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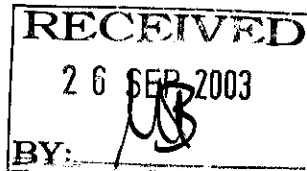


QUEENSLAND MEALS ON WHEELS SERVICES ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED
The Voluntary Caring Service

State President
Mr. Norm Dillman
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GP/2003/110

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24th September 2003

Consultation on the Definition of a Charity
The Board of Taxation
C/- the Treasury
Langton Crescent
PARKES ACT 2600



Dear Ms Jane Schwager,

Re: Consultation on the Definition of a Charity

Submission on Behalf of 162 Affiliated Member Services and Queensland Meals on Wheels Services Association Inc.

Meals on Wheels in Queensland was commenced at Ipswich in May 1956, by Mrs Rhoda Cameron (Wife of the then Federal Minister of Health, Dr. Donald Cameron) in her own kitchen in Salisbury Road, Eastern Heights, when she realised that something should be done for those people who were unable to adequately feed themselves.

Almost all of our 162 Member Services have been registered under the Association Incorporation Act, and all state similar objects of their Association as being:

To provide meals and other food related services to eligible members of the public.

- (a) for the purpose of relieving poverty, sickness, suffering, distress, misfortune, destitution or helplessness;
- (b) without discrimination; and
- (c) in accordance with relevant nutritional and dietary guidelines.

Our State Association feels the Webster's Dictionary definition of CHARITY being "Love and goodwill to men; liberality to the poor; leniency in judging others; any act of kindness; alms; a charitable cause or institution" aptly describes our Community based Meals on Wheels Services.

Our Meals on Wheels Services provide meals to those in need in their communities, and we feel that this forms the basis of charitable organisations. The name of "Meals on Wheels" is a recognised charity throughout the community, for the valuable work of volunteers to the organisation and the communities in which they serve. It is also recognised by Government, both State and Commonwealth, that the service Meals on Wheels provides into their Communities would cost considerably more if Governments were to be involved.

Meals on Wheels Services do not have the same commercial profile of some organisations. Meals on Wheels Services do not generally appear in a survey of the public seeking the top 10 charities.

Charities such as Salvation Army, Lifeline and the Smith Family are more well known due to the fact that they are constantly in the newspapers or on television advertising their role, as well as seeking funding to assist their role and commitment to those in need in the community at large. But nevertheless the role is the same – that is caring for those in need in the community.

Approximately 15,000 dedicated volunteers, who give freely of their time to support those in need in their communities, support Meals on Wheels Services in Queensland. Without their much needed assistance, the cost to Governments would be considerably more than the subsidy paid to our Organisation and Member Services.

As stated above there are some 15,000 dedicated volunteers that assist Meals on Wheels Services operations in Queensland. This is done through many and various **VOLUNTARY** roles including:

- Management Committee
- Treasurers – trying to cope with GST; BAS returns and Home and Community Care (HACC) returns
- Cooks and Kitchen hands
- Deliverers and assistants

Perhaps the most important fact to remember is that Meals on Wheels does not, and will not operate in an area or community unless it has the dedicated support of those in the community itself. That is a social expectation of the past and of the future as communities realise the fact of caring for those in need in their own communities.

Another important factor to consider is that many Charity Organisations have grown out of community need and concern to care for those less fortunate within that community. This then leads on to the spending of monies (government grants, subsidies or client fees) within the community to support the local businesses and providers of goods and services.

Other Community support groups such as Senior Citizen Centres, as well as several Church affiliations support many of our Meals on Wheels Services. This brings into place many other support facets of care for those in need in the community.

Since the delivery of the first meal, clients have paid a fee towards the cost of their meal being provided. This cost or fee does not rule out charity status but provides the client with the independence of contributing towards the cost of the services provided. This cost is marginal compared to the real cost of the provision of service if the client was institutionalised.

To emphasise their commitment to their communities, all 162 Meals on Wheels Services in Queensland undertook the registration process for the GST as well as the re-endorsement process for DGR and Income Tax Exempt Charity status. This enabled them to continue their role and concern for those in need in their community.

Queensland Meals on Wheels Services Association Incorporated was formed in June 1976, and from the humble beginnings at Ipswich, now boasts a membership of 162 Affiliated Services, 93 of which have now been operating in their own communities for more than 20 years. Approximately 2.25 million meals are delivered annually from Services ranging in size from under 10 meals a day to over 500 meals. (In fact, 32 Services of the 93 shown above, have operated in their own communities for over 30 years).

Queensland Meals on Wheels Services Association Inc. is the parent Body for 162 Affiliated Meals on Wheels Services and whose Mission Statement is as follows:

“Queensland Meals on Wheels Services Association Incorporated is the Peak organisation established by Meals on Wheels Member Services to support them in their provision of meals to those in need.”

The Association is a registered DGR – 900 395 875 (Deductible Gift Recipient) and Income Tax Exempt Charity, as well as having an ABN – 63 104 919 974. No meals are served from our office, but our role is one of management support, advocacy and assistance to those 162 Affiliated Meals on Wheels Services across Queensland.

Question 1 – Queensland Meals on Wheels Services Association Incorporated
Ground Floor, 295 Ann Street, Brisbane 4000. (GPO Box 2136, Brisbane 4001).
Telephone: 3221 9841 Fax: 3229 0340 Email: qmow@tpg.com.au Manager: Greg Payne.

Question 2 - The State Association was established by Meals on Wheels Services to provide management support and assistance to 162 Affiliated Member Meals on Wheels Services across Queensland.

Question 3 - The principle reasons for making the submission are as follows:

- It is our role to make submissions on behalf of our Member Services to seek to maintain their current registered status as charitable organisations.
- To identify to the Board of Taxation the important role that Meals on Wheels Services provide within their local communities and to the social fabric of the State and that these Services rely heavily on community support to maintain their operations, not only in supply but in voluntary personnel.
- To seek to maintain the current registered charitable status of Queensland Meals on Wheels Services Association Inc, which could not exist if that were taken away. For a description of the scope of activities undertaken by Queensland Meals on Wheels Services Association Incorporated on behalf of its Member Services, see the attachment to this submission.

Question 4 - As indicated above, we are currently endorsed with the ATO as an Income Tax Exempt Charity. We consider that we would still be entitled to endorsement on the basis of the Charities Bill 2003, but that view needs to be clarified.

To the best of our knowledge, the 162 Affiliated Member Services have maintained their ITEC registration with the ATO, and we consider, referring to the dot points raised under Question 3 that these Services would maintain their ITEC exemption on the basis of the Charities Bill 2003.

Question 5 - Not applicable.

Question 6 - As the Bill does not identify the administrative requirements for maintaining charitable status, it is difficult to assess additional compliance costs. However, we would wish to make reference to the fact that the Management Committees of our Member Services are generally comprised of people from local communities, many of whom have little or no commercial or administrative experience.

The current administrative burden on these Management Committees due to Commonwealth and State Government legislation is already having a huge impact on the ability of Services to attract volunteers for these positions.

Question 7 - No; due to the shortness and non-descriptive nature of the Bill, it is very hard to assess its flexibility across the charitable community sector. Our concern would be that the

Charities Bill 2003 contains enough flexibility to allow for the growth of Meals on Wheels Services in Australia as they work to meet the growing needs of an ageing population.

Question 8 - The inclusion of altruism in a public benefit test would only strengthen the claims by Meals on Wheels Organisations for the maintenance of charitable status. This view is re-enforced by the fact that 15,000 volunteers in Queensland are utilised to prepare and deliver 2 ¼ million meals per year into clients homes.

In conclusion we submit that Queensland's 162 separately incorporated Meals on Wheels Services

- Provide a high level of service provision, client advocacy, providing quality, choice, cost effectiveness, client satisfaction, monitorial role, co-operative arrangements with Government.
- Receives support from 15,000 dedicated volunteers whose support and contribution assists our Community Service to those in need. Many of our dedicated volunteers have in excess of 30 continuous years' service to their communities.
- Are willing to adhere to standards of government and addressing accountability
- Are generally recognised by Commonwealth, State and Local authorities as having contributed extraordinary service to their communities over a great number of years.
- Are widely recognised in some areas as the clients only contact during the day, and it is that social contact on a personal level that makes our Services unique.

In providing this submission, this Association wishes to advise that it would be happy to provide evidence to the inquiry and/or answer questions.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Norm Dillman', enclosed within a large, loopy oval shape.

Norm Dillman
PRESIDENT.

ATTACHMENT

SERVICES AVAILABLE FROM QUEENSLAND MEALS ON WHEELS SERVICES ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

Queensland Meals on Wheels is operated through a State Council, comprising people from Affiliated Member Services, elected every two years, and provides to all Affiliated Member Services, regardless of size and location within the State, a quality support centre for a wide range of items including:

- **Support Manuals & updates**
 - (i) Guidelines for Service Management Manual
 - (ii) Guidelines for Foodservice Management Manual
 - (iii) Guidelines for People Management Manual

- **Food Safety Project and legislation interpretation**

- **Workplace Health & Safety**

- **Administration Helpdesk – Risk Management**
 - Charity Enquiry
 - Privacy Act
 - Volunteers and the Law
 - Newsletters/Minutes/Quarterly Magazine
 - Financial
 - GST & BAS Returns

- **Insurance – central negotiations carried out by Queensland Meals on Wheels (for Product/Public Liability, Directors & Officers Liability, Personal Accident and Volunteer Loss of No Claim Bonus/Excess) with Insurance Broker. Other Insurances include Statutory Liability and Professional Indemnity.**

- **Assistance with preparation of funding and grant applications**
- **Community of Interest Meetings**
- **Constitution updating and reviewing**
- **Award negotiations and updates**
- **Conducts 4 General Meetings and AGM each year**
- **Central support centre for supply of Referral Pads, Service Brochures (Profiles), Promotional materials and display boards, photocopying etc.**
- **Public contact point for client referrals and assistance.**
- **Provision of Student kits**
- **Organisation of State Conferences, Supervisors Forums, HACCC/MOW Forums, Cooks Seminars, Management Training.**
- **Provide linkage to other Organisations such as QCOSS, Aged Care Qld Inc., Volunteering Q., Australian Meals on Wheels, MWP Industrial, COTAQ, Discharge Planning Workshops etc.**

Queensland Meals on Wheels represents the interests of all Affiliated Members through the pivotal role of a Peak Body in negotiations/discussions with Queensland Health HACC (Home and Community Care) Unit (Funding body).

The role of the Peak Body includes negotiations/discussions of Service Agreements, Funding, Reporting and regular meetings to discuss Meals on Wheels issues on a one to one basis with the appointed HACC/MOW Staff Members.

This appointment has improved relationships between HACC (the funding body) and Queensland Meals on Wheels on behalf of its Affiliated Members.

Assistance for Member Services is obtained by contacting the State Association Office which is located in Brisbane and operates Monday to Friday from 8.45 am – 4.45 pm.

The State Association Office does not operate on Public Holidays or on Weekends.

Contact can be made by:

PHONE: (07) 3221 9841

FACSIMILE: (07) 3229 0340

EMAIL: qmow@tpg.com.au

Or by a personal visit to: Ground Floor, Ann Street Tower, 295 Ann Street, Brisbane.