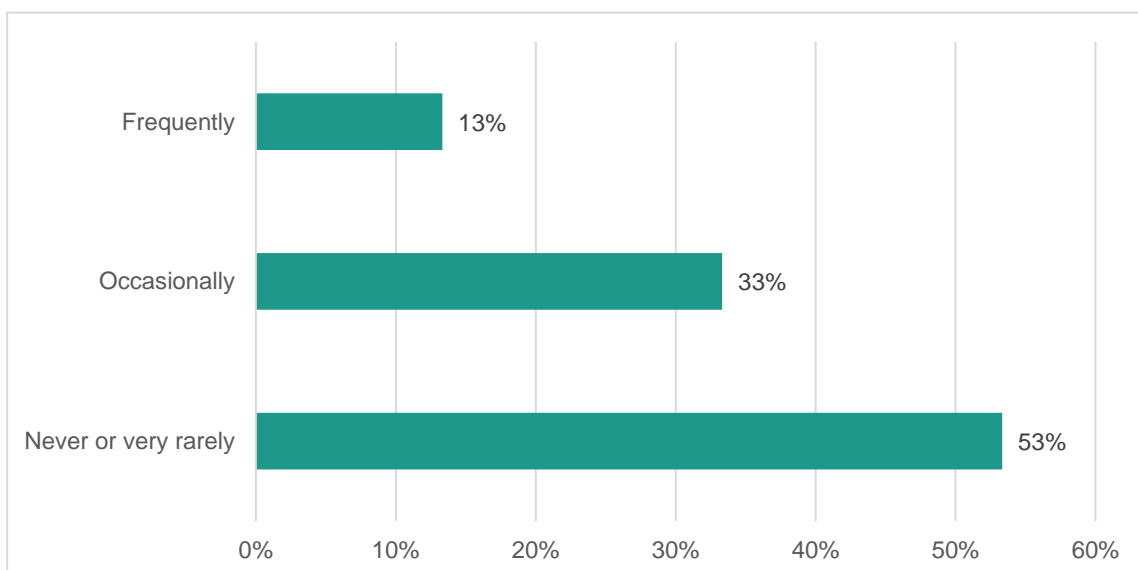
“I would like to see current volunteers (not Committee of Management) be able to transition into paid employment.” - Volunteer

**Figure 33: Agency position on engaging volunteers through Work for the Dole arrangements (n = 30)**



Nearly half (46%) of agencies agree or strongly agree on the use of volunteers who are engaged with Work for Dole arrangements.

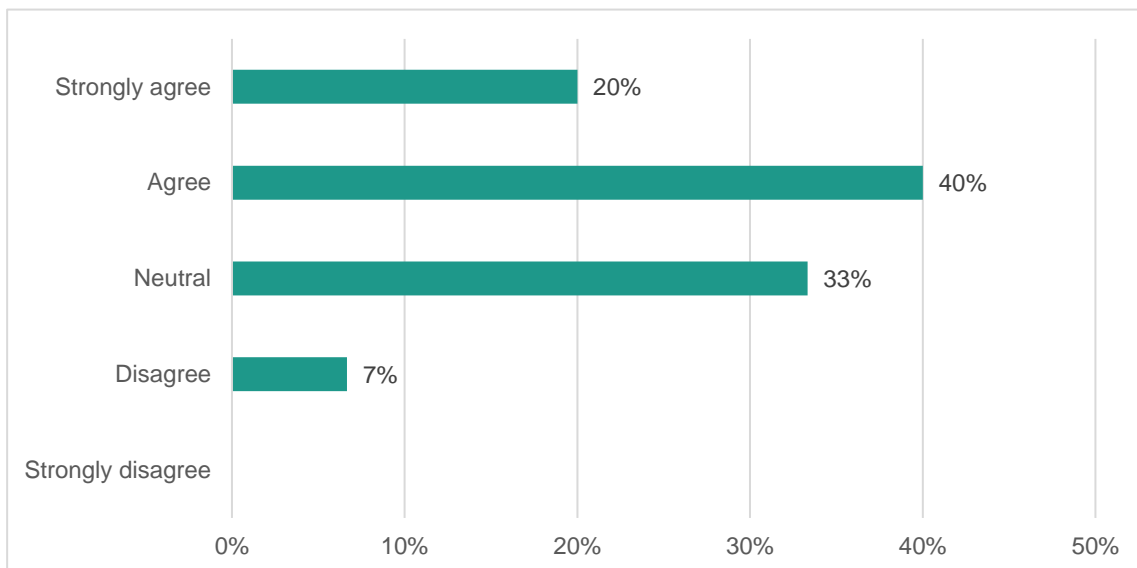
**Figure 34: Frequency of Work for the Dole arrangements**





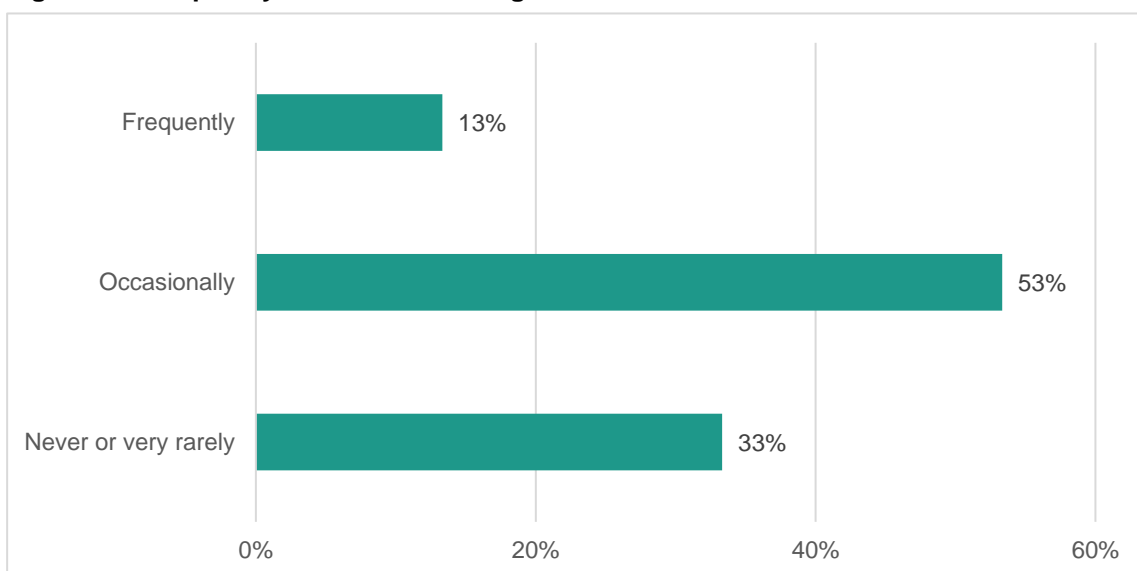
Fifty-three per cent of agencies never or rarely provide opportunities for volunteers engaged in Work for the Dole to meet mutual obligations, compared with 33 per cent occasionally and 13 per cent frequently.

**Figure 35: Agency position on engaging volunteers through Over 55's arrangements (n = 30)**



More than half (60%) of agencies agree or strongly agree on the use of volunteers who are engaged with the Over 55's arrangement.

**Figure 36: Frequency of Over 55's arrangements**

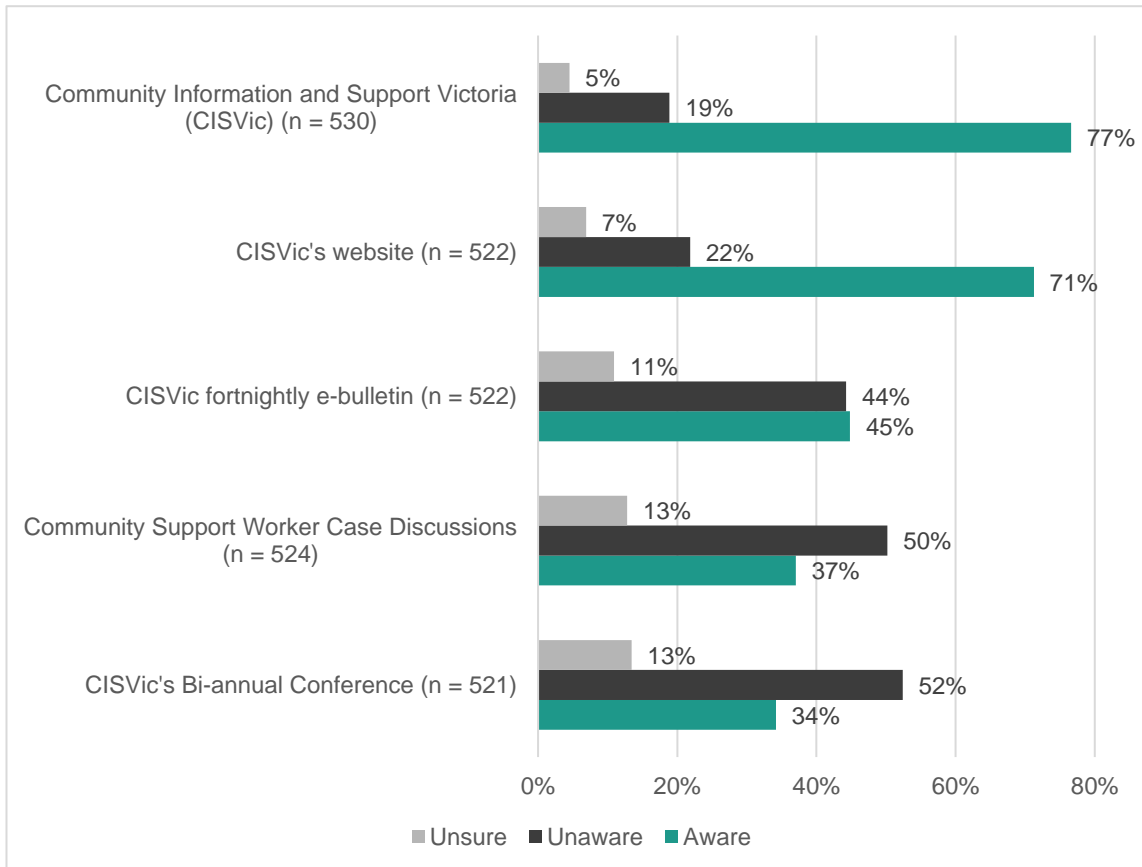


Just over half (53%) of agencies responded that they provide opportunities for Over 55's mutual obligation arrangements occasionally. This is followed by a third (33%) of agencies answering that this arrangement never or very rarely occurred.

# Volunteer Network


A key function of CISVic is to provide opportunities for our members and their workforce to come together to share information, ideas and resources, discuss issues, access professional development, and to make new connections or strengthen existing ones.

**Figure 37: Volunteer awareness of CISVic's networking and information sharing activities**



The majority of volunteers are aware of CISVic (77%) and the CISVic website (71%).

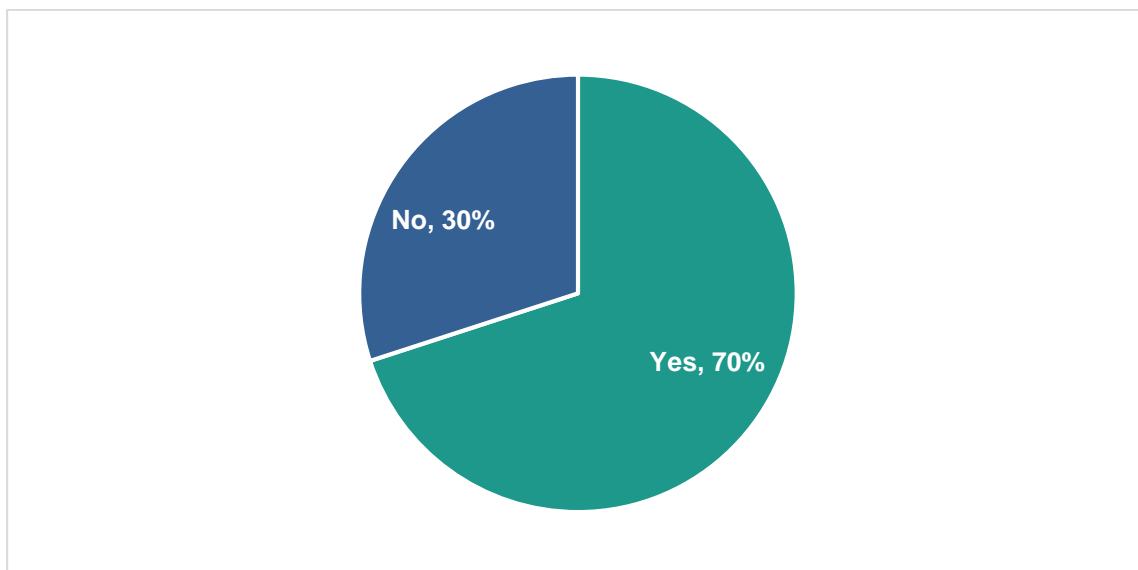
Contrastingly, volunteers were aware of other networking and information sharing mechanisms to a much lesser extent. Just over a third (34%) of volunteers were aware of CISVic's Bi-annual conference. Further, less than half of volunteers were aware of the fortnightly e-bulletin (45%), the Community Support Worker Case Discussions (37%), the CISVic facilitated peer to peer learning forum for volunteers.



2.3 Volunteers are provided with supervision and support that enables them to undertake their roles and responsibilities.

## Agency networking

**Figure 38: Agency attendance at a local Volunteer Network**



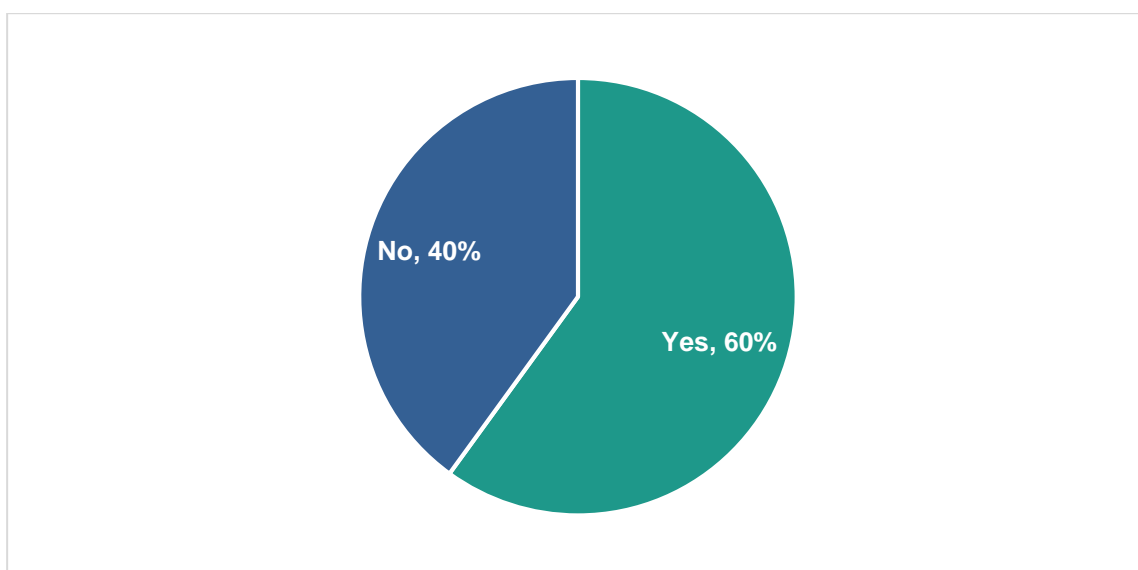
More than two-thirds (70%) of agencies responded that they attended a local Volunteer Network.

Of the agencies participating in Networks, the person responsible for attending varied across agencies. The most frequently reported response was the Volunteer Coordinator. Other answers included the President, the Emergency Relief Coordinator, Managers and Community Support Workers. One agency also added that *“all members are given an opportunity to attend”*.



2.3 Volunteers are provided with supervision and support that enables them to undertake their roles and responsibilities.

**Figure 39: Agency membership of Volunteering Victoria**



The majority of agencies (60%) responded that they are a member of Volunteering Victoria.

## Other local networks

Agencies listed that they utilised local volunteer networks and resource centres to support volunteers. Some agencies also responded that they respectively used their local council, service clubs, schools, community groups and support services, such as the Salvation Army and Turning Point.



2.3 Volunteers are provided with supervision and support that enables them to undertake their roles and responsibilities.

## Committees of Managements (Boards)

**Figure 40: Professional/Organisational associations across Committee of Management (Board) volunteers (n = 29)**

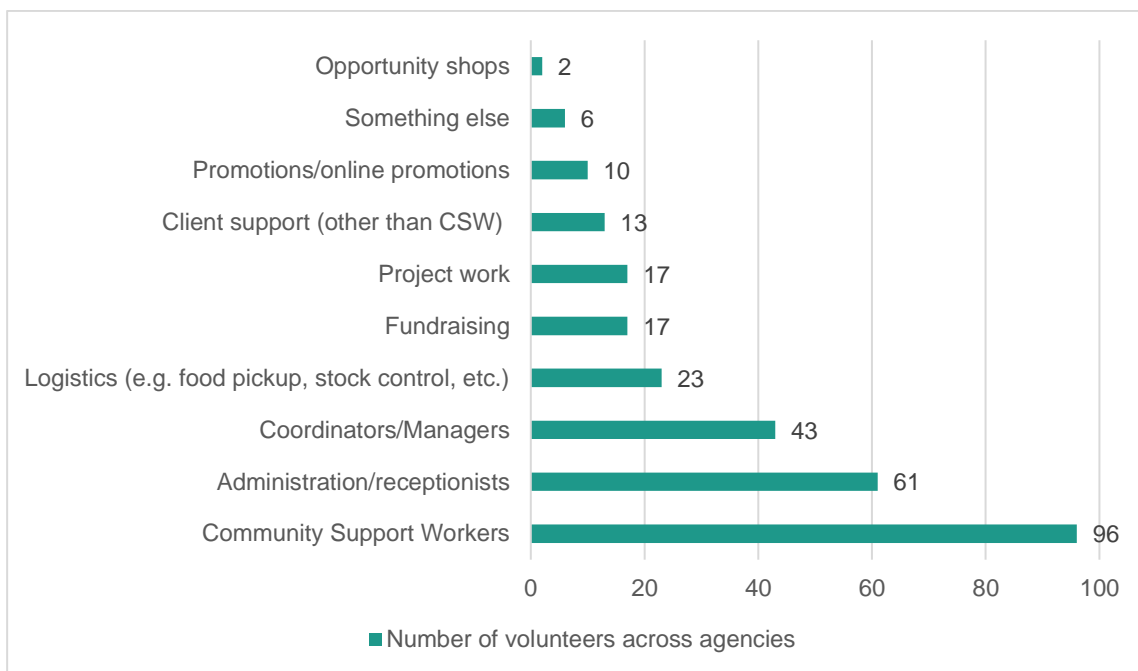


Impressively, many agencies identified their Committee of Management (Board) volunteers as being members or past members of organisations or professional associations that support the work of the agency. Notably, the representation of Social Work/Health/Community Services field at 90 per cent.



7.1 The governing body and employees understand how volunteers benefit the organisation, service users and the community.

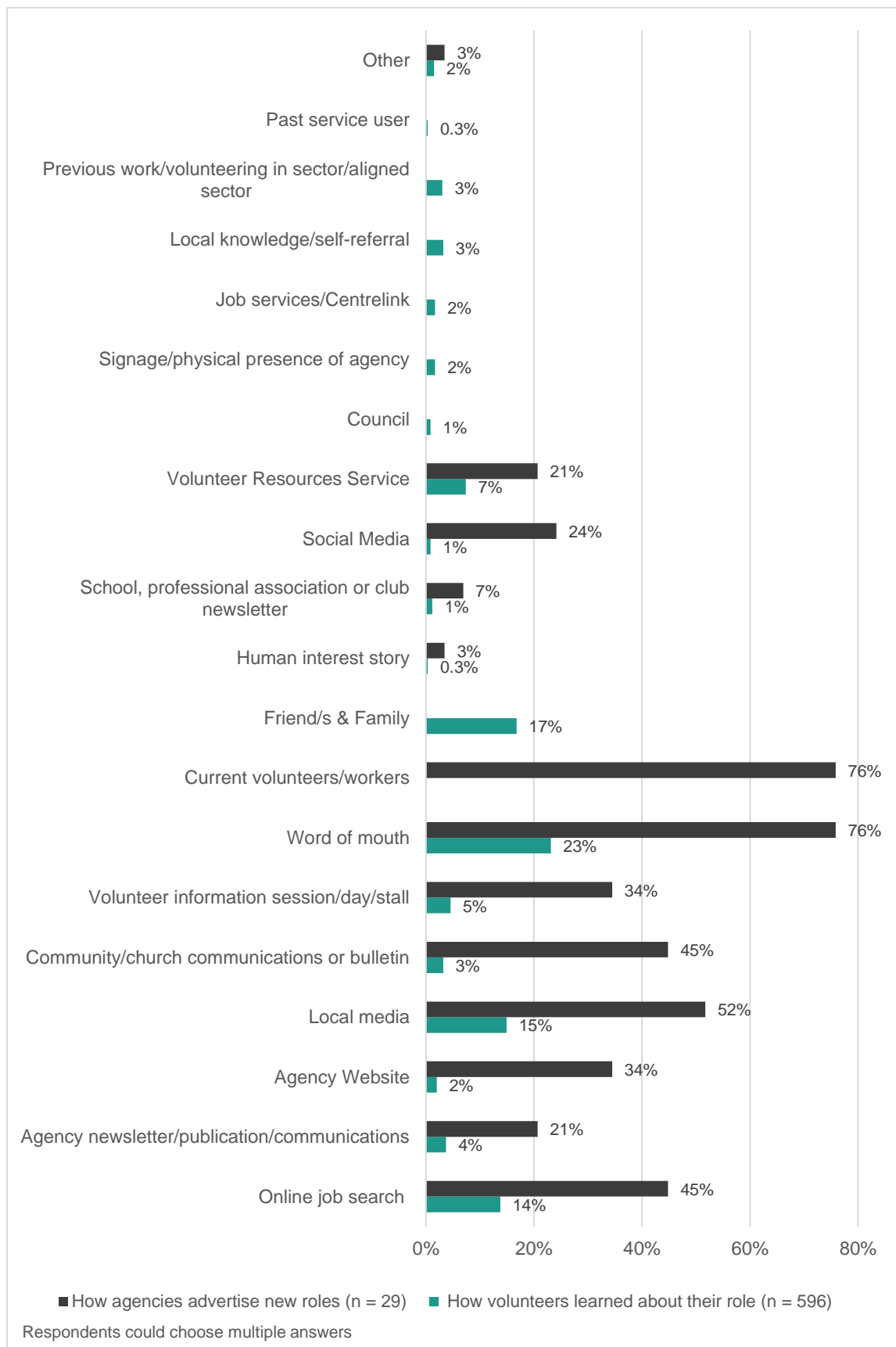
**Figure 41: Other roles performed by Committee of Management (Board) volunteers (n = 27)**



Agencies provided information as to what other roles Committee of Management (Board) volunteers performed within their agency. Across agencies, the most frequently occurring position also held by Board members was the Community Support Worker role.

# Engagement and Recruitment

**Figure 42: Methods of engagement and recruitment**



Agencies reported the most frequently used means of attracting new volunteer roles was through word of mouth (79%), current volunteers/workers (76%) and the local media (52%).

Similarly, volunteers indicated the most popular means by which they learned about their role was through word of mouth (23%), friend/s and family (17%), and the local media (15%).


Interestingly, despite nearly half of agencies (45%) reporting that they advertise volunteer roles through community or church bulletins, only 3 per cent of volunteers indicated this method is how they learned about the role.

**Table 2: Screening and recruitment process**

	Yes	No
Agencies have a documented recruitment and screening process (n = 30)	70%	30%
Volunteers found the recruitment process understandable and informative (n = 596)	97%	3%

The majority of agencies (70%) answered that they have a documented recruitment and selection process.

Nearly all volunteer (97%) answered that they found the recruitment process easy to understand and felt informed throughout the process of becoming a volunteer.



4.2 Potential volunteers are provided with relevant information about the organisation, the volunteer role and the recruitment and selection process.

**Table 3: Targeted recruitment (n = 30)**

	Yes	No
Agency targets volunteers with specific characteristics	73%	27%
Agency recruit new volunteers for specific short-term projects or roles	83%	17%


Nearly three quarters (73%) of agencies responded that they did not target volunteers with specific characteristics. Of the agencies (27%) that did target volunteers, retirees was the most frequently occurring answer. One respondent cited *"they are more likely to give a much longer term of service considering the time spent training volunteers"* as their reasoning.

The second most frequently targeted group was those who hold specialist skills for specific roles, such as money management skills.

Respondents also listed students in community services courses and individuals who hold strong interpersonal skills.

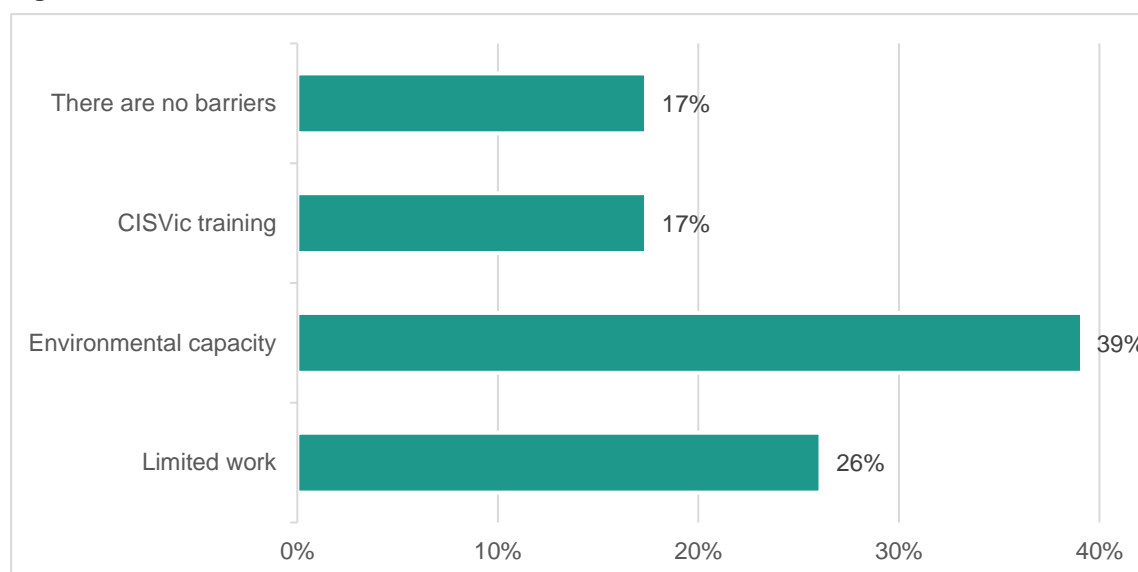
Further, the majority of agencies (83%) reported that they do not recruit new volunteers for short term projects or roles in their agency.

Of the agencies who responded that they do recruit short-term volunteers, the majority elaborated that they externally advertise these roles. One agency also included that they *"usually use students"* for this type of work.



4.1 If the organisation recruits volunteers, it uses planned approaches to attract volunteers with relevant interests, knowledge, skills or attributes.

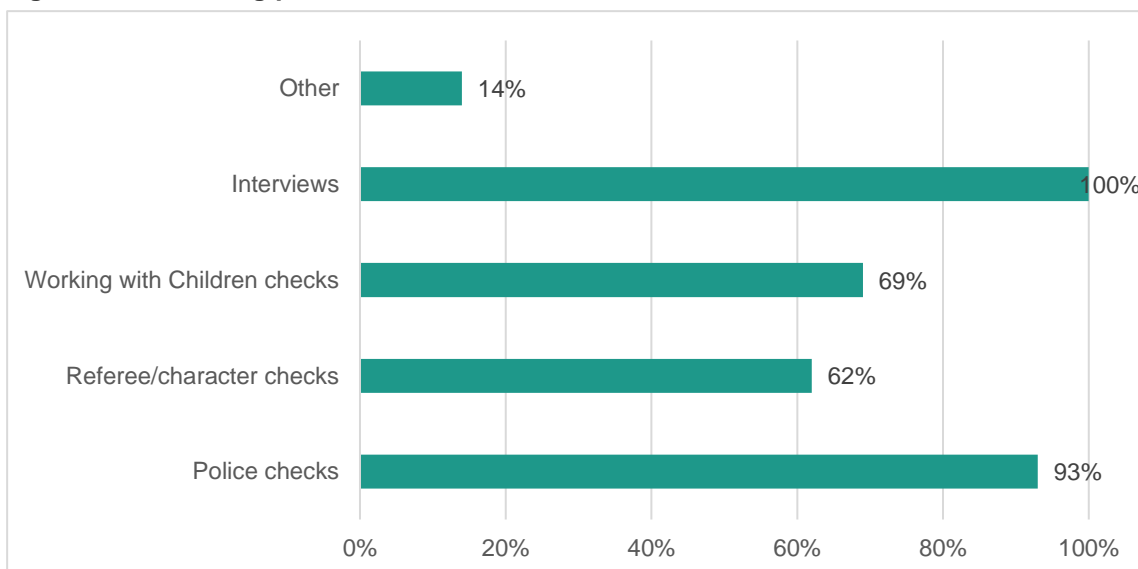
**Figure 43: Barriers to recruitment**



The most common responses for barriers to recruiting new volunteers was the environmental capacity of the agencies (39%), such as not having enough room or lack of disability access. A further twenty-six per cent of agencies reported that there was limited work available.




**Figure 44: Screening practices used**



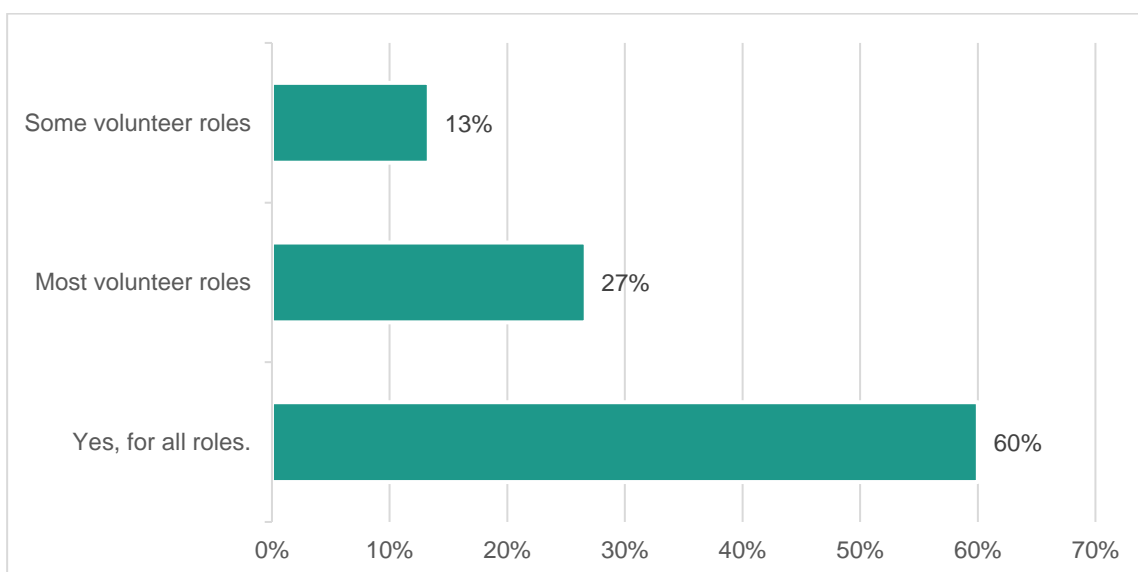
Agencies responded that interviews were the most frequently used screening practice, with all agencies answering that they utilised this process. Further, nearly all agencies (93%) indicated that they also utilised police checks.

Some agencies further elaborated that they also used alternative screening processes, such as probation periods and not accepting existing clients.



4.4 Screening processes are applied to volunteer roles that help maintain the safety and security of service users, employees, volunteers and the organisation.

**Figure 45: Agency has position descriptions for volunteer roles (n = 30)**

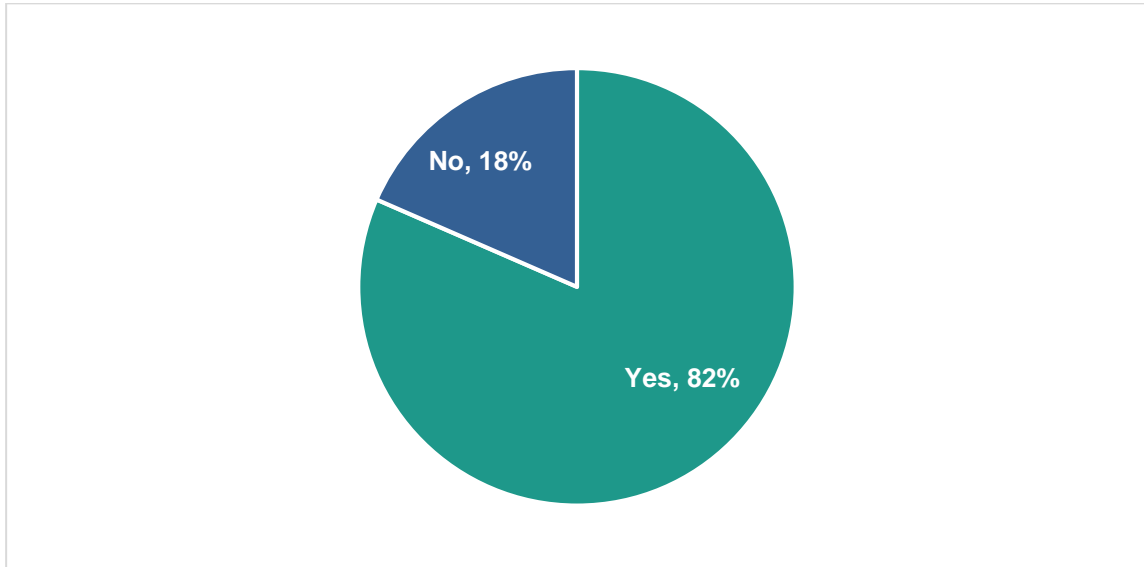


Many (60%) of agencies stated that they have position descriptions for all volunteer roles. No agency reported that they did not have position descriptions for at least some volunteer roles.



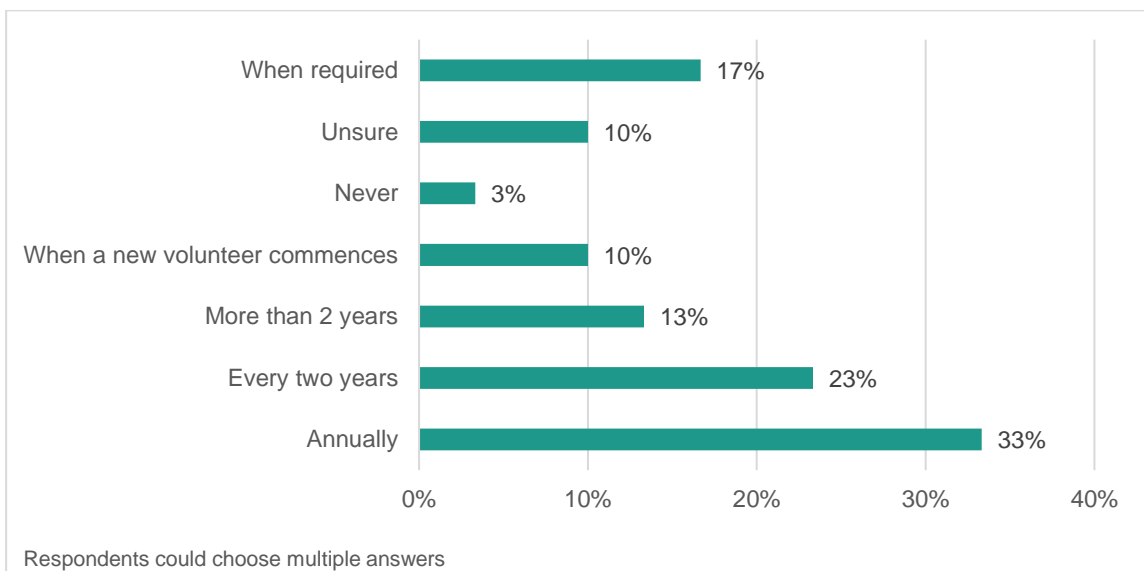
### 3.3 Volunteer roles are defined, documented and communicated

**Figure 46: Volunteers received a position description for their role (n = 596)**



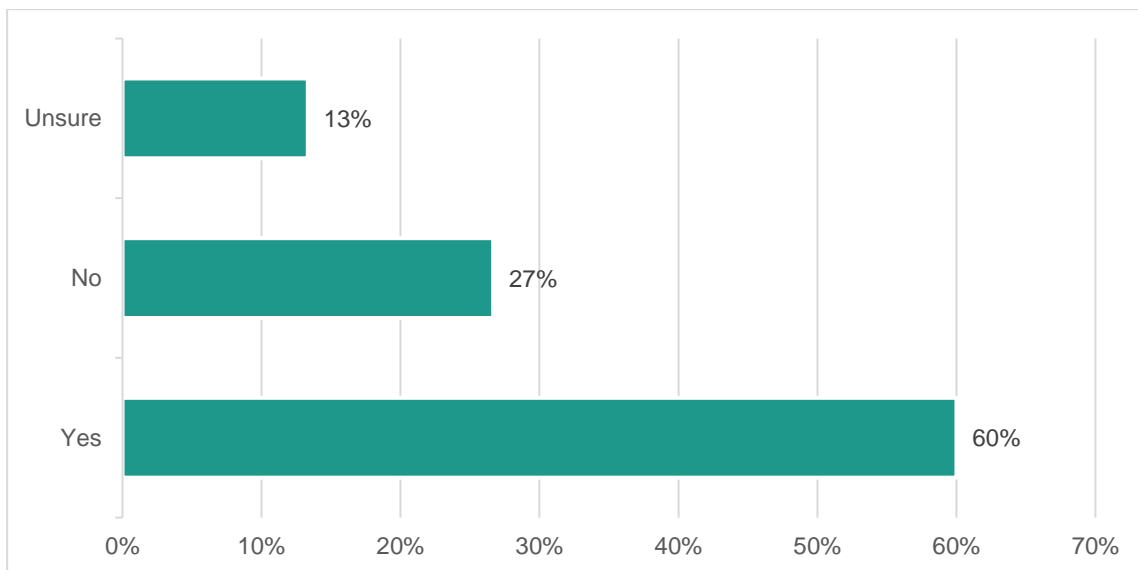
Volunteer responses showed that the vast majority (82%) had received a position description prior to, or upon commencing, their role.

**Figure 47: Frequency of review of volunteer position descriptions (n = 30)**



The timeframe in how often position descriptions were reviewed differed across agencies. One third (33%) of agencies responded that the position descriptions were reviewed annually, with a further 23 per cent of agencies reporting that a review occurred every two years.

**Figure 48: View of volunteer base as a representation of the local community (n = 30)**



Over half (60%) of agencies responded that they believed their volunteer base represented the local community they are based in.

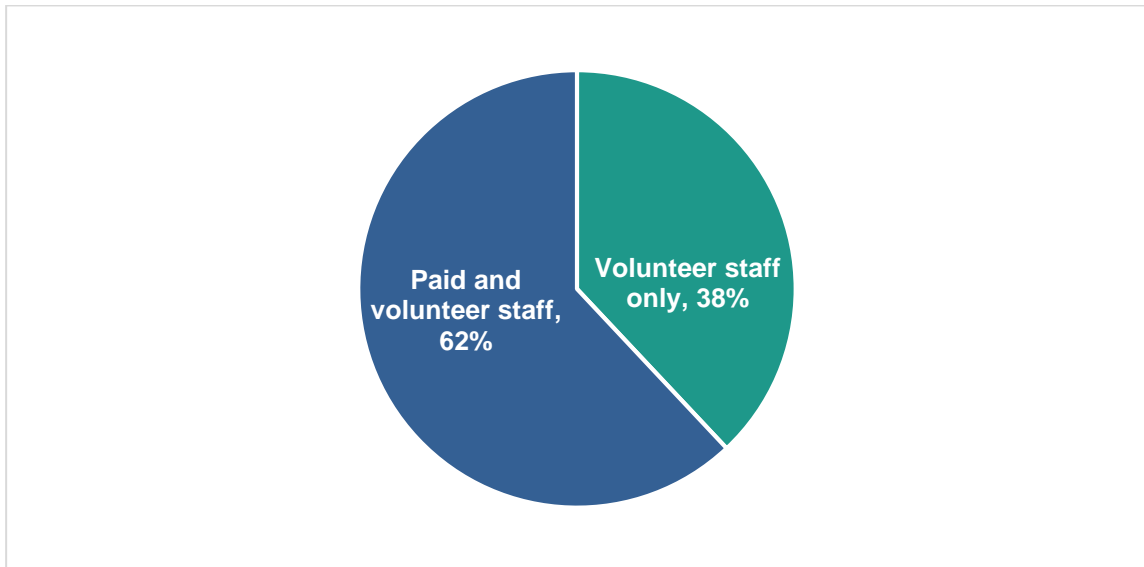
### Volunteer enquiries

On average, the agencies reported that they receive 36 volunteer enquiries annually. Of these enquiries received, on average, 64 per cent result in new volunteers.

# Volunteer Management

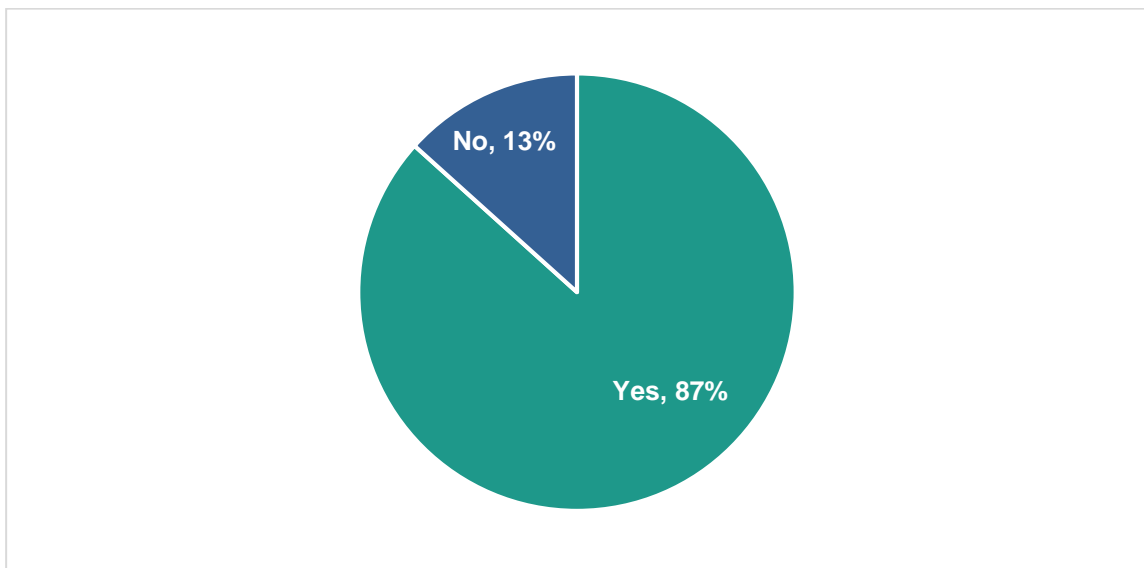
Across the 34 agencies that responded, there is a collective number of 3228 volunteers.

**Figure 49: Composition of agency staff (n = 34)**




Thirty-eight per cent of agencies responded that their agencies were comprised solely by volunteer staff .

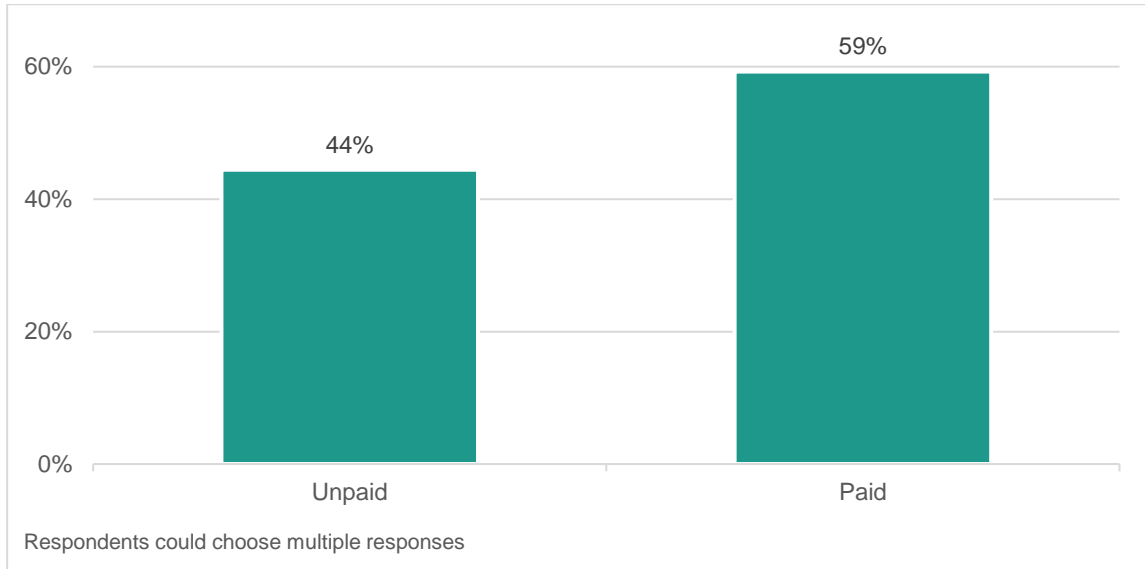
**Figure 50: Volunteer Coordinator position in agency (n = 30)**



The majority (87%) of agencies have a Volunteer Coordinator or someone who includes this as a component of their job.

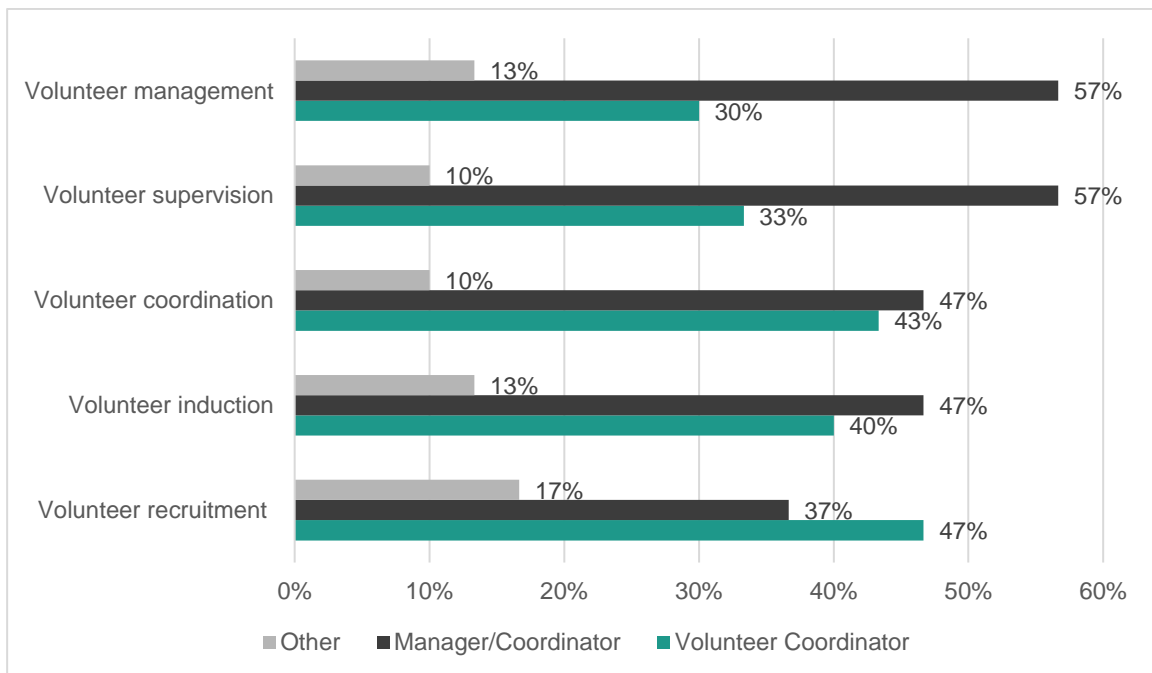
 2.3 Resources (including time, funds, equipment and technology) are allocated for volunteer involvement.

**Figure 51: Volunteer Coordinator position as paid or unpaid (n = 27)**




Over half (59%) of the agencies pay their Volunteer Coordinator. Some agencies elaborated on where the core funding for the position comes from. The most common answer was the local government. Other funding sources named were philanthropy, self-funding or through the absorption of other position's funding.

**Figure 52: Person responsible for volunteer processes (n = 30)**



Responsibility for volunteers across a range of tasks is broadly shared across agency leaders.



**1.1** Responsibilities for leading and managing volunteer involvement are defined and supported.

**Table 4: Agency priority ratings on systems that support and manage volunteers (n = 30)**

	N/A	None	Very Low	Low	Neutral	High	Very High
Procedures/systems that assist in identifying, assessing and managing risk/OHS	3%	-	-	3%	17%	40%	37%
Volunteer records are collected, kept secure and maintained	-	-	-	-	3%	47%	50%
Opportunities to informally check-in with someone (debriefing)	-	-	-	3%	10%	30%	57%
Formal supervision (scheduled time to meet and check-in)	0%	0%	3%	7%	37%	30%	23%
Performance development processes (yearly performance planning)	-	3%	7%	17%	43%	17%	13%
Opportunities that develop effective working relationships (team building)	-	-	-	3%	30%	33%	33%
Processes to identify 'skill needs' of volunteers (effective work practices)	-	-	-	3%	27%	50%	20%
Requirements around level of training needed	-	-	-	7%	20%	40%	33%
In house training	-	-	-	3%	10%	47%	40%
External training	3%	-	-	3%	33%	40%	20%
Provision of additional volunteering opportunities (pathways, skill development)	3%	-	3%	13%	40%	33%	7%

The priority agencies put on various volunteer management and support systems varied from very low to very high. The system in which agencies indicated as their highest priority, with nearly all agencies (97%) indicating the process as a high or very high priority, was ensuring that volunteer records are collected, kept secure and maintained.

To a lesser degree, less than a third (30%) of agencies rated performance development processes, such as yearly performance planning, as a high or very high priority.

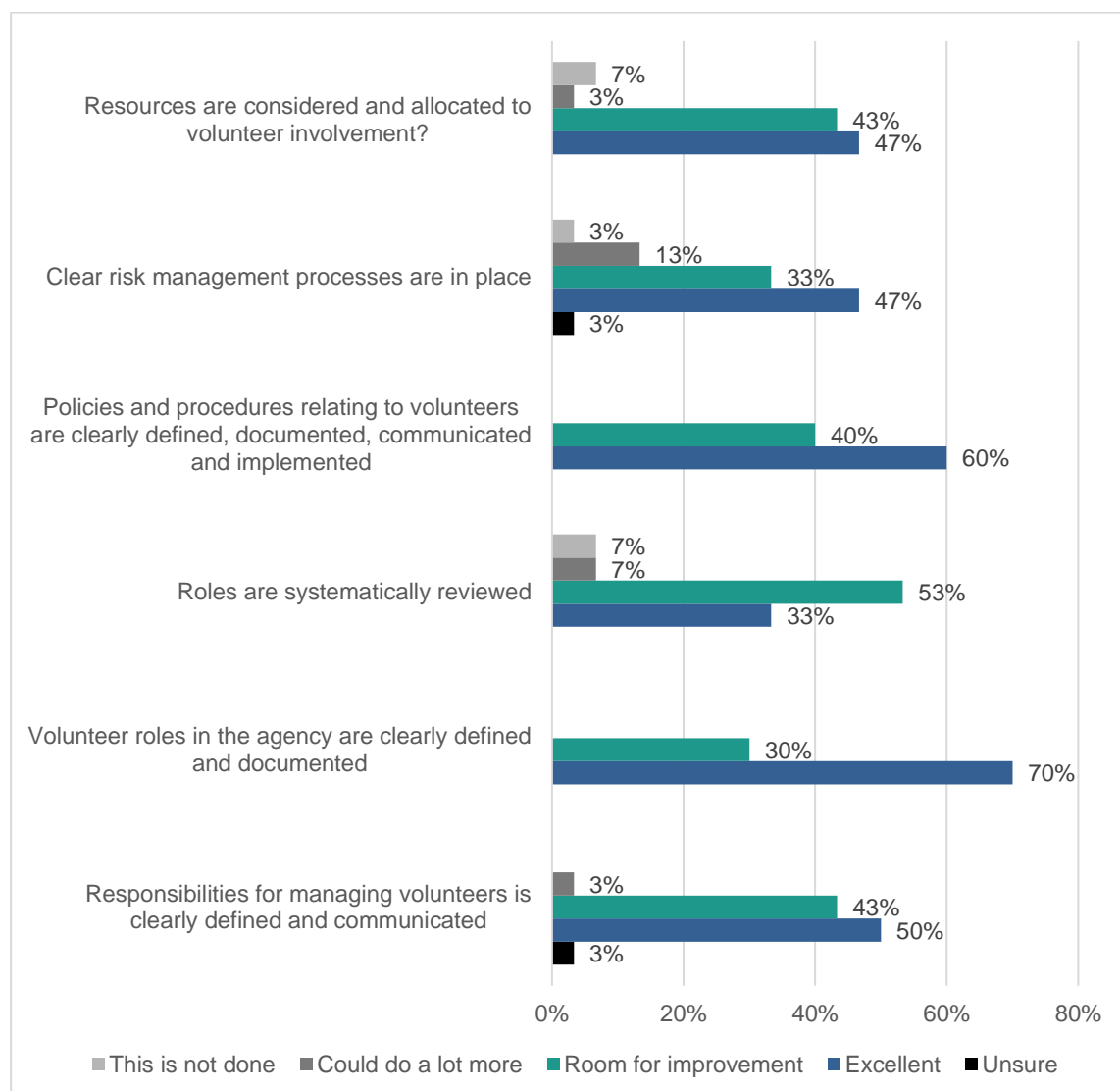


2.2 Volunteer involvement is planned and designed to contribute directly to the organisation purpose, goals and objectives.



2.3 Resources (including time, funds, equipment and technology) are allocated for volunteer involvement.

**Figure 53: Agency ratings of systems performance (n = 30)**



More than two-thirds (70%) of agencies rated their process in clearly defining and documenting volunteer roles as excellent. Contrastingly, only a third (33%) of agencies their process of systematically reviewing roles as excellent.



1.4 Volunteer involvement records are maintained.



5.3 Volunteers knowledge and skill needs relevant to their roles are identified, and training and development opportunities are provided to meet these needs.



5.4 Volunteers are provided with supervision and support that enables them to undertake their roles and responsibilities.



6.2 Processes are in place to protect the health and safety of volunteers in their capacity as volunteers.



## Summary

For 50 years we, the community information and support sector, have seen volunteering at the heart of what we do. Volunteer involvement in the delivery of our work with the community is critical and something that our member agencies continue to value, work hard at and admire. The National Standards for Volunteer Involvement provide guidance for agencies to best support their volunteers. In this report we have identified where volunteer involvement aligns with these standards. Overall, agencies had a strong alignment across all of them.

The findings from our census surrounding volunteers' experiences were also overwhelmingly positive. Volunteers expressed feeling supported and appreciated by their agencies and believed their roles and community contribution to be meaningful. The strong support and direction from agencies is reflected in the remarkable commitment from our volunteers. Nearly two thirds of volunteers in the census have been with their agency for more than two years. Impressively, 20 per cent had been volunteering in their agency for more than ten years.

Volunteers have also expressed a greater sense of wellbeing. Many volunteers shared that through their volunteer roles, they have developed increased feelings of personal satisfaction and positive self-worth. Throughout the report, volunteers also repeatedly commented on how much they valued the social connections and friendships they had made through their volunteering. It is encouraging to see that not only are our agencies able to provide impactful and meaningful experiences for community members who access our services, but that our volunteers are also able to achieve vast benefits through their role. It should be regarded as a great achievement by agencies, volunteers and CISVic alike that nearly all volunteers in the census responded that they would recommend volunteering in their agency to others.

As we look to the next 50 years there are some areas that provide opportunities to improve. With only 17 per cent of agencies reporting they use Return on Investment and a further 29 per cent advising that they don't capture volunteer hours, one of the areas needing further development in is the measuring and accounting for the impact of our volunteers' contribution.

Communication from CISVic to volunteers could also be improved, as a lack of awareness from volunteers of CISVic's development and training opportunities was highlighted. Further, volunteers and agencies alike indicated the need for greater types of training delivered across more diverse locations, including more 'in house' training.

CISVic sincerely thanks all volunteers and agencies for taking part in the Census, your willingness and openness in sharing your experiences and views is greatly appreciated. We would also like to acknowledge and thank the volunteers who shared their volunteer stories, highlighted throughout the report. Finally, we thank our two wonderful RMIT students on placement, Miranda and Fola, who generously worked on the census and census report.

# Volunteer Thoughts

## On the community sector

Together we do a great job, imagine what we could do if we had more financial help, infrastructure and technology.

Very disappointed with expectations made by government on community agencies without providing relevant funding.

I wish the Council would recognise and invest in the area and understand that living in a boarding house is inappropriate for anyone.

As the budget here diminishes I find it frustrating not to be able to help people as we did last year.

Volunteers in general are not given enough accolades by the state and federal governments for the work they do.

There should be more pressure on politicians to improve housing standards and availability for communities as it is at crisis point!

Housing opportunities in our region are decreasing with increase in people identifying as homeless. We feel as if there is only so much we are able to do and difficult to have positive outcomes.

## On what they wish they could provide (if they had more funding and resources)

BBQ every week for clients. Christmas party for clients.

A greater capacity to support the needs of our clients with material aid.

More items for everyone e.g. more food, hygiene items, Myki, phone cards.

Grants to families and individuals that have the will to be self-sufficient but need assistance to get over the current crisis."

Help (to) more people on a daily basis with bills and food.

More services to clients.

The ability for the homeless people to be able to have a warm shower.

An increased range of support services based on the needs of the clients, such as increasing the amount of food voucher support and other material aids. Also develop follow up system on how the client has been doing, who do not show up after six months or more.

Fuel vouchers.

Help with emergency and long-term housing.

## Anything else to add?

I hope everyone does some volunteering within their lifetime because giving back to the community is priceless. It's great to know you are doing something to help others and hopefully one day we can all help each other and have a world without poverty and full of peace. Everything is possible so let's hope and pray for a global solution. Wouldn't it be wonderful!

Volunteers are an amazing bunch of people. I am very grateful for the opportunity to work with these amazing people.

I have fully enjoyed being a volunteer and always let my friends know that I do it. I am very proud of my contribution and encourage others to volunteer themselves.

I am beyond grateful for the opportunity to help. More than happy to be able to make a change in someone's life.

Volunteering has helped me cope with my husband's death.

I no longer live in the municipality, but have found it impossible to leave, as long as I can be of use. The work makes me aware of how fortunate I have been, and the agency is such a pleasant, caring place to work. It also keeps me in touch with the world outside the retirement village where I now live.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1

**Information About You**

**Welcome to the first ever CISVic Volunteer Census!**

Did you know that you are a part of a bigger community of volunteers, over 3,000 in fact! It is our, Community Information and Support Victoria's (CISVic), role to support you and the agencies you volunteer in to ensure that people in need are supported.

It's very important to us that we understand who you are and what matters to you, so we can:

- Assist in improving and enriching your volunteer experience; and
- Tell others of the wonderful work you do and the significant impact this can make on others in the community.

Information collected will be used to produce the first biennial report on the status of volunteering in the Victorian community information and support sector. The information that you share in this survey is confidential and anonymous.

The survey should take about 14 minutes.

1. What gender are you?

Female

Male

Other/Unspecified

2. What is your age?

<input type="checkbox"/> 24 and under	<input type="checkbox"/> 55-64
<input type="checkbox"/> 25-34	<input type="checkbox"/> 65-74
<input type="checkbox"/> 35-44	<input type="checkbox"/> 75-84
<input type="checkbox"/> 45-54	<input type="checkbox"/> 85+

3. Are you an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI)?

Yes

No

\* 4. Are you from a Culturally or Linguistically Diverse (CALD) background?

Yes

No

5. Do you speak a language other than English?

Yes

No

6. Do you identify as having a disability?

Yes

No

7. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

Below Year 12

Diploma

Year 12 (or equivalent)

Degree

Apprenticeship

Post graduate

Certificate 3 or 4

8. Are you currently employed?

Yes, full time

No, retired

Yes, part time

No, job seeking

Yes, casually

No

Yes, self-employed

9. How far do you live from the agency you volunteer at?

0 – 2 kms

10 - 20 kms

3 - 5 kms

20+ kms

5 - 10 kms

10. What was your main reason for undertaking volunteering? *(You may select more than one)*

11. What is your main reason for continuing volunteering? *(You may select more than one)*

## Working in the Agency

12. Agency name? (Question optional)

13. Region agency is in?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> South East (includes Mornington Peninsula, Frankston, Casey/Cardinia and Dandenong)       | <input type="checkbox"/> North (includes Melbourne, Moreland, Maribyrnong, Brimbank, Moonee Valley and Hume) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inner South (includes Kingston, Bayside, Glen Eira, Monash, Port Phillip and Stonnington) | <input type="checkbox"/> West (includes Hobsons Bay, Wyndham, Melton )                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> East (includes Knox, Maroondah, Yarra Ranges, Whitehorse, Boroondara and Manningham,      | <input type="checkbox"/> Rest of Victoria  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> North East (includes Yarra, Banyule, Darebin, Nillumbik and Whittlesea)                   |  |

14. How did you learn about the role?

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Online job search (Seek, GoVolunteer, Volunteering Victoria, Ethical Jobs, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> Word of mouth                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agency newsletter/publication  | <input type="checkbox"/> Friend/s  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agency webpage   | <input type="checkbox"/> Human interest story                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local newspaper listing  | <input type="checkbox"/> School, professional association or club newsletter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community bulletin board   | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Media  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer information session/day  | <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer Resources Service                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)   |  |

15. Did you find the recruitment process easy to understand and felt informed throughout the process of becoming a volunteer?

- Yes  
 No

16. Were you given a position description for the role?

- Yes  
 No

17. Do you know who you can speak with if you have any issues relating to your role?

- Yes  
 No

18. Thinking about your participation in the agency, how do you feel about the following?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Do you feel appreciated in the agency?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you feel like a respected member of the agency?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you feel like the agency is making the most of your skills and expertise?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you feel supported as a volunteer in the agency?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you feel you receive enough direction to perform your role properly?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you feel there was an appropriate orientation/induction to the agency and the role?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Considering your role, do you feel the work you do is meaningful in directly supporting the agency?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

19. How would you rate your understanding of the agency's:

	Low	Medium	High
Vision, Mission or Goals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Strategic Plan/Direction	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Policies and procedures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
OHS & Risk management systems	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Complaints and grievance procedures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

20. How would you rate your understanding of the benefit your volunteer contribution has on the agency?

Low	Medium	High
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

21. How would you rate how safe you feel performing this role?

Often feel unsafe	Occasionally feel unsafe	Feel very safe at all times
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

22. Are you aware of further volunteer roles/opportunities that you can take up within the agency? (e.g. Committee of Management, skilled roles like Tax Help etc)

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

23. If yes, have you taken up any of these roles?

- Yes
- No

## Your involvement

24. How long have you been volunteering at this agency?

- |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0 - 6 months      | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 - 5 years  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6 months - 1 year | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 - 10 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 - 2 years       | <input type="checkbox"/> +10 years    |

25. What is your **primary** role within the agency?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community support worker (Interviewer)            | <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunity shop   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administration/                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reception   | <input type="checkbox"/> Promotion/online promotion   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Data Entry  | <input type="checkbox"/> Logistical support (e.g. food pickup, stock control, etc.)         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Governance (Board)                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Technical Support  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Co-ordination/management                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Project work (e.g. skilled volunteering conducting research, etc.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Client support (e.g. NLS, Tax Help, Casework etc) |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)                            |   |

26. Do you perform more than one role at the agency?

- Yes
- No

27. Thinking about your **primary** role, to what extent do you agree with the following statement: "The role has met my expectations"?

Strongly disagree      Disagree      Neutral      Agree      Strongly disagree

28. Why did you choose this role to volunteer in?

\* 29. Why did you choose this agency?



30. How long do you plan to stay volunteering within the Agency?

0-1 Month

1-2 Years

1-3 Months

2-5 Years

3-6 Months

+5 Years

6 Months-1 Year

Unsure

31. On average, how many hours do you volunteer at this agency in a month?*(please include hours that you attend training and all other hours when you are doing work for the agency).*

32. What impact has volunteering in this role had on you?

## Training and Other Supports

33. Over the last year, approximately how many training sessions have you attended which support your role at the agency?

- |                                 |                                 |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> None   | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 - 10 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 or 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 10+    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 - 5  | <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure |

34. Have you completed the CISVic Community Support Workers Course (50-hour training)?

- Yes
- No
- Process of completing

35. To what extent do you agree with the following - 'The CISVic Community Support Workers Course has helped with the work you do at the agency'?

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

36. What training do you think would better support you in this role

37. Are you aware of any of the following?

	Yes	No	Unsure
Community Information and Support Victoria (CISVic)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
CISVic's website	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
CISVic's Working with Interpreter training	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
CISVic's Recognising and Responding to Family Violence training	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
CISVic's Building Upon Your Interview Skills training	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community Support Worker Case Discussions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
CISVic fortnightly e-bulletin	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
CISVic's Bi-annual Conference	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If you would like to receive the CISVic e-bulletin please email your email address to [meagan@cisvic.org.au](mailto:meagan@cisvic.org.au) with the subject line e-bulletin.

## Feedback

38. How likely are you to recommend volunteering at this agency to others?

Very likely

Likely

Not likely

Unsure

39. If the agency you volunteer for had unlimited resources, what would be needed to make your involvement more fulfilling and enjoyable?

40. Do you have anything else you would like to share?

Agency Survey

Demographics

**Many hands make light work.**

**Volunteers are an integral part of the community information and support sector. They assist in the delivery of critical services to those in need, by providing our agencies with a knowledgeable and skillful workforce.**

**In the changing face of volunteering and how emergency relief services are being managed we believe that it is critical to accurately measure the number and key characteristics of volunteers, and better understand the structures that support them. We hope by doing this we will ensure that our workforce feel supported and properly resourced, and that we can better support our sector in the ongoing recruitment and management of their volunteers.**

**To do this we need your help! To ensure that we build a true picture of our sector's volunteering, we are asking all CISVic member agencies to share with us information about their volunteers and the systems that support them. The volunteers themselves will complete a separate survey regarding their own experience.**

**This survey (the agency survey) should take about 20 minutes to complete and will require some board demographic and agency information about your volunteers and how you support them in the agency. We have sent through a hardcopy version of the survey to assist you in complete the survey, if you haven't received this and would like a copy please contact Jill Wilson at [jill@cisvic.org.au](mailto:jill@cisvic.org.au) or call 9672 2003.**

**Thank you for your time.**

\* 1. How many volunteers work with the agency?

\* 2. How many volunteers working with the agency have been volunteering for the following periods of time? (Approximate numbers if exact numbers unknown)

0 - 6 months	<input type="text"/>
6 months - 1 year	<input type="text"/>
1 - 2 years	<input type="text"/>
2 - 5 years	<input type="text"/>
5 -10 years	<input type="text"/>
10+ years	<input type="text"/>

\* 3. What gender are the agency's volunteers? (Approximate numbers if exact numbers unknown)

Male

Female

Other/Unspecified

\* 4. How many volunteers from each age group volunteer with the agency? (Approximate numbers if exact numbers unknown)

24 years and under

25-34 years

35-44 years

45-54 years

55-64 years

65-74 years

75-84 years

85+ years

\* 5. Please provide numbers of the agency's volunteers who are from an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) descent:

Unknown

Number of ATSI volunteers (Approximate numbers if exact numbers unknown)

\* 6. Please provide numbers of the agency's volunteers who are from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) background:

Unknown

Number of CALD volunteers (Approximate numbers if exact numbers unknown)

\* 7. Please provide numbers of the agency's volunteers who have a disability:

Unknown

Number of volunteers with a disability (Approximate numbers if exact numbers unknown)

\* 8. How many volunteer hours in total are contributed to the agency each month? (Please remember to consider board/committee member's contribution)

\* 9. On average, how many hours per month does each volunteer contribute to the agency?

\* 10. Roughly speaking, and in terms of their roles, what is the composition of the agency's volunteers?

Community support workers

Administration/Reception

Governance (Board)

Co-ordination/Management

Client support

Opportunity shop

Fundraising

Promotion/Online promotion

Logistical support (e.g. food pickup, stock control, etc.)

Project work (e.g. skilled volunteering conducting research, etc.)

\* 11. Is the agency:

Volunteer only

Unsure

Volunteer and paid staff

**Volunteer Engagement Process**

\* 12. Does the agency have a Volunteer Co-ordinator, including as a component of their job?

- Yes  
 No

13. Is the Volunteer Co-ordinator position paid or unpaid?

- Unpaid  
 Paid (Please specify where the core funding comes from [e.g. local government])

\* 14. Who is responsible for the following activities?

	Volunteer Co-ordinator	Manager/Co-ordinator	Other	Not Sure
Volunteer recruitment (including advertising, expressions of interest, screening etc)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volunteer induction/orientation (including developing processes/manuals etc)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volunteer coordination (including record-keeping, task allocation, absences, claiming expenses etc)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volunteer supervision (including conflict management/grievances, debriefing, check ins, training needs etc)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volunteer Management (Including evaluating, understanding/capturing impact, acknowledging/valuing, risk management/Occupational Health & Safety, policies etc)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

\* 15. Does the agency attend a local Volunteer Network?

- Yes  No

If yes, who attends?

\* 16. Is the agency a member of Volunteering Victoria?

- Yes  
 No

17. What other volunteer supports does the agency use locally? (If applicable)



\* 18. What steps does the agency take in gaining feedback from volunteers about their involvement with the agency?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Survey                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Informal/On the job     | <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anonymous feedback      |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other? (please specify) |   |

\* 19. Does the agency have position descriptions for volunteer roles?

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, all.            | <input type="checkbox"/> Some volunteer roles |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Most volunteer roles | <input type="checkbox"/> No, none.            |

20. How often does the agency review its position descriptions for volunteers?

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Annually               | <input type="checkbox"/> When a new volunteer commences |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biennially             | <input type="checkbox"/> Never                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More than 2 years      | <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |   |

21. When you have short-term projects/roles in the agency (e.g. research, social media or a project worker for a specific role), do you recruit new volunteers for these?

- |                              |                             |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|

If yes, how is this done? (please specify)

\* 22. How does the agency advertise volunteer roles? (Select all that apply)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Online job search (Seek, GoVolunteer, Volunteering Victoria, Ethical Jobs, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> Current volunteers/workers                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agency newsletter/publication  | <input type="checkbox"/> Word of mouth   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agency Website   | <input type="checkbox"/> Human Interest stories                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local Newspaper  | <input type="checkbox"/> School, professional association and club newsletters |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community bulletin boards  | <input type="checkbox"/> Social media  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer information session/day  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)   |  |

\* 23. Does the agency target volunteers that have specific characteristics? (e.g. retired, students, particular expertise/skills)?

Yes

No

If yes, who do you target and why do you target these characteristics?

\* 24. Would you describe the agency's volunteer base as a good representation of the community it is based in?

Yes

Unsure

No

25. Are there any barriers for the agency to the recruitment of new volunteers (e.g. Not enough room, not enough work etc)? (please specify)

\* 26. Does the agency have a documented recruitment and selection process?

Yes

No

If yes, is this communicated to potential volunteers? How often do you review these?

\* 27. Does the agency use any of the following screening practices?

Police checks

Working with Children checks

Referee/character checks

Interviews

Other (please specify)

\* 28. Who in the agency is responsible for carrying out induction/orientation for new volunteers, informing them of the agency's policies and procedures and ensuring they understand what is expected of them in their new role?

- Volunteer Co-ordinator
  Buddy/Colleague  
 Manager
  There is no formal induction/orientation carried out  
 Mentor/Supervisor  
 Other (please specify)

\* 29. How many volunteer enquiries has the agency received in the past 12 months? (Approximate numbers if exact numbers unknown)

\* 30. How many of these volunteer enquiries have resulted in new volunteers? (Approximate numbers if exact numbers unknown)

\* 31. What priority does the agency place on the following systems for supporting/managing volunteers?

	Very low	Low	Neutral	High	Very high	None	N/A
Procedures/systems that assist in identifying, assessing and managing risk/OHS	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volunteer records are collected, kept secure and maintained	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opportunities to informally check-in with someone (debriefing)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Formal supervision (scheduled time to meet and check-in)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Performance development processes (yearly performance planning)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opportunities that develop effective working relationships (team building)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Processes to identify 'skill needs' of volunteers (effective work practices)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Requirements around level of training needed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In house training	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
External training	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provision of additional volunteering opportunities (pathways, skill development)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

\* 32. Does the agency have a process to identify skill needs for volunteers?

Yes

No

If yes, how often is this done?

\* 33. How well does the agency rate in the following?

	This is not done	Could do a lot more	Room for improvement	Excellent	Unsure
Responsibilities for managing volunteers is clearly defined and communicated	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volunteer roles in the agency are clearly defined and documented	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Roles are systematically reviewed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Policies and procedures relating to volunteers are clearly defined, documented, communicated and implemented	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Clear risk management processes are in place	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Resources are considered and allocated to volunteer involvement?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

\* 34. How often does volunteering provide a pathway to paid employment within the agency?

Never	Occasionally	Frequently
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

35. Please provide numbers for when this has happened over the last 12 months

\* 36. What is the agency's position on the use of volunteers who are engaged through a mutual obligations arrangement (MOA), this includes Work for the Dole -(WFD) and people Over 55?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
WFD	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Over 55s	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

\* 37. Does the agency currently assist with volunteer placements for volunteers engaged in MOAs?

	Never or very rarely	Occasionally	Frequently
WFD	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Over 55s	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

38. How many Committee of Management (Board) volunteers are/were members of organisations or professional associations that does/would help support the work of the agency?

Accountancy/Banking

Social Work/Health/Community Services

Event Management

Business/Corporate

Information Technology

Human Resources

Other

39. How many Committee of Management (Board) volunteers also perform other roles within the agency?

Community support workers (CSW)

Administration/Reception

Co-ordination/Management

Client support (other than CSW)

Opportunity shop

Fundraising

Promotion/Online promotion

Logistical support (e.g. food pickup, stock control, etc.)

Project work (e.g. skilled volunteering conducting research, etc.)

Other

**Quantifying Outcomes**

\* 40. Does the agency record volunteer hours?

- Yes  No

If yes, please provide details. (How is this done? Who does this? (individual volunteers, co-ordinators, etc.)

41. How often are volunteer hours recorded?

- Daily  Monthly  
 Weekly  Ad hoc  
 Other (please specify)

42. How does the agency use information gathered about volunteer hours?

\* 43. Does the agency use Return on Investment (ROI) to measure the impact of volunteers?

(ROI measures the dollar value benefit provided by volunteers against the cost of programs provided, taking into account the cost otherwise of the volunteers labour)

- Yes  
 No

\* 44. Please rate your satisfaction for the following CISVic training?

	Access to course placements	Location of venues	Volunteer training supports agency	Appropriate scheduling of courses
Community Support Worker Course (accredited training)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Non-accredited training (e.g. challenging behaviours, working with interpreters etc)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Please comment (if you would like to share anything further)

## Agency Survey

45. If there were unlimited resources, what volunteer support would the agency want?

46. What could CISVic do to better support volunteering in your agency?

47. Any other comments?