The management of performance by volunteers: The use of performance feedback

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THESIS

THE MANAGEMENT OF PERFORMANCE BY VOLUNTEERS:

THE USE OF PERFORMANCE FEEDBACK

BY

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Thesis submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Award of

Master of Business (Human Resource Management)

at the Faculty of Business and Public Management

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USE OF THESIS

The Use of Thesis statement is not included in this version of the thesis.
DECLARATION
I certify that this thesis does not, to the best of my knowledge and belief:

(i) incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education;

(ii) contain any material previously written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.; or

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Signature

Date 8.01.01.
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the use of feedback by managers and coordinators of volunteers in the management of performance by volunteers.

Research into the use of feedback in the paid workforce was examined extensively. Additionally, research dealing with the application of human resource management theory to volunteers is discussed.

A foundation study conducted to examine the performance management practices in use with volunteers in Western Australia forms the basis for a multi-phase qualitative and quantitative examination of the topic. The perceptions of the managers and coordinators of volunteers, and the volunteers themselves about what constitutes poor performance and the role played by feedback in its management are examined.

Results indicate that the special "nurturing" element associated with managing volunteers, and the general feedback environment including the organisational culture, have an important role to play in the use of feedback. The findings offered here represent a reference point for managers and co-ordinators of volunteers seeking to employ feedback effectively as an effective tool in managing volunteers.
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the research

*Today, nonprofit and voluntary action research is a viable multidisciplinary concern of interest to researchers, scholars, and practitioners in many different disciplines and professions.*

(Lohmann, 1992, p. 6)

There has been a growing scholarly interest in the area of nonprofit and voluntary action research, commencing with a trickle in the 1970s and expanding to a point where in the late 1990s over forty reputable universities and organisations have dedicated research bodies conducting investigations in the area. Lohmann (1992) identified that in the early 1990s, despite the existence of such “academic centers and programs” independent scholars at a variety of institutions were still carrying out much of the research.

The research covers a vast range of work, including Lohmann’s (1992) own highly theoretical perspective on the phenomenon which he terms “the commons”, which attempts to embrace all that is included in the nonprofit and voluntary sectors as well as the associated concepts and definitions. The growing body of research also explores the operations and actions of those who work with volunteers and of volunteers themselves, and it is in the nature of this sort of research that the current work stands.

This research was conducted as a result of a preliminary study, detailed in Chapter 3, which highlighted the need for co-ordinators and managers of volunteers to have some sort of information which offered them strategies to deal with the occurrence of poor performance by a volunteer. Anecdotal evidence and personal communication highlighted that this above many other aspects of managing volunteers was of concern to co-ordinators and managers of volunteers.
The current climate for volunteer managers and co-ordinators is one of rationalisation of services, competition for funding, increasing demand for volunteers from a wider range of organisations, and what some have determined as a decline in volunteer numbers, increased accountability and the rolling back of the welfare state. Volunteer managers and co-ordinators are therefore under increasing pressure to ensure that the service provided by volunteers meets the needs of the community (Baum et al., 1999; Ironmonger, 1998; Jamrozik, 1996; Lyons & Fabiansson, 1998; Metzer, Dollard, Rogers, & Cordingly. 1997). Monitoring and evaluation, service standards and increased legal responsibility have created a climate in which organisations are less able to accept poor or declining performance by a volunteer. This research investigates the use of feedback in the management of poor performance by volunteers and offers insights to assist volunteer managers and co-ordinators.

1.2 Research problem

The problem addressed in this research is:

To what extent is feedback used by Western Australian organisations in the management of performance by volunteers?

Essentially this thesis presents a picture which illustrates that Western Australian organisations are using feedback to manage the performance of their volunteers to varying degrees. It is argued that poor performance by volunteers should be managed, and that feedback, if used in a consistent and sensitive manner, is an appropriate tool. It is apparent, however, that the environment in which the feedback is to be used is the key to the success of such feedback and that there are a number of other variables that will influence the outcomes.
1.3 Justification for the research

The 52nd session of the United Nations General Assembly approved by consensus on November 20, 1997 a proposal by the Government of Japan and 122 other Member States that the year 2001 be proclaimed the International Year of Volunteers (1998).

This statement indicates the growing recognition of the importance of volunteers and volunteering. Australian Bureau of Statistics figures (ABS, 1996, p. 1) reveal that over 2.6 million Australians (19% of the civilian population) served as a volunteer at some time during 1995. These figures have been interpreted to indicate a decline in the level of volunteering in Australia since the 1980s (Jamrozik, 1996; Lyons & Fabiansson, 1998). Earlier figures derived from an Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) time use survey indicated that “voluntary workers each contributed 134 minutes of work per day on average to the community” (ABS, 1994a, p. 19). Ironmonger (1998, p. 23) estimates that aside from the direct benefits to the volunteers in terms of personal satisfaction and social contact,

if the households and organisations [in Australia] paid the full cost of benefits they receive in the form of voluntarily provided goods and services received, the money involved would be equivalent to about eight per cent of GDP ($31 billion in 1992).

In addition to the numerical approach to quantifying volunteering, there is increasing interest in the contribution of volunteering to civil society (Salamon & Anheier, 1998b; Seigel & Yancey, 1994). Volunteering is cited as one of the components of social capital, defined as “the processes between people which establish networks, norms, social trust and facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit” (Cox cited in Baum et al., 1999, p. 13). It is argued that the strength of social capital within the community might be indicated by the willingness of its members to volunteer (Baum et
al., 1999, p. 14), and that “the extent to which people are active in secondary groups in the community” can be seen as a “crucial test of the health of civil society” (Putnam cited in Wilson & Musick, 1997, p. 252).

Despite the increasing recognition of the role and contribution of volunteers to the Australian economy and to our society, the pressures on volunteer managers and coordinators come from all quarters. Governments expect increasing levels of responsibility and accountability from agencies and organisations. Increasing demands and reduced spending have meant that such expectations must be met in order to receive grants and other forms of funding. As a consequence, organisations are demanding more of their volunteer programmes as expenditure is cut in other parts of the organisation, and clients are demanding more of the services they receive despite the reduced spending in areas such as welfare and education.

Volunteers themselves have expressed varying levels of concern about the organisation of their volunteer work. Seventy one percent of British volunteers indicated that they would like their work to be better organised (Davis Smith, 1998), and smaller percentages indicated concern with boredom, coping with workload and taking up too much time. In Australia, when asked about concerns about aspects of voluntary work, 11.6% of volunteers indicated a lack of support was their major concern, with amount of time required (10.4%) and legal responsibility (10.5%) being the next major concerns selected from the choices offered (ABS, 1996). Sixty four percent, however, indicated that they had no concerns. Research has shown that volunteers “strongly desire conditions and organizational settings that facilitate effective and efficient volunteer work.” (Colomy, Chen, & Andrews, 1987, p. 23).
The increasing “professionalisation” of volunteering is reflected in the establishment of “best practice” standards (Volunteering WA, 1997 as amended) and in the nature and content of the material being published about volunteers and volunteering. It is important that the day to day management concerns of those who manage volunteers are researched thoroughly to complement the formal and informal support networks established to share information (such as the Co-ordinators’ Network in Western Australia). It is important, too, that such research address not only the concerns of the managers and co-ordinators and their agencies but also those of the volunteers themselves, to enable the outcomes to enhance the volunteer experience rather than simply imposing one more expectation on volunteer and manager alike. This view is supported by recent findings in the United Kingdom which indicate that whilst organisations must manage volunteers professionally, care must be taken to avoid alienation of the volunteer workforce by the same actions (Cunningham, 1999).

1.4 Methodology

A combination of quantitative and qualitative methods was used in this study. The adoption of the combined approach was designed to serve the dual purpose of canvassing a range of views and issues and making direct contact with the people most likely to be affected by the phenomena under examination. Further discussion of the methodology can be found in Chapter 5.

1.5 Outline of the thesis

This thesis is presented in seven chapters, and includes a synopsis of a preliminary study which was an important aspect of the development of this topic. Chapter 2 examines the
literature in two areas. The first is that of feedback which has been researched widely in relation to the paid workforce. It is generally agreed that feedback is vital in the management of performance, but that it is also a very complex, and at times dangerous, tool which needs to be carefully handled. The second area is the literature on the management of volunteers, which contains only a small amount of empirical research into the use of feedback with volunteers.

The foundation study is outlined in Chapter 3. This preliminary study served to provide a backdrop against which to further examine the issues related to the management of the performance of volunteers, and was the tool for the workshop at which the research issue was identified. Those findings from that study which are contributory to this thesis have been presented here.

Chapter 4 outlines the research framework and the methodology and instruments are examined in Chapter 5, with further explanation of the combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches.

The findings of this research are set out in Chapter 6 which also details the profile of respondents and presents an analysis of the data.

Chapter 7 looks at the implications of the findings of the research, offers some insights for practitioners, and outlines the potential for further research.

1.6 Definitions

Key and controversial terms are defined here to establish the position of this research. Further discussion of the terminology takes place in both the literature review and theoretical framework chapters of this thesis.
Perhaps the most controversial is the definition of the terms volunteer and volunteering. There is some debate as to the nature of these terms, and there are those who argue that a purist definition of the terms should be employed at all times (IAVE, 1998). Cnaan, Handy and Wadsworth (1996) proposed a framework for the clarification of operational definitions of the term volunteer (Figure 1.1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Free choice</td>
<td>Free will (the ability to voluntarily choose).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relatively uncoerced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Obligation to volunteer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remuneration</td>
<td>None at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>None expected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expenses reimbursed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stipend/low pay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>Formal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Informal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intended beneficiaries</td>
<td>Benefit/help others/strangers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Benefit/help friends/relatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Benefit oneself (as well)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 1.1: Key dimensions of the term volunteer**
(Source: Cnaan, Handy & Wadsworth, 1996, p. 371)

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Using the framework developed by Cnaan, Handy and Wadsworth (1996) the definition of volunteer for the purposes of this research is as follows:

- Category 1: Free Will - volunteers exercised free will or were relatively uncoerced.
- Category 2: Remuneration - volunteers did not receive a stipend or low pay
- Category 3: Structure - volunteers were in a formal volunteer setting
- Category 4: Intended beneficiaries - volunteers came from the full spectrum of this dimension.

Further discussion of the adoption of this definition is contained in Chapter 2.
Two other terms defined for the purpose of this research are "feedback" and "supervisor". For the purposes of the questionnaire definitions of these terms were offered to assist volunteers. These were as follows:

- *feedback* means information about your performance as a volunteer. This information could be in many forms - from a beep from a computer when you make an error - to a formal recorded discussion;
- *supervisor* means the person who organises, supervises, co-ordinates, is your contact, or generally looks after your needs while you volunteer.

Each of these terms are further discussed in the literature review in Chapter 2.

### 1.7 Limitations

This research is largely exploratory. The sample of six organisations and the number of participants (85 questionnaire respondents) are relatively small and this limits generalisability of the findings. It is contended that the propositions made are based on a sufficiently varied sample to be taken seriously and to form a sound basis for further hypothesis testing and discussion. It is also contended that the workshops and seminars were a valuable method of reducing the impact of these limitations.

### 1.8 Assumptions

Assumptions about the issues to be researched may have some bearing on the findings. It is assumed that volunteering is beneficial and necessary to the community. On the basis of the assertions by such authors as Handy (1988) and Drucker (1989; 1990), it is also assumed that it is valid to consider the application of management theories in the volunteering context. This issue emerged in discussion during data collection and is considered in both the literature review (Chapter 2) and the findings and discussion chapters (Chapters 6 and 7).
1.9 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the key features of this thesis. It has introduced the research problem and outlined the direction of the thesis. It has demonstrated the value of the issue under investigation and the methodological approach taken.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Chapter 2 reviews the literature relevant to the issue of the use of feedback in volunteer management. It commences by exploring the various ways in which the terms volunteer and volunteering may be applied and outlines the use of the terms for this research. It then examines the debate as to whether the theories developed for paid employees can be applied to volunteers, and concludes that there is some merit in taking this approach. Subsequently the research into the use of feedback with paid employees is discussed. This is followed by an examination of the extant literature on this specific topic with volunteers.

2.2 Context: Volunteers and Volunteering

There seems to be widespread agreement that there is a lack of clarity about the terminology associated with volunteering (Handy, 1988; Kendall & Knapp, 1995; Marshall, 1996; Noble, 1991). Cnaan and Amrofell (1994) observed that much of the research they encountered in their review of over 300 articles assumed that the terms “volunteer” and “volunteering” are universally understood, but that a wide variety of interpretations had been placed on the exact nature of the terms.

Recent discussion of the terminology has provoked some debate. Ellis (1997), for example, suggests that the terms must continue to evolve from that which they once represented, if volunteering is to remain in touch with what is happening. Others disagree, stating that the purist approach to the terminology is necessary to maintain the integrity of volunteering (Lee, 1997 cited in IAVE, 1998, p. 12). Ellis (1997, p. 29)
argues that the term volunteering is “evolving and expanding”. She outlines the progression from a time when debate centred around whether a “volunteer” could receive reimbursement of expenses, to the current debate in the United States where the lines are now blurred and there is even a possibility that stipended service and payment of college or university tuition fees at the end of periods of voluntary service might still constitute volunteering. Ellis contends that it is unwise to “blindly accept all changes as inevitable”, but that to “hold on to outmoded definitions of volunteering” is to “risk narrowing our scope to nothingness” (1997, p. 29).

Cnaan and Amrofell argue that for the purposes of research “it is essential that the exact profile of volunteers be reported in each study if we are to avoid erroneous generalisations.” (1994, p. 349). They suggest that the use of a classification system will allow researchers to “account for contradictory findings and will be challenged by the need to look for what explains variability... for specific unique groups.” (p. 349). Davis-Smith (1992, p. 73) suggests that even within the United Kingdom research findings cannot be easily compared due to the lack of agreement on a definition. Lyons, Wijkstrom and Clary (1998, p. 46) have called for a framework and the setting of standards in volunteering research.

Trawling for information on volunteers and volunteering makes the lack of clarity in the terminology rudely apparent, as much of the material is found in less obvious places in the literature. Conducting research into any aspect of volunteers and volunteering requires the development of operational definitions, and to compare research such definitions require clarity. This study argues whilst it may be difficult to offer a definitive statement on the “correct” terminology, there is a need for a framework which
can be adopted both in research and in the practice of volunteering, and which will allow generalisation and better comparability of results.

2.2.1 Current definitions
In Australia, the term “volunteer” and the act of “volunteering” have been defined by a number of authoritative organisations for differing purposes. Volunteering Australia adopted a definition of volunteering which is found in the Volunteering Standards Manual (Volunteering Australia, 1998, np):

Formal volunteering is an activity which always takes place through not-for-profit organisations and projects and is:

- Of benefit to the community and the volunteer;
- Undertaken of the volunteer’s own free will and without coercion;
- For no financial payment; and
- Underpinned by Volunteering Australia’s Principles of Volunteering.

This definition specifically excludes:

- Labour performed through community service orders,
- Work-for-benefit-schemes which do not allow the individual to choose to volunteer,
- Student work experience.

The reasoning here is that these activities are not entirely of the person’s free will, but are done in order to “fulfil an obligation.” (Volunteering Australia, 1998 in Volunteering WA, 1997 as amended).

The standards manual also specifies that “volunteer work is based in non-commercial settings.” This is despite recognition of “corporate volunteering” and “employee volunteering” where companies encourage their employees to undertake voluntary work
during work time (e.g. bus drivers in free dress to raise money for Radio Lollipop), or becoming involved in voluntary activities such as Clean up Australia in their own time. Volunteering Australia, and Volunteering WA, have pragmatic as well as philosophical reasons for the adoption of the definition above. Apart from the arguments about purist definitions and the alienation of the true volunteer, there are strict frameworks within which these bodies apply for funding assistance from government and other sources. For there to be any chance of competing for the limited funding available, agencies must be clear about both their client base and their role.

For its inaugural survey of voluntary work the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) designated a volunteer as “someone who willingly gave unpaid help, in the form of time, service or skills, through an organisation or group.” (ABS, 1996, p. 31). It did not specifically define voluntary work, despite this being the title of the survey. The ABS voluntary work data was collected as part of the monthly survey of labour force status (Lyons et al., 1998, p. 47).

The Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) in its paper “Volunteering in Australia” defined voluntary work as work which is:

*Done of one’s own free will;*
*Provides a service to the community;*
*Is done without monetary reward, excluding out of pocket expenses. (ACOSS, 1996, p. 5).*

The ACOSS paper observes that “volunteering is work. It is also an expression of active participation in the civic life of a democratic society” (p. 5).

The research for the ACOSS paper did not include unpaid household work and “informal volunteering” within its scope. This exclusion of “informal volunteering” corresponds
with the ABS inclusion in its definition of the work "being done through an organisation or group." The purpose of the ACOSS paper was to examine "the nature and extent of volunteering in Australia, with a particular emphasis on issues relating to women's involvement in voluntary work" (ACOSS, 1996, p. i).

The 1991 UK survey of voluntary activity used the definition:

any activity which involves spending time, unpaid, doing something which aims to benefit someone (individuals or groups) other than or in addition to a close relative, or to benefit the environment (Lynn & Davis Smith, 1992, p. 16).

This approach was used again in 1997 (Davis Smith, 1998). Interestingly, the survey questionnaires did not use this definition directly. The questionnaire also "deliberately avoided the terms 'voluntary work' and 'volunteering' in order to reduce the risk of respondents answering only within their own perceptions of what constitutes volunteering" referring instead to unpaid work and help (Davis Smith, 1998, p. 14).

In the US volunteering has been defined as "not just belonging to a service organisation but working in some way to help others for no monetary pay" (Hodgkinson & Weitzman cited in Sundeen, 1992, p. 275).

2.2.2 Statistical comparisons
Definitions applied in Australia and elsewhere largely exclude informal volunteering.

For example, the Australian Bureau of Statistics in its survey on unpaid work (ABS, 1994b, p. 4) excluded "work undertaken by an individual or group of individuals acting on their own initiative .... Because there is no way of capturing such activity which occurs within and between households."
The UK studies, whilst making a clear distinction between formal and informal volunteering, did collect data on voluntary activity undertaken “outside of an organisational context and on an individual basis, such as a neighbour helping a neighbour” (Davis Smith, 1998, p.14).

Statistics Canada has maintained more exclusions than ABS in its appraisal of unpaid work, largely on the basis of the difficulty of distinguishing “work” from leisure (ABS, 1994b, p. 6).

Lyons (1994, p. 164) suggests that the confusion over the terminology might contribute to the lack of recognition of the value of the services provided by volunteers to the Australian economy. Concern over definitions and methods of calculation are compounded by concerns over the classification of volunteer activity as “work” or as “leisure”. Part of this concern is perhaps associated with the changing view of the volunteer as active citizen rather than “Lady Bountiful” (Sheard, 1995). Sociologists (Baldock, 1988) and labour historians (Oppenheimer, 1998; Scott, 1998) have also been examining this view. Scott (1998) argues that if volunteer activity is classified as “work” much of labour history, especially that of women, is yet to be examined, as there a vast amounts of “work” which have been undertaken by women in a voluntary capacity, which have not traditionally be included in historical considerations of "work" and labour.

Lyons, Wijkstrom and Clary (1998) examined the various approaches taken in four national studies and in four cross-national studies. They concluded that there were a number of variables which were framed differently in each of these studies including technical differences such as size of sample, and scope differences such as the
informal/formal distinction. More important, and more "fatal" however, were the variations they encountered in "the way the activities that are the object of the study were defined and how the questions designed to elect the data were framed and put." (p. 48). The examples provided by the authors demonstrated their concern about the variation in the way "activities were identified to respondents" and in the prompting of responses (p. 49).

To further complicate the picture, some authors refer to a volunteer, voluntary or non-profit sector. Comparisons are difficult to make between the various viewpoints taken on the existence and boundaries of a "sector". Many researchers and commentators have observed that the term sector refers to that which is not the state or the market (i.e. the government or profit sectors). This results in the definition being somewhat unclear, and referring to what the "sector" is not, rather than what it is (Marshall, 1996). It can also result in the misconception that volunteering does not take place in the other two sectors. It is beyond the scope of this paper to pursue the debate on the existence or otherwise of a sector or sectors, but a large number of differing terms, models and taxonomies have been proposed on this subject (e.g. Hodgkinson, 1990; James, 1997; Kendall & Knapp, 1995; Marshall, 1996; Salamon & Anheier, 1994; Salamon & Anheier, 1998a; Salamon & Anheier, 1998b).

**2.2.3 Differing Perceptions**

Qualitative research in the UK revealed that volunteers and non-volunteers had differing perceptions on the nature of volunteering. All of the definitions offered included giving up time to do work in an unpaid capacity, but non-volunteers had a perception that
volunteers "put themselves out" and suffered some inconvenience, whilst volunteers saw their activities in a more positive light (Thomas & Finch, 1990, p. 17).

Cnaan et al.'s (1996) investigations of "perception" demonstrated that there was wide variability in what people classified as "volunteering". This was supported by work of Lyons (cited in Lyons et al., 1998). The varied perceptions of volunteering is an issue examined in relation to youth volunteering in the UK. Young people did not like the term "volunteering", and one third of the participants felt the terms volunteer and volunteering were a "turn off" at least to some extent (Gaskin, 1998).

Research in the area of volunteering could be hampered by perceptions of the terms volunteer and volunteering. People do not always classify what they do as volunteering, either due to its not fitting the traditional form of volunteering, or in some cases due to its "strong association with charities and the 'stigma' attached" (Gaskin, 1998, p. 40). This may result in their not viewing research in the area as being relevant to them, and declining to participate, or leaving out important information. The UK studies have attempted to avoid participants making assumptions or leaving out important information, by using mechanisms to avoid use of the terms volunteer and volunteering. This has included structuring questions which ask about lists of specific activities.

### 2.2.4 Mapping the terms

Work by Cnaan and Amrofell (1994) and Cnaan, Handy and Wadsworth (1996) revealed that the term volunteer is utilised to describe a large range of activities and is perceived in a wide variety of ways. Cnaan and Amrofell (1994) utilised a mapping sentence technique which allows classification of a complex multidimensional phenomenon and enables each person or group to be defined by selection of relevant categories in each
facet or dimension. The ten facets identified are "who is the volunteer, what is being volunteered, the level of formality of the volunteer work, the frequency of volunteering, the amount of time allocated per volunteer episode, relatedness of beneficiaries, characteristics of beneficiaries, who manages volunteers, management activities and volunteer rewards." (p. 340). The mapping sentence is presented in Figure 2.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A person X of a certain gender, age, education, or SES (socioeconomic status)</td>
<td>who gives Time, Service, Expertise, Prestige, or Connections</td>
<td>to a(n) Individual, Informal, Nonprofit, Governmental, or For-profit Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at least once, each time for</td>
<td>Less than 1 hour, 1-3 hours, 3-5 hours, or &gt; 5 hours</td>
<td>To Oneself, Relatives, Similar people, Staff, Strangers, or causes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at least once, each time for</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who are characterised by a(n) age, need, gender, or race, and X is managed by (a) Formal coordinator, staff member, veteran, volunteer, oneself. X</td>
<td>Who conducts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment, Screening, Orientation, Preservice training, Ongoing supervision, Recognition or Termination and X obtains rewards that are Tangible, Internal, Social, Normative, or avoidance</td>
<td>and X is a Volunteer.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 2.1: Volunteering Mapping Sentence**

(Source: Cnaan & Amrofell, 1994, p. 341)

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This mapping sentence allows the researcher to identify the research participants. It can allow a researcher to select variables to be measured - such as demographic data, and time spent volunteering - as well as dimensions to be used to construct an operational definition. Discussion of each of the facets of the mapping sentence demonstrates the scope of the terminology and its application. This then allows the researcher to comment on the generalisability of results, and allows the reader, and other researchers, to categorise and compare research. The limitations of the mapping sentence become apparent when attempts are made to bring it into everyday use. Ten facets is excessive, and some, such as demographic data and frequency, duration and management of volunteer work, are too specific.

2.2.5 Four dimensions of volunteering

Further work by Cnaan with Handy and Wadsworth (1996) identified four key dimensions across which there was a spectrum of acceptance of entitlement to be called a volunteer, and which constitute a framework which could be adopted for everyday use. These are presented in Figure 1.1 (on page 16).

The four key dimensions approach accepts that the definition of volunteer is not universal, and invites discussion on these four aspects.

Dimension 1: Free Choice

Compulsion or coercion to volunteer is not acceptable to many volunteers and practitioners in defining volunteering. There are, however, examples where this dimension becomes blurred. The voluntary work initiative for unemployed Australians has maintained the element of free will in its scope. No unemployed person will be forced to do “voluntary work” under this scheme. (VWI, nd). Some unemployed,
however, feel that voluntary work is the only option available to them if they are to be successful in maintaining skill levels or in gaining experience to assist them in the search for paid work.

In addition, some organisations do not make a distinction between their volunteer workers and those who “serve the community as a result of a court order and as a means to avoid a prison sentence” (Adams, 1992 cited in Cnaan & Amrofell, 1994, p. 347). This possibility would need to be recognised by a researcher conducting research in volunteering. The response set provided by a “volunteer” who is not a true volunteer may skew results, or may limit comparability of findings.

Generally it is agreed that members of an association are not volunteers per se, and become volunteers when they take on active roles such as committee member, fundraiser, worker or administrator. The dimension of free will may occasionally be compromised when an element of coercion is involved in the movement of the status of person from member to volunteer, such as the existence of penalties including removal of membership entitlements for failure to perform rostered duties.

**Dimension 2: Remuneration**

Volunteers in some categories do receive remuneration. United Nations Volunteers for example, receive a living allowance whilst on placement overseas, as do Australian Volunteers Abroad. Mesch, Tschirhat, Perry and Lee (1998) refer to stipended volunteers. Stipended volunteers in this context are defined as those who “receive some remuneration for their services but one that is below the economic cost of their investment.” (p. 1). Purists would argue that these are not really volunteers, but it is recognised that the living allowance is often far less than the volunteer would receive if
they took their professional skills into the workforce seeking employment at market rates. Mesch et al (1998) also caution that the motivation to volunteer may be influenced by the learning opportunities and career enhancing aspects of such work and therefore the dimension of free will may also be affected. Reimbursement of expenses is seen as important to enabling everyone to volunteer regardless of socio-economic status (Hedley, 1992, p. 105). The availability of a living allowance can also be viewed as the creation of an opportunity to volunteer, and that without the living allowance the numbers of people able to volunteer would be severely reduced.

Two other situations arise where remuneration is an issue. The payment of an honorarium, traditionally paid in recognition of the donation of formal skills, or of a small fee, significantly below commercial rates, can sometimes be seen to be consistent with volunteering. Inclusion of the stipend or low pay element of this dimension allows the researcher or commentator clarity.

Dimension 3: Structure

Earlier discussion has focussed on what is and is not formal and informal volunteering, with the UK National Survey (Davis Smith, 1998) having a special component of its research focussed on this. The existence of an organised body seems to be the biggest distinguishing feature in this dimension. Where volunteering is not undertaken in association with, or under the auspices of an organisation, it is not considered to be formal volunteering.
Dimension 4: Intended beneficiaries

Self-help groups or mutual aid groups are perhaps the most controversial element of this dimension. There is support for the proposition that those who take on active roles in associations are volunteers, even when the purpose of the association is self help, and the person joined the organisation for this purpose (Cnaan, Handy & Wadsworth, 1996; Lyons et al, 1998).

2.2.6 A Definition

Cnaan, Handy and Wadsworth (1996) claim that the “pure” definition of a volunteer falls into the first category in each dimension. That is:

- the volunteer has exercised free will,
- for no remuneration at all,
- in a formal setting
- to benefit/help others/strangers.

This purist definition excludes many we might accept as volunteers in most everyday situations e.g.:

- those who take up voluntary work in unemployment schemes which are not coerced;
- those who have their expenses reimbursed, or who receive amenities free;
- those who take on informal volunteering where a group of neighbours help out a local family in a crisis by hanging out washing or by picking up children from school; and
- those who become an activities leader in a human service organisation because their child is one of its clients.

The adoption of a spectrum approach allows for a broader operational definition of volunteering where this is appropriate. The framework developed by Cnaan, Handy and
Wadsworth (1996), containing these four dimensions, is put forward as an acceptable basis for clarifying the definitions used in this research.

The category of obligation in the dimension “free choice” allows the researcher to clarify if some of the “volunteers” taking part in a study may in fact be there due to an obligation. In the dimension “remuneration”, the category of stipended service/low pay is still under debate and should remain in the framework to enable comparative research. It is necessary, however, to ensure that this element is clearly understood to mean payment which enables volunteering, and not payment for services.

The dimension “structure” is an area where a distinction is already being made in the literature (e.g. Davis Smith, 1998), and the issues here are the lack of research on the informal volunteering category, and the need for more accurate categorisation of formal volunteering in research. Finally clarity on the dimension “intended beneficiaries”, will enable researchers to make a conscious and stated decision on whether to include service which benefits the self (i.e. self-help).

For the purposes of this research the following dimensions apply to the definitions of volunteers and volunteering:

- Category 1: Free Will - volunteers exercised free will or were relatively uncoerced.
- Category 2: Remuneration - volunteers did not receive a stipend or low pay
- Category 3: Structure - volunteers were in a formal volunteer setting
- Category 4: Intended beneficiaries - volunteers were from the full spectrum of this dimension and beneficiaries include strangers and others, relatives and friends and, in some cases, the self.

2.3 The “Management” of Volunteers

A sometimes hotly debated issue is whether volunteers can, or even should, be managed according to the theories and principles developed for business and for the management
of paid employees. Harrison (1994, p. 36) argues that “we should not think, or talk, in
terms of ‘managing’ volunteers” as considering the volunteer to be “a special, rather
awkward, kind of employee” is inappropriate. He suggests that using the management
terminology, such as motivation or job description is “reductionist in nature and intent”
and devalues the volunteer experience.

Conversely, Mason (1984, p. 18) states that “not only can much of business management
knowledge be applied directly to the management of voluntary enterprises, but other
aspects of the business models can also be adapted ... [and] many voluntary enterprise
managers could significantly increase their own effectiveness” by use of this knowledge.
He argues, also, that the “assets of voluntarism [idealism, much product for little effort,
innovation... ] bring liabilities, such as softness, inefficiency, and sluggish response to
direction....” and that “because volunteer workers are not paid, direct-line accountability
is difficult to enforce. It can be achieved but only by consent” (p. 57). Aside from
Mason, Handy (1988), Leat (1993), Drucker (1989; 1990), Geber (1991) and others (e.g.
Byrne, 1990; Selby, 1978; Smith & Green, 1993) suggest that the application of
management theory can be used to great advantage in managing volunteers.

Perhaps the most balanced view is that presented by Dartington (1992), and previously
touched on by Selby (1978). This view welcomes management theory but cautions that,
in welcoming it, volunteers, and those who “manage” them, need to ensure that they do
not lose those qualities which make volunteering special - networking, autonomy,
creativity, “the voluntary, eleemosynary [i.e. charitable], altruistic, and creative qualities”
(Selby, 1978, p. 92). Dartington (1992, p. 32) also warns that to simply ignore the
opinions of those who resist ‘management’ could be destructive, and that such fears must
be “understood, to overcome the resistance to ordinary good practice”. To lose sight of these concerns could lead to unthinking application of management practices and a loss of those qualities of volunteering which attract volunteers. Colomy, Chen and Andrews (1987, p. 24) for example, found that

Thoroughly aware that they are providing a ‘gift’ of their time and resources for which they are not being remunerated, volunteers apparently expect to be treated in a manner significantly different from the typical employee. Accordingly, authoritative commands seemingly not informed by an awareness that volunteers are donating their services and are not employees may be regarded as illegitimate. At the same time, volunteers desire clearly defined responsibilities and in many cases recognize that in order to perform their work effectively appropriate supervisor guidance is essential. However, the way in which that guidance is provided and the way in which it reflects an awareness of volunteers’ distinctive non-employee status, remains problematic.

Volunteers have expressed a need for their volunteer work to be better organised:

There were also reflections on management and organisation: ‘No one wants to be associated with an organisation that’s disorganised; it makes you feel as if no one cares’. The sample of respondents wanted a more ‘professional’ and ‘organised’ approach to be taken by the volunteer using bodies (Hedley, 1992, p. 99).

It can be argued that managers of volunteers should be using the policies and practices developed for the management of people in the employment relationship to develop policies suitable for use with volunteers, but with caution. To develop volunteer management practices by adopting and adapting business management practices provides a starting point and some context in which to work. The extensive experience of management of volunteers which is available, and the controlling influence of cause and effect, should serve to prevent the wholesale application of management theory without due consideration for its context.
2.4 Feedback Research

2.4.1 Management of individual performance
The management of individual performance is part of an overall system or process. The Human Resource management literature suggests that it commences with Human Resource planning, job analysis and design, job descriptions and evaluations, recruitment and selection, and induction or socialisation. It continues with communication of expectations and standards, feedback on performance, training, counselling and coaching, support if there are problems, and provision of a safe and fair work environment. It concludes with separation whether by resignation, retirement, or dismissal. In theory, these are all part of an integrated process practised by all levels of management and supervision. In practice, however, the level of implementation and/or practice of performance management varies from business to business, manager to manager, and industry to industry. One determining factor seems to be the demonstrated commitment of top management.

There is a vast amount of literature on the subject of performance management. This tends to consist of prescriptive material aimed at enabling the introduction or management of successful performance management systems in organisations, and empirical research aimed at identifying both the contributing factors and limitations to successful systems. Fletcher and Williams (1992 cited in Fletcher, 1993, p. 35) suggest that the most prevalent notion of performance management is that of creating a shared vision of the purpose and aims of the organisation, helping individual employees to understand and recognise their role and thereby managing and enhancing the performance of both the individual and the organisation.
Whilst somewhat narrow, in that it does not acknowledge the role of planning, recruitment and selection or the working environment, this notion is important in its recognition of goal setting and the link between the aims of the organisation and of the individual in the motivation of individuals to perform.

2.4.2 Poor Performance
The management of poor performance has usually been discussed separately by commentators and researchers, and component parts have been the subject of research. Measures to prevent poor performance include appropriate planning, recruitment, selection and placement, induction, training and support, appraisal and feedback systems. Similarly, appraisal and feedback systems, grievance procedures, counselling, Employee Assistance Programmes, training needs identification and training and development activities including the transfer and evaluation of training are all aspects of improving poor performance and early intervention. Discipline, punishment and separation or dismissal, and the consequences of these, constitute the more extreme measures in the final stages of the process of managing poor performance. All of these and the underpinning aspects of job satisfaction, motivation and the quality of work life have a role to play in the management of poor performance.

Poor performance, as defined earlier, can constitute many behaviours. Table 2.1 sets out some examples:
Table 2.1: Examples of Poor Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poor Performance</th>
<th>Poor Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inconsistency</td>
<td>Excessive absences or tardiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal conflict</td>
<td>Absence without contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excessive disruptions to the work</td>
<td>Poor personal hygiene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of others</td>
<td>Customer conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor personal hygiene</td>
<td>Lack of delegation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information distortion</td>
<td>Dishonesty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malicious or mischievous</td>
<td>Acquisition of others’ tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>complaints</td>
<td>Increased error rate or errors in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abrogation of responsibility</td>
<td>judgement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased accident rate</td>
<td>Reduced quantity of output</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced quality of output</td>
<td>Failure to meet targets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missed meetings and appointments</td>
<td>Failure to pass on information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refusal to follow instructions</td>
<td>Slow decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breach of confidentiality</td>
<td>Carelessness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual/other forms of harrassment</td>
<td>Sabotage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wasting time</td>
<td>Stealing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intoxication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


This table shows that poor performance covers a range of behaviours. Often it is the result of an underlying problem, either work-related or personal. These can be intertwined and can serve to exacerbate each other. Table 2.2 sets out some examples in these two categories:

Table 2.2: Factors Affecting Work Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WORK RELATED FACTORS</th>
<th>PERSONAL FACTORS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of clear role</td>
<td>Separation/Divorce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>descriptions</td>
<td>Compulsive gambling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of recognition</td>
<td>Misuse of alcohol or other drugs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical environment</td>
<td>Physical or mental health problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrimination</td>
<td>Worries about children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient breaks</td>
<td>Legal or financial problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or lack of variety</td>
<td>Relationship problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrealistic</td>
<td>Sexual problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expectations of</td>
<td>Drug related problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>employers</td>
<td>Grief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of training</td>
<td>Self-esteem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shiftwork</td>
<td>Domestic violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low wages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of job security</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job design</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Industrial Program Service cited in Buon, 1992, p. 62, Table 1)

The options available to supervisors when faced with poor performance often depend on the systems and policies in place in the organisation as well as the organisational culture, a concept which is discussed shortly. Many organisations have some form of
performance appraisal system operating in the organisation. In part this is said to be due to “external pressures rather than as a proactive process” (Fletcher & Williams, 1992, p. 47) possibly referring to such matters as the legal and industrial consequences of the actions of supervisors in handling poor performance, including discipline and dismissal or in promotion or compensation decisions.

There is a great body of research on performance appraisal. It has been considered to be “one of the most active [subjects] in terms of research, theory building and practice.” (Wexley & Klimoski, 1984, p. 35) and “one of the most heavily researched topics in personnel and human resource management.” (Cleveland & Murphy, 1992, p. 122). Much of this research is concerned with the improvement of the accuracy of ratings of performance by evaluators (Ilgen, Barnes-Farrell, & McKellin, 1993; Pearce & Porter, 1986), with the validation of performance appraisal techniques and development of new or modified techniques (Muchinsky, 1990); with the use of particular aspects of performance appraisal (e.g. Cederblom, 1982) and with the training associated with the introduction of a new system (e.g. Pulakos, 1986). This study focuses only on the provision of feedback as part of the appraisal process.

2.4.3 The Management Of Poor Performance

Researchers have spent enormous resources studying areas such as proper selection methods, motivation and leadership but research into performance decline remains limited. This is due to the fact that managing poor performance may be one of the most unpleasant tasks of management and one of the most difficult (Buon, 1992, p. 60).

The literature on the management of poor performance acknowledges its inherent difficulties. Supervisors and managers have been found to be reluctant to deal with issues of poor performance (Mitchell & O'Reilly, 1983).
Pearce and Porter (1986) in their examination of employee responses to performance appraisal feedback, examine the alignment of criticism of actions and behaviours with self-esteem. Delahaye (1986, p. 27) suggests that the reluctance of supervisors to deal with performance decline or poor performance could be attributed to the "discipline dilemma" and the conflict between the "exhortations" of text books and experts to use "positive and constructive" discipline that will "re-educate not punish", and the lessons of "harsh reality". Wohkling (1975, p. 489), found that supervisors often do not make use of appropriate disciplinary procedures, and lists eight reasons for the reluctance on the part of supervisors to handle performance problems:

- Lack of training;
- Fear that management won't back them up;
- The fact that no-one else is using discipline either and not wanting to be "the only one";
- Guilt over having done the same thing at some time;
- Fear of loss of friendship or camaraderie;
- The view that the time could be better spent otherwise engaged;
- Fear of losing their temper; and
- Rationalisation that the 'employee knows about their standard of performance so why tell them'.

O'Reilly and Weitz (1980, p. 468) suggested that supervisors are likely to vary widely in their methods and in their judgements and that the standards by which the performance of employees might be evaluated as being marginal or acceptable, will vary.

The prescriptive literature, designed to assist supervisors and managers in the management of poor performance, warns that prior to making a judgement the supervisor has a responsibility to ensure that the basis on which judgements are made is both clear and fair. The clarity and fairness of judgements are the focus of the research on performance appraisal, in particular "understanding the rater as a decision-maker who
processes social cues." (Ilgen et al., 1993, p. 322). The supervisor can be seen as having limited options when it comes to handling poor performance, particularly in instances where contracts or awards set down strict procedures, or a strong union presence means that even discipline for gross misconduct can lead to down time due to strikes or other industrial action. Fear of the consequences of dealing with poor performance can be increased by such possibilities.

Arvey and Ivancevich (1980, p. 123) found that despite the unease associated with it, punishment or the threat of punishment is actually relatively common. There is an ever growing body of research on “progressive discipline”, “positive discipline”, behaviour modification and “discipline without punishment”, which examines punishment as one aspect of disciplinary action. Even as early as 1964, the issue of discipline was being considered in the organisational context by such researchers as Huberman (1964; 1975) and Steinmetz (1969), and it has received the attention of industrial relations commentators (Delahaye, 1986). Whilst Arvey and Ivancevich (1980) suggested that researchers in organisational settings have focused on “positive” reward systems, it is inaccurate to suggest that this focus has been “entirely” exclusive of punishment, and research in the ensuing period has further examined the issue of punishment (e.g. Arvey & Jones, 1985; Ball, Trevino, & Sims, 1994).

Many organisations in recent years have implemented support or disciplinary systems as an alternative to the punitive measures favoured in the past. “Progressive discipline” involves a series of steps from oral notification of poor performance to dismissal, should each progressive step fail to improve performance (Nankervis et al., 1993). This can sometimes include referral to an Employee Assistance Programme. Employee
Assistance Programmes (EAPs) are designed to assist employees to deal with a whole range of problems both personal and work related, including alcohol and substance abuse (Buon, 1992).

### 2.4.4 Performance Feedback

Arguably, prior to invoking any formal discipline processes, there is an intervening stage involving performance feedback. Equally, it can be argued that feedback should not wait until the formal performance feedback process associated with performance appraisal, but should happen at a much earlier point in the performance management cycle, and even in the absence of a formal cycle.

There is extensive research into the subject of performance feedback, much of it conducted in the United States. Analysis of a selection of the available literature has revealed strong patterns suggesting that timely, frequent and specific feedback can be effective in the improvement and maintenance of performance. However, there is also a significant amount of research that suggests that there are many moderating and confounding variables.

The characteristics which influence the feedback process have been identified by research which has mainly, but not exclusively, concentrated on supervisor to subordinate feedback. Education research, communication research and training research has also contributed to the body of knowledge on feedback. Despite the fact that much of the research into feedback has been conducted in laboratory settings, an analysis conducted by Kopelman (1986) suggested that the findings of the laboratory research on feedback can be applied in field settings.
In 1984 two seminal articles appeared which attempted to summarise the research to date and to identify the key issues in the performance feedback process. Larson (1984) presented a preliminary model of the informal feedback process from the perspective of the supervisor and identified antecedent and consequent variables in the process, whilst Taylor, Fisher and Ilgen (1984) summarised responses to feedback from a control theory perspective. Much of the research to follow refers to the theories and models presented by these researchers. Fedor (1991) presented a later review of research on recipient responses to performance feedback and offered a further model as a basis for research. Fedor’s model incorporated the research which had been conducted in the intervening period and focused specifically on the recipient responses to feedback, arguing that the purpose of providing feedback was to “persuade recipients that their attitude or behaviors need to change.” (Fedor, 1991, p. 75).

Performance feedback was defined by Ilgen, Fisher and Taylor (1979, p. 350) as “a special case of the general communication process in which some sender (ie source) conveys a message to a recipient. In the case of feedback, the message comprises information about the recipient”. It could be argued that this definition highlights a common feedback problem. Feedback should focus on the particular behaviour or attitude being assessed rather than on the recipient. (Sherman, 1987). Other definitions of performance feedback include factors of the purpose or quality of the feedback.

In the field of psychology the term feedback was adopted around 1967 from engineering and cybernetic theory. It has been concluded that “the term may be used for any information about the functioning of one or more components of a system that leads to modification of functioning, [and occasionally] for the process or system itself rather than
the information that is ‘fed back’ (Reber, 1985, p. 271), with the latter often referred to as the ‘feedback loop or feedback circuit’. In this discussion, the term feedback process (the process) will include the process or system as well as the message itself.

Research into the feedback process has been conducted from a variety of aspects. The source, the delivery, the message and the response of the recipient have been identified in the literature as the major components. The organisation and the feedback environment have also been identified as major factors in the process. The process is pictorially represented in Figure 2.2.

Figure 2.2: The Feedback Process

Source of feedback

Sources of feedback are identified as:

> other people: supervisors and managers, co-workers or peers and the work group, subordinates, and clients or customers;
> the task environment: the job, equipment;
> the organisation: the information systems in place in the organisation; and
> the self.

Ilgen, Fisher and Taylor (1979, p. 350) identified three of these: others, the task and the self. The organisation was identified later as a provider of feedback (Herold, Liden, & Leatherwood, 1987; Herold & Parsons, 1985).
In the early part of the 1990s the term “360 degree feedback” came into Human Resource Management parlance, and was even referred to as “the latest management craze to sweep the United States” (Ferguson, 1994, p. 66). The term was somewhat misleading in two senses: it suggested a new concept (Moses, Hollenbeck, & Sorcher, 1993, p. 283), when peer, task, subordinate and client feedback have been researched previously, and it also suggests the direction of the feedback when it refers to the sources of data collection for the feedback process. It is used to describe that which has been referred to as “multiperspective measurement”, a means by which ratings are gathered from peers, subordinates and the supervisor, as well as the self (Tornow, 1993, p. 223), and it often refers to the instruments being developed and used for this process. The literature would suggest that it could be classified with performance appraisal processes rather than as “feedback” in the sense used in this discussion.

Larson (1984) proposed a model which emphasised the delivery of feedback, and the most effective means of delivery. He observed that the variability of feedback delivery, between supervisors, and across subordinates and situations by the same supervisor was an area with little empirical evidence and no comprehensive theory specifying the factors that determine when and under what circumstances supervisors will actually give performance feedback to their subordinates (p. 43).

The model presented antecedent variables including “cognitive, affective and situational factors” which influence a supervisor’s delivery of informal feedback; and consequent variables which “include the subordinate’s subsequent work-related attitudes and behavior” and the effect on “the supervisor’s own cognitive and affective states”.
In addition, Larson (1984) outlined research to that time, which had identified that factors such as timing and frequency of feedback, individual versus group feedback, feedback associated with goals and standards, and the nature of the source of the feedback, all had a significant effect on feedback responses.

**The Feedback Message**

Important factors in the feedback process are the nature of the message, whether it be negative or positive, plus the attributions associated with it (Bannister, 1986), the specificity or otherwise of the message, and whether the message contains information about the process or outcome of the behaviour in question (Earley, Northcraft, Lee, & Lituchy, 1990). Not only is the message itself important, but its delivery, its relationship to other events and the organisational environment and its relevance or perceived importance to the recipient are all factors in determining the effectiveness of the message.

**Recipient Responses to Feedback**

Recipient response to feedback has been another major area of research. Taylor, Fisher and Ilgen (1984) presented a control theory perspective of recipient responses to feedback, and examined the interaction with goal setting theory and standards. They suggest that “performance feedback is able to provoke a wide variety of responses from recipients, not all of which are beneficial or desired by the organization.” (Taylor et al., 1984, p. 114). Responses which they suggest are not considered desirable include dissatisfaction with the job, the feedback system or the feedback source, decline in performance, or intentional disobedience. Their review concludes that much of the advice in the prescriptive literature, despite its lack of empirical evidence, is in fact
accurate, and that "specific, frequent, nonthreatening and impersonal" feedback, participative, problem solving and goal setting appraisal interviews, and fair objective and consistent performance measurement will elicit more desirable responses from recipients (Taylor et al., 1984, p. 114).

Taylor, Fisher and Ilgen (Taylor et al., 1984, p. 114) outline four practical implications of their review. These can be summarised as follows: to draw attention to the standards used to evaluate behaviour, the perceived credibility and fairness of feedback sources, self monitoring by recipients and the role of expectancies.

The reaction of a feedback recipient is often dependent on how they interpret the message based on their own characteristics, expectations and theories, and on their perception of the source and the message. Fedor's (1991, p. 109) model, established to "identify significant influences on the feedback process", adds several further factors to the earlier theory including recipient intentions, attitudes and level of elaboration (the extent to which one thinks about or scrutinises information relating to the incoming message). He concludes that

*effective feedback needs to take into account recipients' pre-existing beliefs, the relative certainty of those beliefs and the recipients' motivation and ability to process the information...It will often be insufficient simply to provide 'quality' feedback and expect recipients to respond 'logically'.* (Fedor, 1991, p. 112).

The dimensions and elements of feedback have been labelled and identified by many researchers. The complex relationships which exist and the difficulties associated with understanding the process have resulted in many of the researchers selecting only one small area of the field as the subject of research.
Table 2.3 sets out some of the characteristics investigated by numerous analysts. These are categorised under each of three headings identified as constituting the three major components of the process, despite some overlap of categories. The table is by no means exhaustive, but gives a fair indication of the complexity of the feedback process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCE CHARACTERISTICS</th>
<th>MESSAGE CHARACTERISTICS</th>
<th>RECIPIENT CHARACTERISTICS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Credibility</td>
<td>Timing</td>
<td>Expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trustworthiness</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Frame of reference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competence</td>
<td>Specificity</td>
<td>Locus of control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliability</td>
<td>Content - process, behaviour or outcome</td>
<td>Self esteem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intensions</td>
<td>Information type - task, cognitive or functional validity</td>
<td>Social anxiety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived intentions</td>
<td>Sign</td>
<td>Self monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived power</td>
<td>Accuracy</td>
<td>Need for achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self perceived power and control</td>
<td>Quantity</td>
<td>Need for cognition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affect toward recipient</td>
<td>Feedback type - comparative, evaluative or prescriptive</td>
<td>Prior knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attribution</td>
<td>Method of generation</td>
<td>Organisational tenure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salience</td>
<td>Setting - public or private</td>
<td>Attitudes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implicit assumptions and beliefs</td>
<td>Level of elaboration</td>
<td>Subjective norms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valency</td>
<td>Comprehensibility to recipient</td>
<td>Perceived control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task and outcome dependence</td>
<td>Relation to goals</td>
<td>Behavioural intentions - pre-empt, impress management, improve performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norms and roles in organisation</td>
<td>Distractions - noise</td>
<td>Attribution - own, or sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attractiveness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precedent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The implications of the research into feedback are many, but the most important aspect of these, for the purposes of this discussion, is the effect feedback delivery can have on recipients. The aim of delivering feedback about poor performance is "to persuade recipients that their attitudes or behaviors need to change" (Fedor, 1991, p. 75). If this is
the case, understanding the implications of feedback delivery can improve the results the manager can achieve through the feedback recipients, and reduce the chances, and consequences of "destructive feedback" (Baron, 1988; 1990). Research suggests that people seem to prefer feedback that is specific, is delivered promptly, and is considerate in nature rather than feedback that is general, is delivered only after a delay, and is not considerate in tone.

...too often, persons in authority tend to criticize subordinates only when they are upset, angry and no longer able to keep their tempers in check. As a result the negative feedback they provide is neither specific ... nor considerate ... and often attributes poor performance ... to internal causes (Baron, 1988, p. 199).

Such destructive feedback "is unlikely to redirect recipients' behaviour so that their performance can be improved or to enhance their job-related motivation" (Baron, 1988, p. 199). The fairness of feedback, and the perceived fairness of feedback, are of vital importance to the response of the recipient to the message (Fedor, 1991).

2.4.5 Goal Setting and Feedback

The interaction between goal setting and feedback is very strong (Earley et al., 1990). Locke and Latham (1990, p. 173) present strong arguments that "unqualified claims for the effectiveness of either [goal setting or feedback] alone are misleading in that neither is very effective in the absence of the other." Essentially the review by Locke and Latham (1990) demonstrates that goals are a vital component in the translation of feedback into action, and performance towards goals is far more reliable when feedback is present.

Research suggests that the relationship between goal setting, feedback and performance is strengthened when this is based on a participative process. In particular, research
conducted by DeGregorio and Fisher (1988) showed that some level of participation by the subordinate in the feedback process tended to result in more positive subordinate perceptions of accuracy and satisfaction.

2.4.6 The Feedback Environment and Organisational Culture
The “Job Feedback Survey” (Herold & Parsons, 1985, p. 303) was developed for the systematic assessment of the “feedback environment” in an organisation, that is “a means for assessing the amount and type of performance feedback available to individuals in work settings.” This study built on earlier studies which attempted to clarify the construct “feedback” (Herold & Greller, 1977).

A follow up study by Becker and Klimoski (1989) further developed the feedback environment research, and related perceptions of the organisational feedback environment to performance, as opposed to individual feedback events. This study examined the relationship between specific aspects or types of feedback to performance. The results suggested that there are a number of additional factors in the feedback environment besides the source type combinations identified by Herold and Parsons, including, for example, the possible implications of the feedback for personal outcomes such as performance evaluations for the purposes of raises and promotions. However, they did not investigate beyond the source type combinations, except to analyse the relationship to performance more closely.

Arguably, there are other environmental factors which influence the feedback process, and therefore the “feedback environment” consists of more than just the amount and type of feedback available. Such factors include the external environment in which the organisation operates, the organisational culture and morale, and the organisational or
management attitude to feedback and performance. If, for example, feedback is delivered mechanically as a requirement of an unpopular appraisal process imposed by management, even an enthusiastic source motivated by positive factors, such as a genuine desire to assist, will have difficulty overcoming some of the environmental factors associated with an inappropriate organisational culture or low morale.

Definitions of organisational culture are many. The culture literature is not consistent, nor is it in agreement as to the existence or definition of culture in organisations. Schein (1990, p. 111) suggests that organisational culture is developed over time by a group with sufficient history together that "the perceptions, language and thought processes that a group comes to share will be the ultimate casual determinant of feelings, attitudes, espoused values, and overt behaviour." Thus the behaviour of the group develops into norms and patterns which have developed through shared experiences.

Schein (1990, p. 111) defines culture as "(a) a pattern of basic assumptions, (b) invented, discovered or developed by a given group, (c) as it learns to cope with the problems of external adaptation and internal integration, (d) that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore (e) is to be taught to new members as the (f) correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to these problems."

Organisational culture is said to determine such factors as the nature of communication in an organisation, or the criteria for the allocation of rewards and punishments (Cascio, 1998; Moorman, 1991; Nankervis et al., 1993; Podsakoff, 1982). It may also determine such behaviour as feedback seeking. Ashford and Northcraft (1992) argue that as the flow of feedback in organisations is often less than desirable, people should feel free to seek feedback as and when they needed it. They suggest, however, that feedback seeking
may not be initiated by employees for fear that the impression this gives might be negative. "Poor performers [in particular] need to feel free to seek feedback, unencumbered by impression management concerns, lest their reluctance doom them to a downward spiral of less information, less performance, and a lesser organizational reputation." (p. 331). Thus a culture which is conducive to seeking feedback when one is uncertain or concerned is more likely to invite such behaviour.

Culture sends messages to organisational members about what is expected in terms of behaviour. Commentators (e.g. Spector, 1996) have identified that there can be differences between the espoused or promoted culture and the underlying beliefs, assumptions, and values of an organisation. Official rewards and punishments are accompanied by actions from organisational members which reward or punish behaviours. Such actions can be as simple as seeking someone's opinion, or failing to do so. Thus an organisation can have an expensive reward programme for performance which is not highly regarded by its members and this message is soon received by newcomers.

Skilfully provided, feedback can be a useful tool in the management of poor performance amongst paid employees. Delivered objectively and sensitively, and in private, as part of a two way discussion which focuses on the fact that organisational or performance standards have not been attained, soon after the event of poor performance has occurred, feedback can motivate the employee to improve performance, provide encouragement that this is possible, and offer suggestions as to how this may be achieved. Subordinates must feel comfortable about seeking assistance or support when uncertain, and supervisors and managers must feel equipped to provide negative feedback as part of
their everyday role, so that most problems are dealt with promptly and sensitively before they escalate to a level requiring other action.

2.5 Performance Management and Volunteers

There is an ever-increasing amount of literature aimed at the co-ordinator of manager of volunteers outlining the "How to" of managing volunteers. The handbook or manual is probably the most prevalent in Australia (Curtis & Noble, 1991; Davies, 1989; Fisher & Cole, 1993; Kupke, 1991; MacGregor, James, Gerrand, & Carter, 1982; Volunteering WA, 1997 as amended). Local and overseas authors have tackled the issue of performance management as a component part of the larger issue of management of volunteers or voluntary organisations (Adironack, 1989; Curtis & Noble, 1991; Davies, 1989; Fletcher, 1987), or concentrated on one aspect of performance management for a ready reference or guide (MacKenzie, 1988; 1988; Vineyard, 1989). Until recently the Australian literature on the subject of performance management of volunteers has been of the nature of commentary (e.g. Modder, 1994; Nairn, 1994) or opinion (Harrison, 1994) or prescriptive in nature - such as the handbooks and manuals discussed above. The limited amount of empirical research published is scattered throughout the literature, often in journals associated with the industry in which the volunteers are operating, e.g. healthcare or tourism. The establishment of the Australian Journal on Volunteering under the auspices of Volunteering Australia, has allowed scope for this to change.

The advice to managers and voluntary organisations in the prescriptive publications examines issues such as: whether volunteers should be trained (Davies, 1989); how to handle "difficult volunteers" (MacKenzie, 1988); motivation, rewards and recognition (Vineyard, 1989); whether volunteers should be appraised in the same manner as paid
staff (Adironack, 1989); and feedback and appraisal (Curtis & Noble, 1991). The advice to managers seems to be that “Regular or long term volunteers should have the same opportunities for supervision and support as paid staff,” (Adironack, 1989, p. 68) with adaptation of the process to suit voluntary status.

Case study literature from the United States and Britain provides evidence that since the late 1980s performance management has become important in volunteering. Drucker (1989) and Geber (1991) suggest that some of the organisations that use the services of volunteers, in the United States in particular, are examples for the business sector by virtue of their excellent people management skills. Drucker (1989, p. 89) states that these organisations “have learned that [they] need management even more than business does, precisely because they lack the discipline of the bottom line”, and that “volunteers must get far greater satisfaction from their accomplishments and make a greater contribution precisely because they do not get a paycheck” (p. 91). Drucker (1990, p. 181) also argues that “in no area are the differences greater between businesses and non-profit institutions than in managing people and relationships”. According to Drucker, the management of the people and the relationships in an organisation which has both paid staff and unpaid staff puts greater pressure on the manager to apply good management practices.

Adironack (1989, p. 63) argues that motivation, recognition and clear expectations contribute to good performance for both staff and volunteers. These thoughts are echoed by Curtis and Noble (1991), in their Australian manual.
2.5.1 Volunteer Performance and Feedback
Some authors (e.g. Allen, 1987; Noble, 1991; Penn, 1990) suggest that organisations are reluctant to provide monitoring and feedback to volunteers on performance, and sometimes fail to do so at all. Job descriptions, orientation and training and support mechanisms, further discussed in Chapter 3, are somewhat wasted if the performance of volunteers is not monitored. Volunteers need to know how they are progressing, even if only by self report, and they need to be steered back on track or congratulated on their efforts. MacKenzie (1988, p. 11) argues that “volunteers urgently need the ‘guideposts’ that ongoing assessment provides.” Allen (1987) suggests that the difficulty which may arise from a field volunteer not being directly supervised can be overcome by asking them to provide self assessment, or keep logbooks, or by consultation with clients, and argues that feedback should be an integral part of the management process. One author, Yallen (1988), prescribes a set of guidelines for use with volunteers, including guidelines to reduce defensiveness.

2.5.2 Poor or Non Performance by Volunteers
Penn (1990, p. 39) states “A person who volunteers and does not perform as expected should be replaced by another person who will do the job satisfactorily.” This presupposes that there is another person available to take the job. It can also be seen as an oversimplification of the situation. Certainly it can be argued that Penn is right in asserting that not dealing with non-performance is injurious to all other people involved, and therefore being afraid to tackle the situation for fear of offending that person or hurting their feelings can be a misguided approach. But the organisation owes it to the volunteer to take other steps before removing them from their position.
Of course as Pinder (1985a) points out, it is still a matter of personal motivation and individual choice that determines performance of volunteers. It is therefore the responsibility of the organisation to identify the key motivators of its volunteers and to offer recognition and support appropriate to the volunteers themselves (Vineyard, 1988). Failure to perform can have serious consequences for the client and the organisation. There may be occasions when dismissal is warranted. However, the literature (e.g. Baldock, 1990; MacKenzie, 1988) suggests there is some level of reluctance to dismiss volunteers. Allen (1987) discusses the role of the agency as “grateful recipient” in the volunteer/agency relationship. Penn (1990) talks of the detrimental effects including demotivation of other volunteers if problem volunteers are not dismissed. MacKenzie (1988) observes that dismissal of the volunteer may be the only alternative, either in the face of repeated problems or if a fundamental element of the job (e.g. confidentiality) has been breached. There is a growing amount of prescriptive material on the dismissal of volunteers, testament to the fact that this is an issue of concern to those charged with the management of volunteers. Findings on the dismissal of volunteers in Western Australia by Baldock (1990, p. 74), indicate that there was, at that time, recognition of the right to dismiss, but that procedures were relatively informal and could lead to the volunteer being unaware of the reasons for dismissal.

2.5.3 Recent Research on the Performance Management of Volunteers.
Empirical research on the performance management of volunteers is scant, particularly in Australia. There has been a tendency to focus on the issues of motivation and recruiting when researching volunteers (Wynands, 1992). Much of the research literature originates
from Great Britain and North America, where the interest in volunteers and volunteering from academics is of much longer standing than in Australia.

Studies have been conducted into determinants of turnover (Miller, Powell, & Seltzer, 1990), roles played by volunteers in specific organisations such as the hospice movement in the UK (Hoad, 1991), measuring motivation to volunteer (Cnaan & Goldberg-Glen, 1991), the relationship between motives and incentives and attitudes and performance (Puffer & Meindl, 1992), the relationship of egoistic motives to longevity of participation by volunteers (Rubin & Thorelli, 1984), and “the effects of resources mobilisation, employee commitment and bureaucratization on the effectiveness of voluntary organisations” (Torres, Zey, & McIntosh, 1991). More recently research has been conducted into such issues as “mandatory volunteerism” (e.g. Stukas, Snyder, & Clary, 1999), older volunteers (e.g. Baldock, 1998; Chappell & Prince, 1997; Tschirhart, 1998), and supported volunteering (e.g. Woodside & Luis, 1997).

Whilst all of these provide some insight into the management of volunteers, most are overseas studies. Thus they do not account for cultural and social differences which may apply in Australia.

Research relating to paid employees has found that cultural differences do apply. Australian supervisors were found to be more likely to attribute performance to effort than ability and to be less likely to use extrinsic rewards and punishment (Ashkanasy, 1997). With specific reference to feedback, Americans were found to be more trusting of feedback received from their supervisors than their English counterparts (Earley, 1986). It is therefore unwise to assume that findings even from the United States, Canada and Britain will apply to volunteers in Australia.
Research appearing in the Australian Journal on Volunteering (e.g. Du Boulay, 1996), research commissioned by state volunteer centres (e.g. Rowley, 1996), and research conducted in relation to specific types of volunteers (e.g. tourism Decry, Jago, & Shaw, 1997): and the work being done by ABS (1996) provide some empirical data on the Australian volunteer.

Pearce (1993) has examined the organisational behaviour of unpaid workers. Pearson (1993) observes that the small amount of new research conducted by Pearce is mainly American, and that the majority of work reviewed by her pre-1975. However, Pearce (1993, p. 182) herself identifies this as exploratory research and her propositions include one that “In understaffed organizations, poor performer will not be removed unless they cause undisputably [sic] severe damage to the organization.” (1993, p. 154, Table 8.2). This adds more weight to the argument that poor performers must be managed.

The issue of evaluation of the performance of volunteers is one which has begun to be tackled by researchers in volunteering. The literature documents the introduction of evaluation programmes into organisations (Gaston, 1989; Lafer & Craig, 1993). The concerns of volunteers, and the potential for problems when introducing such a programme highlight the need for clear policies and procedures in organisations.

Adams and Shepherd (1996) have conducted one of the few empirical studies into the use of feedback to manage poor performance by volunteers. The focus of their research was on the volunteers’ evaluation of the message “in order to provide recommendations for effective communication in this important context.” (p. 364). Their study reached two major conclusions. The first is that “roles and expectations need explicit clarification”
and the second that "supervisors should provide positive face support in attempting to correct the behaviour of a volunteer" (p. 383).

"Face" is the image people believe they present to others. Face support is the efforts by another to convey a message in such a way that "face" is able to be maintained and is not threatened. Adams and Shepherd's (1996) research is somewhat inconclusive, but its results suggest that "sometimes the message is less important than the context in which it is spoken" (p. 381) and perhaps more importantly that there is interaction between positive face support and what is known as interpersonal construct differentiation. Interpersonal construct differentiation is defined as "the number of cognitive constructs a person has for forming impressions of others" (p. 368) and has a bearing on face support in that people with higher differentiation extract more information from the social behaviour of others, and are more likely to be appreciative of efforts at offering face support than those with less differentiation. This suggests that face support efforts will be valued and recognised more by volunteers who have relatively well developed interpersonal awareness. The efforts of volunteer co-ordinators and managers in dealing with performance issues in private is in line with the concept of face support.

2.6 Conclusion

It is clear from the literature that feedback is a useful tool in the management of performance. If used sensitively, in private, as part of an ongoing relationship between supervisor and subordinate it can provide the manager or supervisor with an avenue for correcting performance problems at an early stage. The evidence of the literature is that volunteers expect to be well organised and to receive support and supervision in their volunteer activity. Volunteers, too, are likely to benefit from the careful use of feedback
in the management of their performance. This research aims to explore the application of feedback in the management of volunteers in Western Australia.
CHAPTER 3: FOUNDATION STUDY

3.1 Introduction

The foundation study, conducted in 1994 to prepare an overall picture of the issue of performance management of volunteers in Western Australia, will now be examined. This foundation study is the platform from which the subsequent research was built. It provided detail of the human resource practices being applied in organisations which utilise the services of volunteers, and the context in which these were being applied. More importantly it established that there was a need for research to investigate the actions of co-ordinators and managers of volunteers in dealing with problems of poor or non-performance by volunteers.

3.2 Purpose of Foundation Study

The foundation study aimed to "explore the performance management of volunteers... and examine the potential for further research." (Paull, 1994, p. 2). It sought to develop a picture of the management practices in use in Western Australia in the management of volunteers. A more detailed report was published in 1994 by the Volunteer Centre of Western Australia (Inc) (now operating as Volunteering Western Australia) to provide information and feedback to participant agencies. Much of the following detail is drawn from that report.

3.2 Methodology of Foundation Study

3.2.1 Participants

Representatives of thirty two organisations (a 64% response rate) responded to a questionnaire mailed out to organisations who were registered with The Volunteer Centre
of Western Australia (Inc) (now Volunteering WA). Questionnaires were completed by the volunteer manager or co-ordinator, or equivalent, in each organisation. A follow up seminar was held to discuss the findings of the research with the Co-ordinators’ Network. The Network is a networking and support body which meets under the auspices of Volunteering Western Australia.

3.2.2 Instrument
The survey instrument consisted of a multiple choice questionnaire containing questions on recruitment and selection, induction, performance assessment, job descriptions, feedback, discipline and dismissal practices in the surveyed organisation. Demographic information about each organisation was also sought (e.g. number of volunteers). Space was provided at the conclusion of the questionnaire for respondents to express an opinion on “the application of business principles in the management of volunteers” and to comment on any other aspect of the questionnaire. Apart from this optional question the questionnaire relied on organisational knowledge and did not survey opinion except in as much as the judgement of the respondent was required to classify elements of the management of performance in their own organisation according to the choices provided.

3.2.3 Limitations
The foundation study was limited in scope and size and reliance on the Volunteer Referral Service (VRS) as the sole source of contacts. As this was preliminary research to explore the context and identify broad research themes and issues, these limitations did not invalidate the study.
3.3 Profile of Respondents to Foundation Study

3.3.1 Response Rate
Thirty three survey forms were returned to the researcher. Of these one had not been completed, the respondent indicating that he/she did not feel the survey was relevant to his/her role. The useable results represented a 64% response rate and provide a reasonable basis for preliminary research.

3.3.2 Respondents to Foundation Study

Foundation Study: Organisation Type
The 32 respondent organisations were mainly service delivery organisations.

The category “other” was selected by five (5) participants who indicated that their organisation type was: Education, Family Support, Fundraising, Resource Centre/Library, and Service and Recreation/Leisure.

Figure 3.1: Organisation Type
(Source: Paull, 1994. Figure 1, p. 15)
**Foundation Study: Numbers of Volunteers**

Numbers of volunteers in respondent organisations ranged from one organisation with none at present to ten organisations with over 200 volunteers. Figure 3.2 shows the distribution of respondent organisations by numbers of volunteers.

![Figure 3.2: Distribution of respondent organisations by number of volunteers](image)

*Figure 3.2: Distribution of respondent organisations by number of volunteers*

*Source: Paull, 1994. Figure 2, p. 15*

**Foundation Study: Age of organisations**

The age of respondent organisations ranged from less than one year old (one organisation) to over 25 years of age (eleven organisations). Thirteen organisations were between 10 and 25 years old. The majority of organisations which responded to the foundation study were either 10 to 25 years old or older (Paull, 1994, p. 15).

**Foundation Study: Volunteers' hours per week**

Most respondent organisations indicated that each volunteer spent an average of two to five hours per week in the organisation. Two organisations indicated that volunteers spent
an average of more than 15 hours per week in the organisation. One organisation failed to respond to this question, and one provided a complex answer indicating that different volunteers spent differing amounts of time depending on their type of volunteer activity: field volunteer, office volunteer, committee member (Paull, 1994, p.16).

**Foundation Study: Length of service of volunteers**

Information was sought regarding the length of service of volunteers. One respondent indicated that this is dependent on the type of volunteer: field volunteer, office volunteer, committee member. Two organisations indicated that volunteers either departed within the first six weeks or stayed on, in one case for up to fifteen years in the other for six to ten years. Three organisations did not respond to this question. Turnover and reasons for leaving are further discussed in Section 3.5 (Paull, 1994, p. 16).

This data on the respondent organisations in the foundation study provides comparative data for use in the examination of results in the central study.

### 3.4 Findings on Volunteer Management Systems from Foundation Study

Data was collected on a wide range of performance management system components to provide an overall picture of the performance management environment in which the volunteers are working. The Foundation study demonstrated that, in accordance with the recommendations of the prescriptive literature, respondent organisations employed Human Resource Management practices in the management of volunteers in Western Australia (Paull, 1994). As member agencies of the Volunteer Centre of Western Australia (Inc) it is possible that this may be due in part to their membership and participation in Centre activities and training, and that non-member agencies may have a
different profile. Nonetheless the Foundation Study provided clear evidence that volunteers were receiving briefing and training for their various roles in their agencies. The following summary provides an overview of the types of Human Resource Management practices in place in agencies which responded to the Foundation Study survey in order that these may be considered in the development of the theoretical framework for the main study to follow.

3.4.1 Recruitment and Selection in Respondent organisations

Recruitment

As the performance of a volunteer is likely to be related to how well they are matched with the position or work for which they are recruited, data was gathered on recruitment and selection procedures. Employers use a variety of recruitment methods for paid employees including newspaper advertisements and public and private agencies. The literature on volunteering indicates a heavy reliance on word of mouth recruiting, (e.g. Lynn & Davis Smith, 1992) and this is a rich and powerful medium through which to attract volunteers. There are major advantages and some disadvantages associated with this method.

The financial outlay associated with word of mouth recruiting is limited to the leaflets and brochures the agency keeps for the information of those who express an interest. Further, there are no advertising costs or agency fees. The bulk of the information passed on to potential volunteers is relatively accurate, at least about what the "recruiter" does for the organisation, and the enthusiasm of the "recruiter" accompanies the message. The "word of mouth" method of recruiting, however, may mean that similar types of people will be recruited and that the pool of applicants will be relatively limited. It also
means that the organisation will have an element of homogeneity amongst its volunteers, whereas a diversity of backgrounds and skills might assist the organisation in the pursuit of its goals. The new volunteer recruited by another method, for example VRS referral, might find that the existing group already has a great deal in common and a network of friends and associates. The new person may feel like an outsider and leave, or at least remain on the periphery. This is the reported experience of one potential volunteer who left soon after offering his services as an emergency services volunteer. He attributed this to the culture of the organisation and the collective mindset of the existing core group (Personal communication, 24.3.94).

For the purposes of this study, respondents were asked to rank the importance of sources of recruitment from one to five on a list provided (refer Table 3.1). Many only indicated two sources of equal significance (e.g. word of mouth and VRS). The results indicated that word of mouth closely followed by referrals from the VRS were the two main sources of recruitment. Several agencies ranked two sources equal first. Table 3.1 indicates the ranking given by respondents.

### Table 3.1: Sources of Recruitment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>1st</th>
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<th>3rd</th>
<th>4th</th>
<th>5th</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Word of Mouth</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4th=3, 5th=0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer Centre Referrals (VRS)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4th=3, 5th=2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media Advertising</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4th=2, 5th=3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newsletter</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4th=4, 5th=1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Recruiting Drive</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4th=0, 5th=2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Information Services</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4th=2, 5th=3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other * &quot;Received Service&quot;</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Building Signage&quot;</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4th=0, 5th=1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Professionals</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4th=1, 5th=1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libraries</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4th=0, 5th=1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: One additional "Other" response was recorded: "Community corrections", however there is some concern whether this is "volunteering", as no further details were provided. The respondent ranked this 4th.
The two major sources of recruitment for respondent agencies in the Foundation Study are “word of mouth” (34% of first choices, and 29% of second choices) and the Volunteer Referral Service (VRS) (29% of first choices, and 29% of second choices). These figures are possibly biased by the selection of the sample using the mail out for the VRS. Volunteering WA stipulates that agencies are not to rely on the VRS for recruitment, and that additional recruiting efforts are required. VRS also stipulates that they do not recommend potential volunteers to agencies, that the service is only to put the potential volunteer in touch with an agency, and that it is the responsibility of the agency to screen and place potential volunteers.

Curtis and Noble (1991, p. 7) warn of “over recruiting” and suggest the setting of targets to avoid the situation of too many volunteers and not enough work. Any campaign of recruiting, whether continued word of mouth recruiting or some other activity such as an annual recruiting drive, media publicity or community information services, requires the agency to be aware of its needs in terms of numbers and skills required so that they don’t have willing hands sitting around idle because there is insufficient work to keep them occupied.

Curtis and Noble (1991, p. 97) cite a dissatisfied volunteer as leaving after a year because the “organisation just accepts any number of recruits. As a result our rostered days are too spread out. I’ve lost all my enthusiasm.”. “Successful recruitment should not be measured by volunteer numbers alone” (6 Principles 1992, p. 28).
Job descriptions, duty statements or outlines provide the organisation with a good idea of the types of work which are required to be done, the time it takes to do it and the skills required.

_Gone are the days when anybody will do. Today the talk is of ‘focused recruitment’, going after people with the skills, attitudes and knowledge you want to do the job right (MacKenzie, 1988, p. 8)._

Whatever form of recruiting is adopted, realistic recruitment appeals outlining the true nature of the work that is available will reduce the number of volunteers who leave due to frustration and dissatisfaction stemming from unrealistic expectations (Pinder, 1985b). In the employment situation realistic job previews have been shown to assist in reducing the turnover created by the candidate being sold a position which is not as it has been previewed (Breaugh & Billings, 1988).

**Selection and Placement Procedures**

Twenty-three respondents indicated that they “require potential volunteers to complete an application or registration form”. Only 8 do not require this and two organisations provide responses as follows:

Yes, _“for office volunteers, not for support group volunteers”_; and

Yes, _“usually”_

No details were sought on the information required by these forms. There did not appear to be any pattern regarding type or size of organisation.

**Interviews**

The only other selection tool about which respondents were asked was interviews. Those who indicated that they did conduct interviews were asked a series of questions regarding
who conducted the interviews, the format of the interviews, the purpose of the interviews
and the action taken if a potential volunteer was found to be unsuitable. Only two
respondents indicated that they did not interview potential volunteers. Of the remaining
31, 25 indicated that interviews were conducted by a paid staff member alone and the
other six either by a volunteer or by a panel (Paull, 1994, p.18).
The purpose of the interviews was indicated by 19 agencies to be a combination of:
"suitability or otherwise of the volunteer"; "record keeping"; and "appropriate job
placement". However, five agencies indicated that the interview was to determine
suitability alone, one to effect job placement alone, and none for record keeping alone.
Three agencies indicated that the purpose of the interviews was for the determination of
suitability and job placement. Two agencies indicated that there was an additional
purpose in conducting interviews: "to create good feeling", and "accountability". That
only two respondents indicated that they did not interview potential volunteers,
demonstrates the prevalence of this selection tool.
Interviews for the selection of paid employees are notoriously unreliable methods of
selection, and many researchers have proved the inability of interviews to predict the
future performance of employees (Cascio, 1998). Employment interviews are still widely
used, mainly due to the absence of a more cost effective, valid and reliable substitute
(Cascio, 1998). Cascio (1998, p. 221) suggests that research is beginning to show that if
the interviews are conducted by trained interviewers, on information directly relevant to
job performance and according to a strict set of guidelines, this will increase the
effectiveness of this tool.
The interview format was varied, with six using a standard interview guide, ten using a free ranging interview or chat, and fifteen using a combination of these. The format does not appear to be dependent on the position of the person who conducts the interviews. In the two agencies that used volunteers to conduct the interviews, one used a standard guide and the other a combined format.

The results of the foundation study indicated that the combination of standard interview guide and free ranging chat is the most widely used interview format (Paull, 1994). This may be a result of the interviewer pursuing the areas of interest of the volunteer and the areas which cause concern for the interviewer in the structured part of the interview.

Curtis and Noble (1991) recommend a semi-structured format to be followed by the interviewer, if only to ensure that all areas are covered by the interview. The variety of potential volunteers may mean that arrangements need to be made to vary the interview format, for example if the potential volunteer has high support needs.

The interview is a matching process, not only to assess the suitability of the potential volunteer but often to assist in placement in a position which interests and suits them. Job descriptions will assist in this process. Pinder (1985b, p. 54) recommends “probing as much as is possible into the needs and values applicants are seeking to fulfil through volunteer work” to achieve a fit between expectations and reality. Research has shown that volunteers will leave if their volunteer work does not satisfy the needs which initially motivated them to volunteer (e.g. Morrow-Howell & Mui, 1989).

**Unsuitable recruits**

Curtis and Noble (1991) recommend that doubts held by the interviewer be pursued to avoid placement of an unsuitable volunteer.
Allen (1987, p. 258) observes that in the area of recruitment the organisation recruiting volunteers is often “the grateful recipient” and that where demand exceeds supply organisations cannot afford to be “choosy”. She also says that without well-defined validation of selection processes for volunteers it would be unfair and unwise of agencies to select only those who are “most likely to succeed”.

Fifteen respondents to the Foundation Study indicated that they refer unsuitable applicants to another agency or the Volunteer Centre and four do both. Two respondents indicated that they have not encountered this situation, and one failed to respond to this question. Table 3.2 sets out the responses to this question:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3.2: Unsuitable Recruits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Find them a minor position in your agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B Turn them away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C Refer them to the Volunteer Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D Refer them to another agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Take other action:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- A or B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- A or C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- C or D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- “Find another position - no position minor”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- “Tell them, show them around, let them decide”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOT ENCOUNTERED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Paull, 1994, p. 18)

When asked what action is taken when a candidate is felt to be unsuitable two agencies indicated that this has not been encountered. Only two agencies indicated that they simply turn away the unsuitable applicant and most refer them to another agency or to the Volunteer Centre, as is recommended by the Centre.

3.4.2 Briefing: Job Descriptions, Induction and Training

Job Descriptions

The prescriptive literature recommends the development of job descriptions as the first step in the scheme of managing the performance of volunteers (e.g. Curtis & Noble,
This allows the potential volunteer to decide whether the tasks set out are the sort of voluntary work they are seeking. It also allows the organisation to determine the type of volunteer they are seeking, whether any specific skills might be required, the time commitment required, and the number of people or other resources which need to be sought.

In the foundation study, organisations were asked whether they had job descriptions for their volunteers. This was included in the survey document adjacent to questions relating to feedback on performance. The foundation study results indicated that 21 organisations had developed job descriptions for at least some of their volunteer positions (Paull, 1994, p. 16).

The specific use of job descriptions in the recruitment and selection process was not surveyed by the questionnaire. Volunteering WA requires that all vacancies which are registered with the Volunteer Referral Service (VRS) have a job description for consultation by the Volunteer Referral Officer and the potential volunteer. The development of a job description is likely to be prevalent among organisations using the VRS, and thus the sample might be biased in this regard.

In comparison to the foundation study results, only 12% of the volunteers who responded to a 1991 United Kingdom survey had job descriptions, and only 8% of those who did not, felt they were necessary (Lynn & Davis Smith, 1992). Job descriptions, according to popular HR theory, underpin the whole performance management process from recruiting the right person for the job to communicating what is required and providing feedback on good or poor performance. Ambiguity, confusion and stress have been found to be able to be reduced by clear duty statements and established reporting relationships (Cascio,
Organisations whose volunteers are only required for one or two hours one day twice a year may still find there is some benefit in a simple statement of what is required, who to report to on arrival and what to do at the end of the time. Job descriptions also provide a basis for training, for statements of service and for providing references.

Fletcher (1987, p. 50) identifies two other benefits of job descriptions for volunteers:

- clear boundaries between the work of volunteers and paid staff,
- often a point of conflict or ill feeling (see also Allen, 1987, p. 259; Hoad, 1991, p. 244); and
- the provision of a feeling of belonging to the organisation.

Willis (1992) suggests that it may not be wise to set formal job descriptions until after the volunteer has been recruited, so that the volunteer can contribute to its formulation. For the purposes of recruiting, however, the organisation needs to have an idea of its recruiting requirements.

**Signed Agreements**

The foundation study questionnaire asked respondents whether their organisation required volunteers to sign any form of agreement. Seventeen indicated that they do not, thirteen indicated that they do and three indicated that this is dependent on some factor or another, including the nature of the volunteer work. Of the thirteen who do require that an agreement be signed by at least some of their volunteers, only three do not include confidentiality in the content of the agreement. Other factors included in these agreements included responsibilities and performance requirements. The combinations of content which were recorded for the 13 organisations who have agreements with their volunteers is shown in Table 3.3.
Table 3.3: Content of agreements

| Confidentiality only                     | 2 |
| Confidentiality and responsibilities    | 3 |
| Confidentiality, responsibilities, and performance | 2 |
| Confidentiality, performance and rights of the volunteer | 1 |
| Confidentiality and insurance           | 1 |
| Confidentiality, personal details and insurance | 1 |
| Confidentiality, performance, responsibilities, review period, registering on and off, police clearance | 1 |
| Registration to volunteer               | 1 |
| Responsibility, performance, notice on leaving | 1 |
| NOT COMPLETED                           | 1 |

(Source: Paul, 1994, p. 18)

Signed agreements have been recommended by some in the area of volunteer work. These are not enforceable at law.

There may be some value in having contracts with volunteers, even though they are not legally enforceable. The signing of an agreement serves to reinforce the responsibilities discussed or agreed verbally by both parties. *Behavioural contracts* (Sulzer-Azaroff & Mayer, 1991), as they are referred to in the psychology literature, may be useful. These involve a contract drawn up by both parties stating the role, duties and conditions for each party, including in this case, the establishment of the job description as suggested by Willis (1992). Research has shown that parties are more likely to adhere to a contract both have contributed and their respective rights and responsibilities are clear (Sulzer-Azaroff & Mayer, 1991). The concept of behavioural contracts will be discussed again later in relation to the concept of a “renewal of commitment” in Chapter 6.

**Induction/Orientation**

Respondents were asked whether they conducted a formal induction or orientation programme for volunteers. This was referred to as “one that is written or established so
that all volunteers receive the same or similar information”. Ten respondents indicated that they did not. The remaining 23 indicated that they had programmes which ranged from a one hour group session with a handout or reading material, to “twelve sessions of group training plus a practicum.” Both of these examples are from service delivery organisations. The organisations which do not have an induction programme included six service delivery organisations, three self help organisations and a library/resource centre.

The literature on volunteer management, and human resource management, emphasises that careful recruitment and selection procedures are wasted if the new volunteer is not adequately introduced to both the organisation and the position. Allen (1987, p. 259) claims that the initial training of volunteers usually focuses on the set up of the organisation, “rather than providing detailed information about the operation and goals of the program (sic) and/or allowing volunteers to practise some of the skills necessary to this operation”.

Whilst content of orientation or induction was not specifically surveyed, some agencies indicated that their programme involves extensive training. One organisation holds 12 sessions of training followed by a practicum, during which time unsuitable volunteers are “weeded out”. Other agencies have a group orientation of one session or one hour. There may be a certain level of induction or orientation involved in getting started on the job which may not be structured or planned but which has developed to a level whereby all new volunteers get roughly the same introduction.
Training Policy

Training is an area with some conflicting opinions. Time spent on training a volunteer who then leaves and takes their new skills into the paid workforce can be seen by some as a waste of resource. Similarly, some volunteers believe that because they are offering their services for tasks for which they are already competent, they should not be expected to participate in training (personal communication 14.4.94). Baldock's findings indicated that just over half of the volunteers interviewed did not believe they required special training, and only one quarter felt that training was essential (Baldock, 1990, p.70). The 1991 UK survey (Lynn & Davis Smith, 1992, p. 66) indicated that 77% of volunteers had not received training and did not believe it was necessary. In contrast to this, the literature on the management of volunteers recommends the training of volunteers (e.g. Curtis & Noble, 1991). Certainly it may not be necessary to provide skills training to some volunteers, but it is still likely to be beneficial to ensure they understand the expectations of the organisation. Change in policy, procedures or expectations may also require training. In addition, Fletcher (1987) suggests that even long term experienced volunteers should be offered some regular training, perhaps in the form of workshops or forums on particular issues. Regular workshops and forums, it is suggested, will offer the opportunity to share ideas and experiences with newer volunteers, and thus pass on their knowledge from one generation of volunteers to the next, or to be kept up to date in trends in their area of work.

In the foundation study two questions were asked on training. The first sought yes/no responses to statements regarding policy on training, and the second sought details regarding practice. The responses to these questions are set out in Table 3.4 and Table 3.5.
Table 3.4: Training Policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Policy</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>No Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training is unnecessary</td>
<td>3*</td>
<td>18**</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training is compulsory prior to placement in a job</td>
<td>17*</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training is a reward</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training is used to assist people with difficulties</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training is optional for volunteers who wish to pay</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training is optional prior to placement</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-optional but free</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as required</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuous on job</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not specified</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note:  
* one (1) indicated that this did not apply to all volunteers, was contingent on the type of work  
** one (1) changed the wording to “Training is necessary” and indicated YES  
(Source: Paull, 1994, p. 18)

The policies on training varied between agencies, with some requiring training as compulsory prior to placement in a volunteer position, and some considering it to be unnecessary.

Table 3.5: Regularity of Training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regularity of Training</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unnecessary</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>a. length of service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change or poor performance</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>b. 1=type of volunteer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Induction</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>c. 8=plus other response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constantly</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>b. 1=type of volunteer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other:</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- continuously</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contingent on type of volunteer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>if required</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:  
a. Respondent indicated that service was often one day only and therefore training is unnecessary  
b. Respondent indicated regularity was dependent on type of work  
c. Several respondents indicated induction plus one other response  
(Source: Paull, 1994, p. 18)

No details were sought on the content of training or on the qualifications of those designing or giving the training.
Baldock (1990, p. 68) states that "the provision of training is one of the most significant aspects of the professionalisation of the volunteer workforce" in the social welfare field in which her research is based. Her findings indicated that 57% of organisations provided no training or had only some on the job training.

The findings of the foundation study indicated that, of the respondent organisations, only three believe training is unnecessary, just under half require volunteers to undertake at least pre-placement training, and another quarter offer this as optional. Other training is offered with varying regularity.

### 3.4.3 Support

Support to volunteers is an area often identified by the prescriptive literature as enhancing the ability of the volunteers to undertake their roles. Three areas investigated by the foundation study were reimbursement of expenses - identified as important in the volunteer management literature (e.g. Curtis & Noble, 1991), grievance procedures and "employee assistance" identified in the HRM literature (e.g. Cascio, 1998; Nankervis et al., 1993).

#### Reimbursement

Most manuals and guides suggest that the organisation has a responsibility to allow the volunteer to offer their services and not be out of pocket. This is not seen as payment, but as "enablement", to allow anyone to volunteer regardless of circumstances. The respondents all seem to offer something to their volunteers in this regard.

Question 9 sought to discover the organisation’s policy regarding making it possible for volunteers to offer their services at little or no personal cost. Two organisations did not respond to this question. Of the 31 who did, 23 offer out of pocket expenses, with one
indicating that approval must be given in advance. Fifteen have a petrol subsidy system, and twelve repay the cost of phone calls. Some organisations selected all three responses, but most selected only two. Three organisations offer an honorarium, and two more do so “rarely” and “at the committee’s discretion”. Other reimbursement offered to volunteers included tea and coffee (2), lunch (1), “use of facilities”, “volunteer excursions”, and “training record, statement of service, referee for job application” (Paull, 1994, p.20).

**Grievance Procedures**

Organisations were asked if they have “a written procedure or policy for volunteers to have grievances or problems heard”. Twenty five organisations indicated that they do not. One organisation indicated that this is currently being drafted. Of the eight organisations who indicated that they do have a written policy, five supply all volunteers with a copy and three do not. Further details were sought as to who heard grievances and whether the person concerned had been trained for such a role. Three organisations have the paid supervisor hear grievances, one offers the option of either the paid supervisor or a member of the board of management, one has a member of the board hear grievances, one offers the option of paid supervisor or another paid staff member, and one refers grievances to another paid staff member. Of these, five are trained and three are not specifically trained for this role. One of the organisations without policies indicated that the organisation has a general grievance procedure not specifically designed for volunteers, and another that volunteers are “invited to attend staff meetings at which problems can be raised and discussed”. The eight organisations who have grievance procedures are not confined to service delivery organisations: Five are service delivery
Eight respondent organisations indicated the existence of a grievance procedure. A grievance procedure might set out how the volunteer might approach the organisation if a problem or difficulty exists which needs resolution. The existence of a grievance procedure is a signal to the volunteer that the organisation is willing to listen. The relatively low number of formal grievance procedures could be because the organisations have informal and open systems of communication which Mason (1984) argues are part of the culture of voluntary organisations and which Dartington (1992) warns might be lost, if care is not given in the implementation of management philosophy. This issue is discussed further in Chapter 6 in relation to the special “nurturing” aspect of managing volunteers.

"Employee Assistance"

Recognition that volunteers have a life outside the volunteer community, or that there may be aspects of their volunteer work with which they need help results in support of volunteers in a formal sense similar to the Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs) offered to paid employees in some organisations. EAPs operate on the premise that personal problems can interfere with the employees’ ability to perform (Nankervis et al., 1993). Only seven of the respondent organisations make professional help or counselling available to their volunteers in a formal sense. Just under half offer support and counselling as part of the management process, and a further six offer informal support through social contact. Only six organisations indicated that there are no support or counselling services available to their volunteers (Paull, 1994, p. 21).
The "caring" nature of much volunteer work is likely to contribute to this high level of support for volunteers. In the UK (Lynn & Davis Smith, 1992, p. 69) the 1991 figures indicated that 23% of volunteers felt that they did "sometimes need advice and support about the sort of help that they give to the group or organisation." No data on advice and support to deal with problems outside the organisation is available.

3.5 Performance Management, Feedback and Recognition

By far the greatest volume of research on volunteering, appears to be on motivation to volunteer, primarily, it appears, for the purposes of recruiting. There is limited research on the performance of volunteers. Further, as discussed previously, many authors agree that there is a reluctance and sometimes an absence, of monitoring and feedback to volunteers on performance. Three aspects of performance monitoring and feedback were examined by the foundation study. One is setting the criteria for performance monitoring and feedback, a second is recognition of volunteer work and the third is dealing with poor or declining performance by a volunteer.

3.4.1 Performance and Feedback

Two blocks of questions were asked about performance and feedback for volunteers. Question 12 asked whether respondent agencies have a written policy related to feedback on performance for volunteers. Only three agencies indicated that they have a written policy, and of these two supply a copy to all volunteers. No further details on the content of the policy were sought.

Responses to the question on job descriptions were detailed earlier (Section 3.4.2: 19 do, 7 do not, 2 for some and 5 no response). Follow up questions were then asked. Of the 19 respondents who indicated that they have job descriptions, 13 reported that they give
every volunteer a copy of their relevant document, one provides job descriptions on request, and five do not. Both the organisations who have job descriptions for some of their volunteers issue a copy to their volunteers (Paull, 1994, p. 16).

Respondents were also asked if the job descriptions included performance standards. Of the 21 respondents who do have job descriptions, 12 include performance standards. Of the five organisations who do not provide a copy of job descriptions to their volunteers two include performance standards. Five respondents require their volunteers to assess their own performance.

Of the twenty one respondents who have job descriptions for some or all of their volunteers, eighteen provide feedback on performance, one indicated "if requested" and one "no" and one "not in a formal sense". Feedback is mainly provided by the paid supervisor (11), or the paid supervisor and/or another paid staff member (4). One organisation has feedback provided by a number of people, contingent upon who supervised the practicum or training. Two organisations have a volunteer supervisor provide feedback, and one either a paid supervisor or a volunteer supervisor. One respondent indicated that feedback is provided by a paid supervisor or another paid staff member or by "clients". One of the respondents reported that feedback is provided but did not specify by whom (Paull, 1994, p. 22).

It can be argued that job descriptions, orientation and training and support mechanisms are somewhat wasted if the performance of volunteers is not monitored and the results fed back to volunteers. Volunteers need to know how they are progressing along the way, even if only by self report, and they need to be steered back on track or congratulated on their efforts. MacKenzie (1988, p. 11) argues that "volunteers urgently
need the 'guideposts' that ongoing assessment provides.” Provision of feedback by the paid supervisor or another paid staff member appears to be the most prevalent in respondent organisations who have job descriptions. The bases and format of such feedback is an area for further investigation. Allen (1987) suggests that the difficulty which may arise from a field volunteer not being directly supervised can be overcome by asking them to provide self assessment, keep logbooks or consult with clients.

Recognition

One form of feedback, most often related in the volunteer management literature to motivation and managing volunteers, is recognition. What is most frequently recognised in the respondent organisations in the foundation study is length of service of volunteers, with 15 organisations recognising this. Ten organisations recognise outstanding achievements, nine retirement, six completion of a special project and six “other” responses - “Special luncheon for all”, “annual event”, “Xmas”, “Everyone”, “At the end of course [training] and ongoing service” and “volunteer of the year” (Paull, 1994, p. 23). Recognition is most often given through certificates (15) and banquets or receptions (14). Internal publicity (“newsletter”, “Bulletin”) (11), media publicity (19), bouquets or badges (6 each). Five “other” forms of recognition were also cited - “special luncheon”, “party”, “trophy presented at AGM”, “morning tea”, “present at Christmas” (Paull, 1994, p. 23).

Most organisations recognise more than one event in more than one way. All organisations had some form of recognition of the work of their volunteers. No formal statistical comparisons were conducted between recognition and turnover but pictorial graphs of the responses showed that there was no apparent difference between
the turnover in those organisations which indicated formal recognition procedures and those which did not (Paull, 1994, Figures 6 and 7, p. 23).

Recognition, in a formal sense, is practised by all the respondent organisations. The level of recognition and its form varies. MacKenzie (1988, p. 11) admonishes “shake up your old beliefs about recognition. It isn’t just the annual dinner where pins, plaques ... and certificates are given out.... [It] is part of the central core...” Vineyard (1988, p. 4), whilst supporting the view that such activities are welcomed and esteemed by some, argues that volunteer managers should “work toward understanding the volunteer and paid staff’s motivational needs and definitions in order to create systems meaningful to the recipients.”

Traditional forms of recognition such as dinners, certificates and publicity are prevalent amongst surveyed organisations. The key according to Vineyard (1988) is to ensure that the reasons for the types of recognition given are examined and are acceptable to both the organisation and the volunteers. She cites the example of the food distribution agency which puts on a lavish spread at Christmas for volunteers who would rather see their clients benefit from this activity. Similarly, certificates for length of service may mean little if no volunteer is ever asked to leave and poor performers are recognised in exactly the same way as achievers.

**Poor Or Non Performance**

Not only does the organisation need to recognise good performance, but conversely it needs to deal with poor performance. Penn’s (1990, p. 39) argument, cited previously, that a volunteer who is not performing should be replaced by another presupposes that there is another person available to take the job. It should also be seen as an
oversimplification of the situation. Penn is right in arguing that not dealing with non-performance is injurious to all other people involved and therefore being afraid to tackle the situation for fear of “injuring that person’s feelings” can be a misguided approach. The organisation owes it to the volunteer to take other steps before removing them from a position.

Respondent organisations indicated that in the event that a volunteer either does not perform the required duties or does not perform them to the standard required by the organisation, a paid staff member speaks to the volunteer or the volunteer is counselled by a paid staff member. Such action may result in other action such as reallocation of tasks, referral for further support and advice, training or dismissal. It may also result in improved performance, the ultimate aim. Movement to another task, even if undertaken in consultation with the volunteer, may result in reduced motivation, especially if the volunteer feels that they have not been given a fair chance. Seven organisations indicated that this is an option but not that it was the only action taken in the event of poor performance.

Accurate communication of expectations at the outset, by way of a job description and behavioural contract or signed agreement (discussed earlier), and provision of resources and support including advice and support and feedback on performance will allow the volunteer to perform the required tasks. As Pinder (1985a) points out, it is still motivation and individual choice that determine the performance of volunteers. Thus it is the responsibility of the organisation to identify the key motivators of its volunteers and to offer recognition and support appropriate to the volunteers themselves (Vineyard, 1988).
Question 15 sought data on the action taken "in the event that a volunteer either does not perform their required duties [non-performance], or does not perform them to the standard required by the organisation [poor performance]. Ten options were offered plus one "other" category seeking specification. Table 3.6 sets out the responses.

Table 3.6: Action in the event of poor or non-performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spoken to by another volunteer</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spoken to by a paid staff member</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselling by another volunteer</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselling by a paid staff member</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asked to leave with explanation</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asked to leave</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moved to another task</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Given less responsibility in the hope that they will leave</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left to handle the situation themselves</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provided with an assistant or supervisor</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other - &quot;Advice sought from Volunteer Centre&quot;</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- &quot;Training&quot;</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Paull, 1994, p. 24)

One organisation did not respond to this question. Sixteen provided single responses, seven provided two responses, three and four responses were provided by four organisations each and one organisation provided six responses to this question indicating that they have six alternative methods of dealing with poor or non-performance. One organisation which indicated that in the event of the volunteer failing to perform to the required standard they would be spoken to either by a paid staff member or another volunteer, added a note that this would be undertaken "with tact". Most organisations with several options indicated that this depended on the type of task, the type of volunteer or the type of poor or non-performance (Paull, 1994, p. 24).

Dismissal

Failure to perform can have serious consequences for the client and the organisation.

There may be occasions when dismissal is warranted. The literature suggests, however,
that there is some level of reluctance to dismiss volunteers. Respondents to the foundation study were asked if a volunteer had ever been dismissed from their organisation and, if so, for what reason. Fourteen organisations indicated that this had not occurred, two that they did not know or were unsure, and one did not respond. Of the remaining 16 respondent who indicated that there had been an event of dismissal of a volunteer, one did not specify the reason, and one indicated “theft (community service order)”. As the latter response is unclear (did the theft result in a community service order, was the volunteer assigned on a community service order or did the theft take place within the organisation?) it was excluded from the results. Table 3.7 shows the various reasons for dismissal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons for dismissal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>client complaints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>client complaints, personality problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>client complaints, general unsuitability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>breach of confidentiality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>client complaints, general unsuitability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>confidentiality breach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>client placed by social worker [in volunteer position] but unhappy here</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>requested payment for service in addition to voluntary service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>standard of behaviour less than acceptable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>personality problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>verbal abuse of client</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>financial unreliability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inappropriate behaviour - unreliable, uncommitted, not listening</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.7: Reasons for dismissal
(Paull, 1994, p. 25)

Allen (1987) discusses the role of the agency as “grateful recipient” in the volunteer/agency relationship, suggesting that organisations cannot afford to view themselves in this way. She suggests that even in the event that there is a shortage of volunteers available to assist organisations they cannot afford to keep on a volunteer who is not performing. Penn (1990) talks of the detrimental effects including reduced
motivation of other volunteers if problem volunteers are not dismissed. MacKenzie (1988) observes, however, that dismissal of the volunteer may be the only alternative, either in the face of repeated problems or if a fundamental element of the job (e.g. confidentiality) has been breached. Baldock’s (1990, p. 74) findings on the dismissal of volunteers, indicate that there is recognition of the right to dismiss, but that procedures are relatively informal and can lead to the volunteer being unaware of the reasons for dismissal.

3.6 Turnover

Turnover of volunteers is an area of increasing research. As the competition for volunteers increases, not only do agencies have to attract volunteers in the first place, but they must place a priority on retaining them. The 1991 UK survey indicated that moving away from the area was a major reason for leaving volunteer positions (Lynn & Davis Smith, 1992). The survey also indicated that some two thirds of volunteers felt that their work could be better organised, and that other dissatisfying aspects of volunteer work were prevalent.

Length of service figures have been set out previously (Section 3.3.2). Respondents were asked whether they seek reasons for leaving from departing volunteers. Twenty-eight respondents indicated that they do, with one of these failing to indicate the most common reason. One organisation did not respond to this question. Of the four who indicated that they do not seek this information one added the comment that the volunteers are short term and leave when the “project finishes”. Table 3.10 sets out the reported reasons for volunteers leaving respondent organisations.
Table 3.8: Reasons for leaving

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family commitments</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work commitments*</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfaction with organisation</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personality conflicts</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need to move on to other activity</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retiring</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incapacity</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not what they expected</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteered for set time</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other - moving away</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- time pressures</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- gained employment*</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- overload - need a break</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- studies, job, going overseas</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* One (1) respondent ticked “work commitments” but indicated that this usually meant that the volunteer had gained full time employment. Thus the figures for work commitments could be misleading. Only 8 respondents selected only one answer to this question.

(Paull, 1994, p. 25)

Reported reasons for leaving cited in the foundation study included a large number of job seeking volunteers leaving for paid employment. Some respondents indicated that “obtaining employment” was a major reason given by departing volunteers, and one indicated in the “comments” section that “volunteers may really be seeking work experience and one needs to find this out at interview or else a lot of training can be spent on them then they leave to get a job” (Paull, 1994). There is thus the need for agencies to cater for this new type of volunteer.

Morgan’s (1991) figures on the number of unemployed seeking volunteer work would suggest that agencies that use the services of volunteers must address this rather than viewing the job seeker as a negative. The identification of short or long term volunteer positions and specification on job descriptions including whether training is required may begin to alleviate this problem. Different types of volunteer positions and programmes could be offered to the job seeker volunteer who may need to maintain skills, gain skills
or simply be occupied whilst seeking work. The satisfied volunteer who leaves to go to full time employment might return later to a regular longer term volunteering role in the same organisation, or another, once they have settled into their new job. The issue of short term and episodic volunteers arose again in the main study and is further discussed in Chapter 6.

3.6 Further comments from Respondents to Foundation Study

At the conclusion of the questionnaire, respondents were provided with space to comment on the application of business principles to the management of volunteers and to comment on any of the questions or answers in the questionnaire. There was a level of support for the type of research being undertaken in this study, and for the issues raised by the questionnaire. Comments included the lack of time, funding and support available to the person allocated responsibility for management of volunteers, to enable the systems of Human Resource Management to be implemented.

The comments provided at the conclusion of the questionnaires raised several issues.

- the level of support given to the co-ordinator or manager of volunteers by the organisation;
- the time available for developing policies;
- the varied level of support for research; and
- the need to incorporate qualitative research methods into research about volunteers and volunteering.

3.7 Follow up Seminar on the Foundation Study

A seminar was held to discuss the findings of the foundation study with the Co-ordinators’ Network, a group which meets under the auspices of Volunteering WA. One of the areas of most interest to those present appeared to be the issue of poor performance. As can be seen from Table 3.6, a high proportion of organisations
indicated that poor performers were spoken to or counselled by another member of the organisation, most often a paid staff member. The table derived from the questionnaire responses does not, however, present the whole picture. The level of concern over issues associated with providing negative feedback and the occasional dismissal of volunteers was highlighted at this seminar (Co-Ordinators Network September 1994). Discussions with the managers and co-ordinators of volunteers who are charged with the responsibility of managing poor performers, identified that the emotional difficulty associated with giving negative feedback, and the fact that sometimes poor performance leads to dismissal of a volunteer when early intervention may have prevented this was of major concern to them. Anecdotal evidence was provided of the possible costs, both personal and professional, to the organisation, co-ordinator and volunteers, when negative feedback is provided. The importance of this process being skilfully handled was clearly identified (Co-ordinators’ Network September 1994).

The foundation study indicated that agencies do dismiss volunteers, and for a variety of reasons, the most prevalent being client complaints (Refer Table 3.7). Subsequent seminar discussion, however, indicated that managers were uncertain as to the steps which should be taken and the level of investigation which should take place, prior to a dismissal (Co-ordinators’ Network September 1994).

There was general agreement amongst seminar participants that it is necessary to take action to manage poor performance, not only for the sake of the organisation and its client, but also for the sake of the volunteer. Never dismissing volunteers was seen as having serious repercussions, but the manner and situation of a dismissal was seen as a sensitive issue. Co-ordinators related incidents which had caused themselves, the
volunteer and other organisational members considerable distress, and which might have
been avoided if the poor performance had been identified and followed up earlier (Co­
ordinators’ Network September 1994).

The follow up seminar served to highlight the interest and concern of managers, co­
ordinators and supervisors of volunteers on the issue of managing poor performance.

3.8 Conclusion

This foundation study provided data which indicated that in a variety of agencies using
the services of volunteers, management theory is being applied in some form or another
in the management of volunteers. The question is still unanswered as to whether this
should be the case. Rather than examining the question from the philosophical or
ideological perspective of Harrison (1994) and others, the question might best be
examined from the point of view of demonstrated effectiveness.

At the time the foundation study was concluding there was little empirical evidence that it
is the absence or application of management theories that influences the effectiveness or
otherwise of an organisation, either in meeting or satisfying its mission or goals, or in
recruiting, retaining, and satisfying its volunteers. Allen (1987, p. 257) argues that
evaluation of the effectiveness of volunteer programmes needs to examine the “effects of
such programs (sic) on clients.” Others suggest that it is the volunteer who should be
satisfied (Ross, 1992). Case study descriptions of success stories such as the Girl Guides
in Western Australia (Nairn, 1994) and others in the United States (Byrne, 1990;
Drucker, 1989; Drucker, 1990; Geber, 1991), and the UK (Butler & Wilson, 1990), serve
to support the argument in favour of the application of such theories. However, empirical
and statistical research showing a causal link was limited in 1994.
The anecdotal and descriptive evidence of many experienced in the management of volunteers was identified as a valuable starting point for the development of hypotheses for further research testing. In addition, qualitative research was seen as the appropriate tool to gather some of the wealth of knowledge and experience which the co-ordinators and managers of volunteers have gained in the field. Documentation of such knowledge was identified as a good basis not only for further research, but for the enhancement of training packages and manuals already available, and for the identification of issues and trends which are important to volunteer management.

It was determined, therefore, that in-depth research following up on many of these issues would serve to aid both policy and practice, and provide a basis for further research. The identification by seminar participants of the problems associated with managing poor performance provided a focus for this research. The area of volunteers and volunteering, is receiving increasing attention both locally and overseas and is an area of interest to the student of performance management because of the diversity and complexity of the relationships and, perhaps most importantly, the absence of the much debated motivator, money. The next chapter sets out the theoretical framework on which the in-depth study was based.
CHAPTER 4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

4.1 Introduction

Chapter 3 outlined the foundation study which was conducted to explore the context for this research. This chapter outlines the research questions to be explored and sets out the theoretical framework which was developed from the foundation study and the literature review. It then goes on to set out the variables depicted in the theoretical framework and to outline the basic relationships that exist between them.

4.2 Objectives and Research Questions

The objective of this study was to examine the use of feedback in the management of performance by volunteers. The foundation study indicated that feedback is used as part of the broader Human Resource Management processes in the management of volunteers. In the absence of significant prior research, this study aimed to gain insights into this phenomenon and to describe and identify patterns in how it is used. In order to achieve this primary objective three subordinate objectives were identified:

To identify what is perceived as "poor performance" by volunteers and volunteer managers and co-ordinators.

To identify the nature of feedback received by volunteers about their performance.

To identify how feedback is used in the participant organisations to manager the performance of volunteers.

To identify the elements of feedback identified by volunteers and volunteer managers and co-ordinators as influencing performance outcomes.
In order to address these objectives the research focussed on the following research questions:

**What do volunteers and volunteer managers and co-ordinators perceive constitutes poor performance by a volunteer?**
This question sought to identify what volunteers and those who manage or co-ordinate their activities classify as poor performance in order to provide a context for the examination of the management of performance.

**What is the nature of the feedback given to volunteers?**
This question examined the feedback process, the level of information and training provided to volunteers, who provides feedback on performance and the setting or context in which it occurs.

By addressing these questions the research attempted to establish:

**How is feedback used in the management of poor performance by volunteers? and What are the elements which are perceived to influence the outcomes of the use of feedback to manage the performance of volunteers?**

The issues examined included: the perceived problems associated with providing and receiving negative feedback, and the consequences. The effectiveness of feedback in the management of poor performance was not be measured, but the perceived effectiveness was examined in the context of this question, as was the context or environment in which such feedback is provided.

### 4.3 Theoretical Framework

Figure 4.1 outlines the theoretical framework derived from the literature review and the foundation study findings reported in Chapter 3. The key relationship established links between feedback and the performance of volunteers. The other variables shown are all predicted to influence this relationship in some way.
Figure 4.1: Theoretical Framework

Each of the variables can be described as follows:

4.3.1 Variables

Independent Variable:

*Feedback*: The characteristics of the information provided to volunteers about their performance. (The source characteristics, message characteristics and recipient characteristics of individual feedback and how these interact with the feedback environment make up the feedback process.)

Dependent variable:

*Performance by volunteers*: The performance of volunteers with regard to the standard expected or required by the organisation.
The relationship between the independent variable “feedback” and the dependent variable “performance by volunteers” is the key relationship examined in this study. As this is a descriptive study no causal relationship was investigated. However, the manner in which the people charged with the responsibility of managing the volunteers use feedback to improve performance was examined, analysing the effect this had on the relationship between the volunteer and the organisation.

**Influencing and Modifying Variables:**

Other variables which influence the relationship between feedback and performance, particularly where the feedback is being adopted as a strategy in the management of poor performance, were the subject of exploration. The theoretical framework identifies the following modifying and intervening variables:

Modifying variables are defined as matters of interest to be investigated along with the independent variable and which are seen as having a direct effect on the relationship between the dependent and independent variables.

**Briefing:** The level of information provided to the volunteer about what duties are to be undertaken, and the manner in which this is provided, are seen as moderating the effectiveness of the feedback in improving poor performance.

The foundation study did not examine all aspects of briefing, but highlighted that job descriptions are in use in many organisations and that signed agreements and induction and orientation programmes are also used to provide information to volunteers about the work they are to undertake. The literature identifies that one of the causes of poor performance might be uncertainty about the work to be undertaken.

**Training:** The nature and level of training received by the feedback recipient to enable them to perform their required tasks or duties to the standard required by the organisation.
The foundation study highlighted the variability in the level of training provided to volunteers to enable them to perform the tasks allocated to them.

**Performance evaluation:** The methods, perceived accuracy, and importance of performance measurement as a basis for feedback. The existence or otherwise of a formal performance evaluation system has been highlighted by the literature as a contributing factor in the provision of feedback, with some supervisors avoiding feedback provision except in the performance appraisal or evaluation process. The volunteer literature has indicated a level of concern regarding the use of formal performance evaluation processes with volunteers.

**Options:** The range and types of options available to the feedback source when faced with the poor performance of a volunteer. Managers and supervisors of volunteers, like all managers and supervisors, will be limited by organisational and resource constraints when dealing with poor performance.

**"Nature of volunteering":** The perceptions of participants on those factors which might make the feedback environment different for those managing volunteers. This is an area of some debate and will be examined concurrently with the application of management theory to volunteering.

**Application of management theory to volunteering:** The perceptions of participants as to whether management theory developed for use with paid employees can or should be applied to volunteers. Intervening or confounding variables are those considered to be of importance but not to be directly investigated by the study.

**Voluntary status:** No comparative studies will be made with paid employees thus making this a variable with unknown consequences for the relative effectiveness of feedback.
It was important, however, for this factor to be considered in the analysis of results. This factor fits in with the "nature of volunteering" and the application of management theory issues above.

**Motivation to volunteer**: Often seen as one of the most important aspects of managing volunteers, the motivation of volunteers was not directly measured in this study, but as this ties in with goal setting and the recipient responses to feedback it must be considered.

**Organisational culture**: The culture of an organisation can have profound effects on the performance of its members but no formal culture survey was conducted.

### 4.4 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the theoretical framework and research questions which have been developed based on the foundation study and the literature review. It has detailed the key elements to be investigated in the central study and outlined the basic relationships that exist between them. Chapter 5 will outline the methodology to be adopted in the study to be conducted based on this framework.
CHAPTER 5: METHODOLOGY

5.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the approach taken in the collection, collation and analysis of data for the main study and discusses the rationale behind the chosen methodology. It demonstrates that the case study approach using multiple methods of data collection is a valid research tool and can be utilised for the development of preliminary theory. It also addresses the limitations of the methodology, and the steps taken to minimise these.

5.2 Research Design

A multi-method case study approach was adopted to examine the nature and application of feedback in the management of performance by volunteers. The aim was to document the current feedback activities of co-ordinators and managers of volunteers and to seek the opinions of volunteers about the approaches used. The result is a discussion of the findings developed to aid in the further study of this activity, and to offer those who manage volunteers some information which may assist them in this sensitive aspect of their work. A case study approach (Yin, 1994) with several points of data collection in each of six organisations was adopted. In each organisation a questionnaire to be completed by a group of volunteers was followed by a discussion with a smaller group of volunteers, and finally an interview with the manager or co-ordinator of volunteers. This approach was supplemented by workshops with wider groups, mainly of co-ordinators and managers of volunteers, to test the responses to the conclusions reached and thus increase the generalisability of results.
5.3 Rationale

Schmitt and Klimoski (1991, p. 115) suggest that "qualitative research is more of an approach than a particular design or set of techniques". They suggest also that the reasons for conducting the research might well be the rationale for selecting qualitative research as the approach to a particular study. The four reasons they list (1991, p.122) are:

- To gain familiarity or insights into a particular phenomenon;
- To accurately describe the characteristics of a particular individual, situation or group;
- To detect patterns and common threads; and
- To gather data as "a basis for the testing of theories or models of phenomena involving cause-and-effect relationships" (citing Martinko & Gardner, 1985).

Gummeson (1991) argues that there is a danger of academic researchers undertaking "distance research" (citing Gustavsen 1982. p. 17) with only limited contact with the actual subject of the research, and that qualitative research can be a powerful tool in reducing this distance, and allowing the researcher to gain a greater understanding of the phenomenon under examination. Criticism of considerable amount of the existing research in volunteering has been that only about half of it is able to be used or is of interest to volunteer administrators (Brudney & Kluesner, 1992). As a consequence, Brudney and Kluesner (1992) have urged greater co-operation between practitioners and researchers.

Qualitative research can be limited to providing only a relatively narrow view of a particular situation simply because of the size of the sample in the research design. Quantitative research can gather data from a wider number of participants in a shorter period of time, and offers the opportunity to gather information in a specific framework.
The preliminary study detailed in Chapter 3 has confirmed the view that the true nature of a situation can sometimes be obscure, or at least lack clarity, when investigated by the use of quantitative methods alone, and that valuable insights can be gained by personal contact with some of the participants in the research. One example here is the level of anxiety about the management of poor performance expressed by participants at the seminar following the foundation study that had not been apparent in the responses to the questionnaire. Consequently, some of the elements of quantitative research, combined with the approach of qualitative research can offer advantages from both types of approach. One of the most important uses of case study research is as "a source of ideas in the early stages of investigating a topic" (Leary, 1995, p. 305). Theory building is a recognised aim of case study research in this format (Eisenhardt, 1989), and can involve multiple cases and more than one level of analysis (Yin, 1994). The use of a multi-method approach can help to reduce some of the limitations of any of the single methods employed, and allows the researcher to confirm or refute findings at each stage (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 1997).

As the purpose of this study is to gain insights into the use of feedback, to describe this and to detect patterns and common threads to enable the formulation of a framework, a multi-method case study approach was adopted.

5.4 Sampling

The study was conducted in a selection of organisations. These organisations were selected on the basis of membership of Volunteering Western Australia. Consideration was given to factors such as size of the organisation, the existence or otherwise of a coordinator or manager of volunteers, and the industry or activities in which the
organisation operates. As this is exploratory research, the sample was selected according to accessibility and other characteristics including willingness to participate, thus making it a convenience sample. Factors such as accessing volunteers undertaking a wide variety of activities, as well as representing a range of demographic profiles were also taken into consideration. Eisenhardt (1989) suggests that in theory building it is not necessary to "choose cases with are likely to replicate or extend the emergent theory" (p. 537), but that rather that, due to the limited number of cases that can be studied "it makes sense to choose cases such as extreme situtations and polar types in which the process of interest is 'transparently observable'.” (Pettigrew 1988 cited in Eisenhardt, 1989. p. 537). Very limited information was available to determine which organisations might fit this criteria. It was decided, however, that organisations in which there was an interest in the topic would aid in the data gathering process. Word of mouth contact and soliciting of co-operation through the Co-ordinators' Network and workshops was considered to be acceptable in the circumstances. Co-operation from the co-ordinator or manager of volunteers was considered to be of paramount importance in collecting data in the first instance.

5.5 Participants

As previously stated, participant organisations were selected from amongst member organisations of Volunteering WA. The population is relatively stable with approximately 230 member organisations. The foundation study (outlined in Chapter 3) indicates that member organisations range from those with only two to five volunteers (with some not yet having any), to those whose volunteer workforce exceeds 200. Similarly, the age range of member organisations was from less than one year to in
excess of ten years of age. Organisations tend to cover a wide range of activities, from environment focussed groups to human service organisations, and to range from local branches of world wide organisations to organisations with very localised activities.

A number of member organisations were approached to participate in the study, and six were selected as participant organisations. The rationale for their selection included: Number of volunteers, primary function of the organisation, location of the volunteers, willingness and availability of the co-ordinator of volunteers.

The numbers of participants depended on the size of the organisation, the number of volunteers willing to participate in the study and their availability, and on the cooperation of the co-ordinator of volunteers in the organisation.

A profile of respondents is included in Chapter 6.

5.6 Data Collection

As mentioned above a multi-method data collection process was employed. In each organisation the three phases employed were:

- **Phase 1:** An anonymous, structured questionnaire was completed by a group of volunteers, and volunteer participants for phase two of the project were sought. This questionnaire sought to gain an overall picture of the amount and type of feedback being received by the volunteers and their ratings of that feedback.

- **Phase 2:** A semi-structured group interview was conducted with a randomly selected group of those who indicated willingness to participate in the second phase of the study. These sought to increase the richness of the data gathered in the questionnaires and to develop themes and issues which had been identified in the questionnaire data.

- **Phase 3:** A semi-structured interview was conducted with the person designated as the volunteer manager or co-ordinator in each organisation. These interviews were designed to establish the perspective of the volunteer manager or co-ordinator on the issues identified by and with the volunteers.

As an adjunct to this process workshops were conducted through Volunteering WA with a wider community of co-ordinators and managers of volunteers and some volunteers, to
further test initial findings and increase the richness of the data gathered. This also
fulfilled a commitment to participants to keep them informed throughout the research
process, and offered the opportunity for discussion of raw data and preliminary
interpretations. A further seminar was held with the Co-ordinators' Network towards the
conclusion of the study to test the conclusions reached with the managers and co-
ordinators of volunteers who might benefit from the findings of the research. The data
collection process is depicted in Figure 5.1.
Figure 5.1: The Data Collection Process
5.6.1 Procedures

Questionnaires

The process employed was designed to maximise the participation and co-operation of volunteers in each organisation. These were as follows:

Organisation 1: Attendance by researcher at a regular meeting of volunteers for briefing, and return of completed questionnaires in sealed envelopes to box left at organisation. (Approximately 50% return rate).

Organisation 2: Attendance by researcher at a regular meeting of volunteers for briefing and return of completed questionnaires in stamped return addressed envelopes to researcher. (Approximately 60% return rate).

Organisation 3: No regular meeting of volunteers was scheduled to be held in the foreseeable time frame, therefore all questionnaires were mailed to a list of volunteers selected by the co-ordinator of volunteers for return to a box placed at the venue at which participants undertake volunteer activity. Briefing included in a personal letter to all volunteers, and a follow up letter was sent. (Approximately 50% return rate).

Organisation 4: Questionnaires distributed by co-ordinator of volunteers to volunteers as they attended a series of monthly meetings in small groups. Briefing included in personal letter to all volunteers. (Approximately 90% return rate).

Organisation 5: Attendance by researcher at an annual conference of volunteers with completed questionnaires to be returned either to box at venue of conference by end of conference or to co-ordinator of volunteers for collection by researcher. (Approximately 40% return rate.)

Organisation 6: No regular meeting to be held, therefore mail out approach taken. Stamped return addressed envelopes included with personal briefing letter for each. (Approximately 60% return rate.)
Group interviews

In each organisation several volunteers were randomly selected from those who indicated willingness to participate in group interviews. In Organisations 1, 3, and 4 these were conducted in the location at which the volunteers operate. In Organisation 6 these were conducted at the organisation’s headquarters, and in Organisation 5 at the home of the researcher. Organisation 2 did not participate in this phase of the research. All group interviews were recorded with the consent of participants.

Co-ordinator interviews

These were conducted in the workplace of the co-ordinator in each organisation and were recorded with the consent of the participants.

Workshops and seminars

The workshops were held at Volunteering WA’s premises. The first two were held as part of National Volunteer Week in May of 1999, and the third in September 1999 just prior to the completion of the research as a briefing to the Co-ordinators’ Network which operates with the support of Volunteering WA.

5.6.2 Instruments

It was determined that there were no instruments currently in use which could fully capture the information required by this research, but that there were various sources which could be used to inform the development of instruments - the literature, the foundation study and the various stages of the data collection process. Thus, the development of the questionnaires for the phase one of the data collection process relied on the information gathered at the time of the foundation study, on the literature relating
to feedback research in the paid workforce, and on the literature on volunteers and volunteering. In addition, each stage of the data collection process informed the subsequent data collection in that organisation, and across organisations. Workshops were based on findings to date on each occasion.

**Questionnaires**

The first instrument was a questionnaire to be completed by all the willing participants amongst the volunteers in each organisation. This was an anonymous questionnaire which sought limited demographic data, and consisted mainly of closed questions regarding the feedback environment and the perceived management of poor performance in the organisation. It was intended that the responses to the questionnaires would both inform the qualitative data gathering processes and provide a broader view of the situation in each organisation.

This instrument was constructed with reference to the instrument used in the foundation study as well as material available on the various areas covered by the research. For example the question on whether volunteers had been given details of their responsibilities sought data on letters and procedures manuals as well as duty statements. The question on supervisors sought to identify whether the supervisor was paid or unpaid as the foundation study responses were unclear in this regard (Paull, 1994).

The question seeking data on the types of work performed by volunteers utilised the study conducted in the UK (Lynn & Davis Smith, 1992), but relied mainly on the ABS (1996) categories of volunteer work. Items relating to the feedback environment drew on material on the job feedback environment particularly the work of Herold and Parsons (1985) Herold, Liden and Leatherwood (1987), and Herold and Greller (1975; 1977). In
addition, the work of Smither, London, Vasilopoulos, Reilly, Millsap and Salvemini (1995) and the work of Atwater, Roush, and Fischthal (1995) on upward feedback was consulted. The questionnaire was kept as short as possible to make its completion more attractive to potential respondents, and consequently only two of the five feedback sources identified by Herold, Liden and Leatherwood (1987) were directly canvassed with regard to the amount, utility, consistency and fairness of feedback: Supervisor and Co-worker.

Key considerations in the development of the questionnaires for phase one were: length, potential respondents' varied abilities, layout, coding and analysis of data, and Scmitt and Klimoski refer to as "response styles" (1991, p. 347), the possibility that a respondent will answer positively to a set of questions after having only read the first and might thus indicate "agree" when the statement is the reverse of others in the set.

Item and content validity was tested in the first instance by consultation with practitioners in the area of volunteering at Volunteering WA and with human resource management specialists at Edith Cowan University, School of Management. A draft version of the questionnaire was pretested on two small groups of volunteers at Volunteering WA. Amendments were made, particularly to questionnaire layout and response categories, to reduce ambiguity and confusion. These amendments were as a result of the comments received from participants in the pre-test, and because of the nature of some of the responses which indicated that questions might be unclear. In addition, the amount of demographic data collected was expanded based on discussions with volunteers. The demographic data sought was based on the ABS research to enable comparison of the sample to the overall population of volunteers.
A copy of the final questionnaire is included in Appendix A.

**Group Interview questions:**

Having surveyed volunteers as individuals the next stage was the conduct of group interviews. Schmitt and Klimoski (1991) identify that this is an efficient way of collecting data but the design and execution of group interviews can affect their success. For example, larger groups restrict the amount of time an individual can speak, and groups who know each other well may be affected by the others in the group. Groups for this study were established based on the numbers of volunteers willing to participate with no group containing more than eight people. The interviewer tried to lessen the concern that private or inconsistent thoughts might not surface by using inconsistent responses, opinions and ideas from responses to the questionnaires in phase one for testing in the group interview in a non-attributable manner.

The set of questions for the group interviews was developed based on the questionnaire responses. Some aspects of these were tailored to suit particular organisations - especially where there appeared to be differing opinions on some matters (such as whether feedback is available), but the majority of questions were common to all organisations to enable comparison.

In accordance with advice from Knodel (1993) and others (Krueger, 1993; Leary, 1995; Schmitt & Klimoski, 1991; Seidman, 1991) a set of discussion group guidelines were established and discussed with participants, after which a series of topics or themes was explored. Questions posed included some specific questions but were largely open questions designed to have the group interact with each other to explore the topics raised.
Towards the end of the group interviews some of the preliminary findings from the questionnaires were shared to elicit responses from the group. At the concluding stages of the interview participants were invited to raise any related issues which they felt had not been adequately explored. This provoked discussion in some groups and not in others. The standard questions for each interview are included in Appendix B.

**Co-ordinator interview questions**

The remaining instrument was a set of interview guides for semi-structured interviews conducted with the co-ordinator or manager of volunteers in each organisation. Both closed and open questions with scope to pursue areas of interest were employed. The framework for each interview was largely the same, with a small amount of organisation specific information raised by the interviewer for comment by the interviewee. Themes based on the data collected in each organisation and earlier material from the broader investigative process to date were incorporated into each interview. At the conclusion of each interview the opportunity to explore any issue which the participant felt had not been adequately explored was offered, and this was taken up by all participants with regard to varying topics.

The standard questions developed for these interviews are included in Appendix B.

**Workshops and Seminars**

In addition to the original workshop held in 1994 to discuss the findings of the foundation study (Co-ordinators' Network September 1994), two workshops (National Volunteer Week Workshops 1 and 2) and a seminar (Co-ordinators' Network September 1999) were
conducted to broaden the scope of the study and to reduce the possibility that the findings from the research would be too organisation specific.

The two workshops conducted in National Volunteer Week were part of the programme of events offered by Volunteering WA (National Volunteer Week Workshops 1 and 2). The workshops offered the opportunity to test some of the preliminary findings and explore related issues with a group of people from within and outside the participant agencies. A similar approach was taken at each of the two workshops with the direction and interest in particular topics dictating the emphasis at each. The workshop outline, on which both workshops were based, is included at Appendix B.

Following the development of the first draft of the overall findings of this research a seminar was held for the Co-ordinators' Network (September 1999). This seminar was open to all members of the Co-ordinators' Network, which operates under the auspices of Volunteering Western Australia, and apart from the usual reminders to members of the Network, specific invitations were sent to the various Co-ordinators from participant agencies. As this was the forum in which the research topic was initially identified, it was a suitable venue for exploration of the findings. A number of issues were explored in more depth by the participants in this seminar. An outline of this seminar is included in Appendix B.

5.7 Data Analysis and Synthesis of Findings

5.7.1 Data Analysis
The process of data analysis followed the pattern suggested by Eisenhardt (1989) of intra-case analysis followed by cross case analysis. This served two purposes, the first being to allow the researcher to provide participant organisations the specific findings about
their own situation, and the second to allow the variability of data across organisations to be examined.

Step one involved a within case analysis for each organisation. “The overall idea is to become intimately familiar with each case as a stand alone entity .... [to allow] unique patterns to emerge” before patterns are generalised across cases (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 540). Both the quantitative and qualitative data was used for this analysis. Step two involved searching for cross case patterns and compiling a composite picture of the overall data.

The final stage is an additional stage to those suggested by Eisenhardt, and involved the incorporation the data obtained from the workshops into the study. This stage served to further examine the data gathered in the research process and to increase the potential generalisability of findings.

**Tools**

Quantitative questionnaire data was coded and entered in to SPSS Version 8 for Windows for analysis. Those responses recorded on Likert scales were examined as descriptive statistics and then correlations conducted to examine both internal validity and reliability of findings as well as relationships between variables. This was a mainly descriptive analysis with inferential statistics used to examine the significance of some of the findings. Qualitative data was collected from the questionnaires in the form of comments and qualifications made by participants in the completion of the questionnaires. These data were included in the qualitative data analysis.
All group interviews, interviews, workshops and seminars were audio recorded and transcribed with the written consent of participants. Transcripts of interviews and workshops, field notes and free response data from questionnaires were coded and analysed using NUD*IST version 4 for Windows. In order to reduce the possibility of predetermined categories limiting the findings of the research all data was coded into free nodes and then the different nodes grouped and merged after the original 74 free response nodes had been created.

5.8 Limitations

Several limitations were identified with the study. These include matters associated with the participants, the study design, methods of data collection and the researcher.

5.8.1 Participants

The size of the study, the age and size of participant agencies, their membership of the Volunteering WA, and the effect of the foundation study are all factors which may influence the findings of the study. As this is exploratory research these factors were not considered to be major obstacles.

In accordance with the agreement reached with Volunteering Western Australia and participant organisations, no individual participant or organisation was to be named but it was made clear to participants that some of the findings may allow others familiar with the organisation to identify both the organisation and the people involved. This possibility was included in all consent forms and statements of disclosure signed by participants (included in Appendix C). This possibility may have caused some participants to decline to participate, or may have influenced some of their responses.
5.8.2 Study Design
This study was based on reported not observed data. In some organisations, circumstances may have altered in the intervening period between the questionnaires being completed and the interviews being conducted. The heightened awareness of participants on all aspects of the feedback environment following their briefing could also have influenced responses.

Methods of Data Collection
The survey instrument was lengthy and whilst there are varying views on whether questionnaire length influences response rate (Cooper & Emory, 1995, p. 283), it is possible that this was a factor in determining response rates.

Interviewer skills are considered to be a major factor in the quality of interviews as a process of data collection (Krueger, 1993, p. 73), and it therefore should be noted that whilst the interviewer is trained in interview techniques associated with selection interviewing, with grievance handling and with group facilitation for training purposes, she was not specifically trained in moderation of group interviews for data gathering for research.

5.8.3 Assumptions
Assumptions about the area to be studied may have some bearing on the findings. It was assumed that volunteering is beneficial and necessary to the community. It is also assumed that arguments that management theories are likely to work with volunteers are valid. This assumption is based on the assertions by such well known authors as Handy (1988) and Drucker (1989; 1990). This issue was considered in the literature review, arose during data collection and is considered again in the discussion in Chapter 6.
5.9 Ethical Considerations

Any study involving human subjects requires the approval of the University Ethics Committee, which was granted on the basis of the research proposal.

All participants were consulted and briefed about their role in this study prior to their participation. Assurances were given to all participants regarding confidentiality as far as this was possible. As stated previously, the possibility that some of the findings may allow others familiar with the organisation to identify both the organisation and the people involved despite anonymity being maintained, was made clear to all intending participants. This was included in all consent forms and statements of disclosure which were signed by participants in all of the six participant organisations and by workshop participants as well.

A briefing was conducted with representatives of Volunteering Western Australia to allow them to answer queries and concerns expressed by participants, and they were kept apprised of progress.

A copy of the statement of disclosure and informed consent is included at Appendix C.

5.10 Conclusion

This chapter has detailed the approach taken in this study and demonstrated that this approach is a valid tool in the investigation of the chosen topic. It has outlined the limitations to the study, the assumptions made and the measures undertaken to ensure that an ethical approach was taken to data collection. The findings from this process include some observations of the recurring themes and issues which have arisen across the various organisations. The multi-phase approach adopted consisted of a broad
preliminary study to provide a foundation and develop a specific focus, which was followed by an in depth study utilising both quantitative and qualitative methods. This has allowed the development of a framework designed to inform practice about specific aspects of the chosen topic, aid future research and stimulate debate about the application of management theory in the management of volunteers.
CHAPTER 6: RESEARCH FINDINGS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses of the major research findings. Profiles of the organisations studied, and the respondents to the questionnaires, are followed by discussion of the data gathered in the questionnaires, group interviews, interviews and workshops.

The data gathering process was a three-phase process influenced by the work of Eisenhardt (1989). This process involved gathering quantitative data using questionnaires, followed by qualitative data gathering using group interviews of volunteers and interviews with co-ordinators. The use of workshops and seminars to supplement this data gathering process has enabled preliminary findings to be discussed with participants and outsiders. This data gathering process was discussed in more detail in Chapter 5. The recurring themes and issues arising from the data gathering processes are detailed in this chapter.

Chapter 6 provides a brief description of the organisations and the volunteers who participated in the in-depth study. These profiles demonstrate how the participants compare to the participant organisations in the foundation study, and to the ABS data on volunteers and volunteering in Australia in general.

The findings of this study are presented as key themes and issues under six major headings. A discussion of the findings in relation to the concept of “managing” volunteers is followed by a summary of the findings on what was seen to constitute poor performance. These two areas set the scene for the findings on the HR processes, including feedback which relate to the management of the performance of volunteers.
The section on the importance of the feedback environment and organisational culture is considered to be central to the findings of this study. Each of these key areas is supported by excerpts from taped interviews, workshops and seminars, and by data from the questionnaires where appropriate, and compared with the literature reviewed in Chapter 2.

In the interests of maintaining the confidentiality and anonymity agreements made with participants only limited identifying information is offered. The key to the primary sources cited is presented as References to Primary Sources after Chapter 7.

All material quoted from primary sources is cited according to the list of primary sources at the end of this thesis. Much of the identifying detail has been removed but is held by the researcher in the event that it needs to be verified or further pursued. The primary data comes from:

- The original workshop conducted to discuss the findings of the foundation study with the Co-ordinators' Network in September of 1994 (cited as Co-ordinators' Network September 1994);
- Free response data from the questionnaires completed by volunteers in each of the six participant agencies (cited as Free Response 1 - Free Response 6);
- The group interviews conducted with a small group of volunteers in each of the 5 remaining agencies after the withdrawal of Organisation 2 (cited as Group 1 to Group 6);
- Interviews with the co-ordinator or manager of volunteers in each of the remaining 5 agencies (cited as Interview 1 to Interview 6);
- The workshops to test out preliminary and progress findings with a wider group held in National Volunteer Week in May of 1999 (cited at NVW Workshop 1 and NVW Workshop 2); and
- With the Co-ordinators’ Network which meets under the auspices of Volunteering Western Australia (Co-ordinators’ Network September 99).
6.2 Profiles

6.2.1. Organisations
Confidentiality and anonymity provisions used in the statements of disclosure and informed consent (included at Appendix C) limit the amount of detail which can be revealed on a case by case basis but a brief profile of each organisation is offered here to enhance later discussion.

Organisation 1
Organisation 1 is a semi-autonomous branch of a government organisation whose primary responsibility is related to the environment. This organisation had nearly 70 volunteers in early May of 1999. The co-ordinator of volunteers is a paid officer in this organisation whose duty statement does not identify the role of co-ordinator or manager of volunteers amongst the duties.

Organisation 2
Organisation 2 is a very small branch of a small organisation which is an incorporated body whose primary responsibilities lie in the area of family services. The organisation had a fluctuating volunteer population which meant that data gathering in this organisation proved problematic. The co-ordinator of volunteers in this organisation occupies a paid part-time position, and receives some assistance from head office in Perth. The branch is located in a regional area not far from Perth.

Organisation 3
Organisation 3 is an incorporated body, non profit and non-government organisation, whose services are in the area of disability services. The organisation has been in
existence for many years. It has undergone a change in philosophy in recent times with the focus changing from institutionalised care to community care for its clients. The volunteer population is relatively stable with about 60 volunteers on its books. The position of co-ordinator of volunteer services is a paid part time position. The hours per week for this position were increased during the time of this study. A large proportion of the funds to operate this organisation are obtained from government with the remainder coming from fund raising.

**Organisation 4**

Organisation 4 is an incorporated body whose services are in the area of disability services. A nonprofit, non-government organisation, it provides services to members and their families, and in contrast to Organisation 3, a large proportion of its funds are obtained from fund raising. The position of volunteer co-ordinator is a paid position and the occupant worked 4 days per week at the time of data collection. The number of hours has since been reduced. The number of volunteers on the books varies, but can be as high as 160 volunteers.

**Organisation 5**

Organisation 5 is a government department whose responsibilities fall into an area which can be classified as environment related, and the area in which volunteers are utilised is related to recreation, industry and conservation. The organisation has volunteers all over the state, but the volunteer programme under investigation operates in the Metropolitan area of Perth and currently has about 60 volunteers. The volunteer co-ordinator’s position is a paid full time position with 50% of duties relating to volunteer co-
ordination, and the other 50% being in one of the areas in which volunteers work -
education.

**Organisation 6**

Organisation 6 is a WA branch of an Australian organisation which is part of a world
wide body. The full time paid position of volunteer development officer has been in
existence for approximately twelve months. The funding source for this organisation is
fundraising, with some government contribution. The primary function of the local
organisation is to create awareness and raise funds for the efforts of the organisation in
third world countries. The population of volunteers is difficult to determine as there are
up to 200 on the mailing list with approximately 50 in regular contact with the
organisation.

**6.2.2 Volunteer Profiles**

**Demographic Profile**

Eighty seven volunteers responded to the 160 questionnaires distributed in the six
organisations. Two of the completed questionnaires were discarded due to having less
than 50% of the questions answered. There were six which had some sections which had
not been completed but these were left in the study with incomplete questions being
coded as missing data. A number of other questionnaires had individual questions with
missing data.

Tables setting out the demographic data which were obtained from the questionnaires and
which is discussed below are to be found in Appendix D.
Gender
Of the 77 respondents who indicated their gender, 53 were female and 24 male (females 62.4%, males 28.2%; missing 9.4%). Data collected in 1995 on participation rates in WA indicated that women were more likely to have been involved in volunteer work than men, and that a greater percentage of those volunteering are female (55%) (Rosenberg-Russell, 1995, p. 7). This is a more even gender balance than in the present study. The imbalance in this sample is likely to be related to the fact that no sporting groups or emergency services groups were included in the sample as statistics show a higher participation of males in these two areas (Rosenberg-Russell, 1995).

Age
No respondents were aged under 18 years, and only two were over 75 years of age. The distribution of respondents in the other age groups was relatively even. The 35-44 year old age group is under-represented and the over 65 age group is over-represented in this study when compared with the ABS Voluntary Work Survey data from June 1995 (refer Table 6.1 below).

Table 6.1: Percentage comparison of age groups: Volunteers in Western Australia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Current study</th>
<th>ABS data*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15-24</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-24</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-64</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
<td>(Not separated)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 to 74</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 and over</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Language
Ninety percent of respondents indicated that they came from an English speaking background (Table D13, Appendix D), and Organisations 1 and 5 had no respondents
from a non-English speaking background (Table D14). In a recent Adelaide study conducted by Baum et al. (1999) people from English speaking backgrounds reported involvement in volunteer activity more than those from a non-English speaking background. Volunteer levels in ethnic groups is a largely unexplored issue in Australian volunteering research.

Education levels
Analysis of ABS data on educational attainment of volunteer in WA by Rosenberg-Russell (1995, p. 13) indicates that “people with higher level qualifications are more likely to be involved in the provision of voluntary work.” In this study almost 25% of the volunteers hold a higher degree or bachelors degree, and only 5% did not complete their secondary schooling.

Current employment status
According to the ABS data (Rosenberg-Russell, 1995, p. 10) 69% of volunteers in Western Australia in 1995 were also in the paid work force, with an additional 3% indicating that they were unemployed. Twenty-eight percent were not in the labour force. In the study population, of the 80 who provided data about their employment status, 10 (12.5%) were unemployed not seeking work, 31 (33%) were retired and 7 (9%) were students, although most of the students were also in the paid workforce in some capacity. A lower percentage (34%) of the volunteers who completed the questionnaires were also participants in the paid workforce. As with the age category, this is likely to be partly due to the nature of the participant organisations.

Occupational group
ABS data indicates that professionals and managers are more likely to volunteer than machine operators and labourers (ABS, 1996) with volunteer rates of around 30% and under 15% respectively. Twenty seven out of the 75 who provided data on this question indicated that they have a professional background, whilst an additional 6 indicated a managerial or administrative background. Of those who did not select any of the categories offered, self employed or family business was the most frequent response.

**Volunteer Service Profile**

In addition to the demographic profile of volunteers a profile of the service of the volunteers has also been developed.

**Duties undertaken**

Of the 85 respondents to the questionnaires 60 placed their duties in priority order:

Eleven indicated that their primary role is fundraising, eight that they had a administrative or clerical role, six that they were primarily involved in befriending, supporting or counselling and five that their role was related to protecting the environment.

In addition, of the 85 respondents, 23 indicated that at some time their duties included fundraising, 19 that it involved administrative or clerical work, and 11 that they were involved in befriending, supportive listening or counselling. Of the categories offered for the respondents to indicate the nature of their primary duties, only representing clients, performing/media production, emergency services and guiding/tours were not selected by any of the respondents. Discussions with the volunteers indicated that some element of representing clients may come into the befriending or supporting role taken by volunteers, and also that at least one volunteer had been involved in set making and
costume making for a theatrical production with the clients. As with these two categories of volunteer activity, emergency services and guiding/tours are not primary roles undertaken by the organisations canvassed.

ABS data indicates that in WA in 1995 fundraising was the most prevalent form of voluntary work with 45% of the volunteer population involved. This was closely followed by management and committee work at 43%. A comparison of the duties undertaken by the volunteers in this sample is included in Appendix D at Table D15.

**Length of all volunteer service**

Respondents indicated that their volunteer service ranged from under one year to over ten years. The smallest group was in the six to ten year of service group. ABS data on this aspect was not readily available, and no comparative data was collected in the foundation study.

**Length of volunteer service with participant organisation**

In Organisation 2 there did not appear to be any respondents who had performed volunteer work in other organisations as the information for length of service in this organisation was exactly the same as for length of service for all organisations. No volunteer had service in excess of two years.

In all the other organisations the greatest concentration of volunteers was in the two to six years of service group. ABS data indicates that the greatest concentration of volunteers is to be found in the ten years or more category (28.3%) closely followed by the one to three years category (27.5%), however variations between the categories are not large and approximately one quarter of volunteers surveyed by ABS fell into each of the length of service for organisation categories (ABS, 1996, p. 16). Comparison of the data in the
current study to the foundation study indicated that the two largest groups were 6-10
years service and 2-6 years service.

Time spent on all volunteer work
ABS data indicates that the median hours of voluntary work tend to increase steadily with
age (ABS, 1996, p. 5). ABS data on hours worked is expressed in hours worked over the
preceding 12 months. In this study the median time spent on all volunteer work was from
4-8 hours per week, with two respondents indicating that they spent over 25 hours per
week on their volunteer work. The trend is not as clear in this sample, but there is a
tendency for those who spend larger amounts of time volunteering to be from older age
groups.

Time spent on volunteer work in participant organisation
Most volunteers indicated that they spent 2-4 hours per week in the participant
organisation, with the next greatest concentration being in the 4-8 hours per week group.
One respondent indicated occasional, irregular contact indicating that the response
options provided on the questionnaire did not seek information relevant to their situation.
The average time spent in each organisation varied quite considerably between
organisations with all respondents in Organisation 2 indicating that they volunteered for
2-4 hours per week, and the two offering in excess of 25 hours per week both coming
from Organisation 3 (refer Table 6.2 below).
Table 6.2 Average time per week spent volunteering in participant organisation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hours per week</th>
<th>Organisation Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>less than 2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-16</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-25</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over 25</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasional/irregular</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.2.3 Analysis of the Profile

This profile of the organisations and volunteers studied has shown the extent to which they can be considered to be representative of many organisations and their volunteers. The generalisability of the findings will be limited somewhat by the sample, but the efforts to seek feedback on findings in workshops and seminars has served to increase the generalisability of the results.

The remainder of this chapter discusses the findings of the research in accordance with the key themes and issues identified by the study and relates these back to the Foundation Study and the literature.

6.3 “Management” of Volunteers

In the workshops the issue of whether management principles can, or should, be applied to volunteers was actively pursued, and in some of the group and individual interviews it came up in discussion. Participants in the workshops were not in agreement. The general view appeared to be that to import management principles from the paid workforce was not appropriate, but that there were many similarities between managing paid staff and managing volunteers. It was observed that the nuances of the volunteer -
organisation relationship are subtle and should be recognised by those who manage
volunteers.

"Can I suggest that I really do believe that volunteers should be
managed, but absolutely not in the way that you manage a paid work
force. They need to be, because it such a delicate issue about being
and not being paid, they really do need managing, but you have to
look at a totally different style of management so they never feel
"look why am I going to this, I am not getting paid, why do I have to
listen to this and other things". It has to be done in such a delicate
way that they actually say that they don't feel managed but they have
got the support. Because otherwise you will have people going away
in droves, ...." (NVW Workshop 1).

The general discussion in such debates was that a situational or contingency approach
must apply, that issues such as the type of work being done by the volunteers (NVW
Workshop 1), the accountability of the organisation and the volunteers (NVW Workshop
1), and the motivations of the volunteers for undertaking volunteer work have a role to
play in the benefits or otherwise to be gained from "managing" volunteers. There were
those who argued that employees should be managed as if they were volunteers:

"Everybody is entitled to the same respect, the same courtesy, the
same management principles." (NVW Workshop 1).

There are also those who feel that more can be asked of staff:

"I expect more of the staff because they are paid for it, I mean ... in
sort of a general view. The volunteers are coming in out of the
goodness of their own heart, they are not being remunerated ... but ...
the management of them has to be, you know, to do with performance
evaluation and things, has to be more delicate." (NVW Workshop 1).

Discussion on this topic seemed to follow the line that volunteer expectations about
having their time used in an efficient and effective manner had increased in recent years,
that the nature of volunteering and the unpaid status of volunteers conferred a greater
need for care in the management of volunteers, but that many of the processes used in
managing paid staff could be adapted for volunteer management. This is borne out by the
prescriptive practitioner material available for managers of volunteers (e.g. Adironack, 1989; Donovan & Jackson, 1991; Drucker, 1990; Fletcher, 1987).

Volunteers who expressed dissatisfaction did not refer to increased bureaucracy or being managed like paid employees, instead they referred to issues such as a lack of follow up when procedures or rules had been breached by other volunteers, or to giving up their own time to volunteer only to find that there was insufficient work for them to do (Groups 4 and 5).

The literature canvassed in Chapter 2 and the co-ordinators and managers of volunteers who participated in the case studies and workshops agree that there is much that is known about how people behave in organisations that can be applied in the management of volunteers. It is also clear, however, that the wholesale application of the theories developed for the management of paid employees is neither appropriate nor practical.

This study illustrates that practitioners in the field of volunteering are in no doubt that the demands placed on organisations to account for their activities and to take responsibility for the actions of their volunteers, coupled with the increasing demands on the volunteer pool and greater reliance on volunteers in many fields, requires that volunteers and volunteer activities need to be managed in an effective and efficient manner.

Practitioners and volunteers seem to be of the opinion that there is, however, something extra that is needed in the management of volunteers. Practitioners found that the absence of the employment contract, and the volunteers' reasons for volunteering play a vital role in the volunteer/organisation relationship. Hedley (1992, p. 115) has concluded that "managing volunteers is, in many cases, more difficult, and requires more skill, than managing paid staff". These difficulties stem from the factor identified by Hedley and
also by Colomy, Chen and Andrews (1987, p. 24) that "volunteers expect their non
employee status to be recognised and their personal needs to be met, whilst at the same
time demanding well organised, clearly defined, well supported and supervised work."
The volunteer managers and co-ordinators at the Co-Ordinators' Network Seminar
(September 1999) agreed with participants at the National Volunteer Week Workshops (1
and 2) that the management of volunteers requires a special kind of "nurturing" approach
peculiar to the volunteer/organisation relationship, a philosophy not unlike that of authors
such as Mason (1984) and Dartington (1992). These authors cautioned against the
wholesale import of management theory at the expense of the qualities which make
volunteering special.
Recent research, published as this study was being concluded, complements these views.
The work of Farmer and Fedor (1999) in determining the role the "psychological
contract" plays in the participation and withdrawal rates of volunteers concluded that
"Volunteers participate more and intend to stay longer if administrators create and
nurture a truly supportive, two-way relationship between the voluntary organization and
the volunteer" (p. 366). This concept of nurturing the two-way relationship is strongly
linked to organisational culture and the psychological contract discussed later in section
6.7.4.

6.4 What Constitutes a Performance Problem?

6.4.1 A Matter of Perception
Several themes ran through the identification of performance problems, the most
important is perhaps the perception of what constitutes a "problem". Both volunteers
and co-ordinators identified that performance difficulties can relate to people who who
need support and encouragement as they are new to the organisation or to particular
duties. Largely, however, this was not seen as a performance problem per se, merely as
the need to assist someone who may need help with understanding a process or function
and who might need to be shown what to do. Performance problems identified included:
absence without contact, tardiness, failure to pass on information, breach of
confidentiality and conflict with staff or clients.
Volunteers were varied in their views as to whether declining performance of a fellow
volunteer was any concern of theirs - with opinions ranging from it not being the role of
other volunteers (Group 1) to there being a team and all volunteers should help each other
out (Group 3) and "something needs to be done" (Group 4).
Volunteer respondents over the whole study only identified a small number of
performance problems. Volunteers from the Organisation 3 group interview offered the
following when asked about whether they know what happens when a volunteer is not
performing to the standard required by the organisation:

"No! It is kind of ... because they don’t want to do what needs to be
done, after a while they just disappear and somebody else comes in.
[new speaker] So unless they are really a committed type of volunteer,
then they are not going to last.” (Group 3)
Organisation 4 volunteers indicated that in one area of their organisation making too
much noise and talking too loudly is considered to be undesirable. They agreed that this
was not really acceptable but offered differing responses about the manner in which this
was handled (Group 4). The manner of handling performance problems is discussed
under the heading of constructive and negative feedback in Section 6.6.2.
Organisation 5 volunteers indicated that on occasions some volunteers do not adopt the
demeanour and approach that is suitable for their role and that the actions of these few
can have repercussions for the image of all the volunteers in the organisation. Similarly they identified a varying level of activity and commitment amongst volunteers which can mean that the service offered can be adversely affected (Group 5).

In the main, however, performance problems were largely identified by the co-ordinators rather than the volunteers and the key problems raised are discussed below.

6.4.2 Communication problems and personality "clashes"

In the workshop where the research issue was initially identified, the discussion of performance problems included personality clashes and communication problems including the inability of staff to approach a volunteer, perhaps because of the potential reactions such as anger, violence or depression (Co-ordinators' Network September 1994). There was also discussion of differing perceptions between supervisor and volunteer about performance standards, perhaps partly due to the personalities of the volunteer and the supervisor and partly due to the personal situation of the volunteer about which the organisation was unaware (Co-ordinators' Network September 1994).

Volunteers who do not see the organisation being operated in the way they feel it ought to be, may have clashes with staff, and this may be due to several factors including a lack of understanding of the processes involved, or of the culture of the organisation. Where this problem is encountered with a dual role volunteer, who also makes major financial contributions to the organisation, it is a delicate matter for the volunteer co-ordinator (Interview 6). Dual role volunteers are discussed in Section 6.8.1.

6.4.3 Inappropriate behaviour

The most common performance problem identified by this study is behaviour of the person volunteering that is considered to be inappropriate or unacceptable by the organisation.
In one organisation inappropriate volunteer behaviour can have ramifications for the whole volunteer programme in that there is a definite line between the role and responsibilities of the volunteers and the role and responsibilities of the paid staff who operate in a similar area. The attitude and demeanour of the volunteers must always be of support, encouragement, education and research, whilst paid staff have roles which include enforcement of rules. It is made clear to all volunteers that they are not to stray into the role of the paid staff, but on occasions this occurs (Interview 5; Group 5). This might occur due to inadequate screening during the selection process. It might also be indicative of a change in the personal circumstances of the volunteer, increasing frustration with the volunteer role, or some other factors not identified. The briefing and training process is apparently sufficient that most volunteers are able to maintain the distance between their role and that of the paid staff.

In other organisations inappropriate behaviour might be due to health problems, and in one instance this might have been indicative of a psychiatric problem:

“I also have a problem at the moment with a particular volunteer who hasn’t declared that she has a psychiatric problem. I have the management on one hand saying ‘get rid of her, get rid of her’, and I am trying to look after her needs as well because we are obviously a life line to her and she worked for [another organisation] before and she is producing pieces of paper about the torture they used at [that organisation], and how they filled the oxygen bottles with some gas, and it is really quite ummm....

.... but she does what she is required, I haven’t got her with any [clients], she does a task of filing and things like that, but her behaviour recently has become very bizarre recently like standing looking out the window clicking a pen for 4 hours has just been reported to me. .... she went into a psychotic state at work one day and ...

I have people say ‘she is a crack pot, get rid of her, you know’” (NVW Workshop 1).
Other examples may reflect inadequate screening or briefing. An example of inadequate briefing can be as simple as a volunteer handing out "how to vote" cards for other organisations as well as her own (NVW Workshop 1) or as serious as:

"a volunteer in a youth centre who is, I mean some examples are, dealing drugs, or and that is a very extreme example, but, or having some racial overtones, so their own values are not working, that sometimes it is not obvious to detect at first sight, it can have huge ramifications." (NVW workshop 1).

Inappropriate behaviour can involve criminal activity:

"... it is a very interesting area. One of the clients that I take shopping each week, is absolutely emphatic that he doesn't give any money unless you give him a receipt on the spot, which is I suppose is what you should do, because he had a [name of organisation deleted] person coming for 2 years, and an investigator came around one day and said we are investigating so and so for 300 people she had been seeing over 3 years, because she was giving people receipts but it was her own receipt book and never got to [the organisation], and eventually she was caught." (NVW workshop 1).

One of the issues associated with dealing with inappropriate behaviour, especially where the behaviour may stem from a personal problem or even from a psychiatric problem, is that the co-ordinator of volunteers is often left to handle the problem, despite the identification of the problem coming from someone else in the organisation. This is considered later in the discussion of the supervision of volunteers (Section 6.7.2).

6.4.4 Declining performance due to age

The decline of performance associated with age was an issue which arose frequently in discussions. In one of the workshops the issue was raised of a volunteer who was no longer capable of driving a bus but who insisted on continuing to be the driver for nursing home excursions. His increasing inability to drive safely posed problems for the co-ordinator of volunteers, including the safety of his elderly passengers (NVW Workshop 1).
The decline of performance due to the age of the volunteers can also increase the workload for the co-ordinator:

"And as they are getting older they can't push the wheelchairs any more because they are getting older, ... they want to do the same things but they are getting too old and I am spending more time looking after them than the people in the wheelchairs." (NVW Workshop 1).

Volunteers who are not in the situation themselves may recognise this problem sufficiently to discuss it with their family:

"It is quite valid. My wife ..., is a volunteer at another organisation, and the old bloke there is doing [identifying word deleted] research, and he is very, very learned but he now has Alzheimer's or something so it doesn’t really matter. We were only saying the other day, how in the heck are they going to get on because he probably doesn't even realise." (Group 3).

Organisations, however, don’t seem to have the answers to this issue although some are considering some alternatives. On the one hand, there is the concern for the volunteers themselves for whom volunteer work is a social support mechanism, which offers them the opportunity to feel that they are contributing and keeping active;

"these people are elderly and it could be even more shattering when you say 'look your time is up'" (Interview 1).

but on the other hand, there are safety, accuracy, accountability, productivity and cost factors which to be taken into consideration by the organisation.

Organisations are grappling with this issue for insurance reasons as well. Some organisations report that they are unable to offer volunteer insurance cover for volunteers over a certain age (Co-ordinators' Network September 1999). The possible approaches considered by organisations include offering “life membership” status and retirement (Co-Ordinators’ Network September 1999). One organisation is looking at the possibility of reassignment and how this might be achieved:
"We don’t [retire volunteers] and I think this is a mistake. I think that one of the issues that I would like to address within the next couple of years is the introduction of new job descriptions for all volunteers and that all volunteers volunteer at the end of the year and if they want to they can reapply… for the same area of work, or they can reapply for another area which gives them an opportunity to retire entirely from the [identifying word deleted] if they so wish, gracefully. If they wish to retire from that department and move on to another department, gracefully. …. it also gives us the opportunity to retire volunteers that we don’t feel are appropriate to the organisation. That is we don’t retire them at the moment, but I do feel it is a necessity.” (Interview 4).

Others, however, have not had to contend with any serious consequences from ageing volunteers, having been able to rely on volunteers withdrawing during times of ill health or infirmity, and having volunteers in their late 80s who are still offering valuable service to the organisation when they are able (Interview 6).

Sometimes, too, even an apparently impersonal and objective approach can still not be entirely satisfactory. For example, in the case of drivers, the requirement for an RAC test on a regular basis to ensure drivers are still capable is operating in one organisation.

“You need to say that to drive a vehicle you must have at least a B class rating in the RAC test, that makes it objective. The person might fail the first time and find that he has to do this, this and this he goes away learns it and practises it and then gets his B rating, he has achieved something and you are satisfied that he has achieved the standard. When you get criticism from the CEO or other staff who say that this person shouldn’t be behind the wheel, well you say ‘the RAC says he should, so why not’. ” (NVW Workshop 1).

Issues which arise out of such a system include that if the problem is declining performance, the frequency of the test might need to be increased and when someone observes that a driver should no longer be behind the wheel, perhaps it is time to send them for another test. Individuals who are already defensive and afraid of declining performance, however, may not respond well to such an arrangement.
There is limited material in the literature which suggests that the decline of performance due to age related factors is a problem being experienced in other organisations. Cook (1992) suggests that co-ordinators and managers of volunteers must "face reality" when age dictates that service is no longer possible, and deal with the matter with as much tact and dignity as can be mustered. This issue is going to become increasingly important with the ageing population, especially with promotion of the beneficial effects of volunteering as an activity to follow retirement (e.g. Caro & Bass, 1997; Wheeler, Gorey, & Greenblatt, 1998).

6.4.5 Declining performance due to illness
Age is not the only factor which may cause declining performance. Mental and physical illness may also cause declining performance, and this, too, poses problems for the organisation if the volunteer cannot, or will not, acknowledge that they have reached the point where they are no longer able to carry out the duties for which they were recruited. Organisations which provide a service to members with a degenerative disability, and who have member-volunteers, are likely to encounter this situation reasonably frequently. Dual role volunteers are considered in Section 6.8.1.

As discussed earlier, inappropriate behaviour which may stem from mental illness (NVW Workshop 1) and age related illnesses such as Alzheimer's Disease, may mean that the volunteer is unaware or unable to acknowledge their declining performance and may make their reaction to any attempts to discuss it with them somewhat unpredictable. One Co-ordinator reported being asked by a family member to follow up a dismissed volunteer because of concerns that her depression, compounded by dismissals as a volunteer, might lead her to a suicidal state. The co-ordinator, unaware that the volunteer
had been diagnosed with a depressive illness, was horrified to think her actions might have contributed to this (Co-ordinators' Network September 1994).

In another setting acknowledgement by a volunteer that health restrictions might limit his ability to undertake some tasks has resulted in him developing a niche role for which the other volunteers are grateful. He undertakes tasks within his capabilities that involve a support role for the other volunteers. These are tasks not readily undertaken by other volunteers due to time constraints and the patience required to undertake them but this particular volunteer is reported as having the time, the patience and the knowledge and skills required (Interview 5).

6.5 Managing for Performance

The concept of preventing poor performance was a well accepted concept amongst the volunteers and co-ordinators interviewed and those who attended the workshops. The various measures adopted varied from organisation to organisation, and in many cases reflected an adaptation of the HR practices in use with the paid workforce, in line with the findings of the foundation study.

6.5.1 Recruitment and selection of volunteers

All the respondent agencies have extensive recruitment and selection procedures. Most of the organisations have some volunteers who were recruited prior to the current procedures being instigated. The current procedures in the organisations examined include provision of sufficient information to potential volunteers to enable them to opt not to take up volunteer work with the organisation if they don’t feel that they can meet the organisation’s expectations. In two of the organisations potential volunteers come to a briefing session at which the role they can play in the organisation is explained. Those
who are interested at the conclusion of the session are invited to submit an application for a volunteer role (Interview 5; Interview 6). In another, potential volunteers are asked to submit their application, and apply for a police clearance after they have had an initial interview and a guided tour of the facility in which they will be volunteering (Interview 4).

Some of the organisations use the referral service offered by Volunteering Western Australia and others do not. In Organisation 4 for example intending volunteers might contact the volunteer co-ordinator off their own bat (Interview 4) or they may have been referred by Volunteering Western Australia. Organisation 6, however, does not place any requests for referrals with Volunteering Western Australia. Organisations do not distinguish between volunteers who make contact through Volunteering Western Australia and those who come via some other method. All potential volunteers go through the same recruitment and selection procedures regardless of the source of their initial contact.

Consistent with the findings of the foundation study, two themes run through the data collected on recruitment and selection. One is the need to place volunteers in a clearly defined position and the other is to make sure that the person placed in that position is suitable for the job. Some organisations offer the potential volunteer the opportunity to have a preview of the job before they make a decision to volunteer:

"First of all we are saying what the expectations are for the job and the onus is put back onto the person to say whether they fit it. So we are now more closely matching skills to the job and we are finding we are getting a better level of volunteer and a more committed level of volunteer because they have gone away, they thought about it, they have come back and said ‘yes! This is what I want to do’.” (Interview 6).
The need to define a volunteer's responsibilities and recruit the right volunteer on the basis of a definite vacancy was identified in one organisation.

"I wait for a request. I then use all the best resources that I can to get a volunteer which sometimes never happens because I can't get one and I will not have a volunteer at any cost. It is the right person, I believe that ... Over the years I believe it is best to have the right volunteer than to have some volunteer at any costs." (Interview 4).

The need to have a volunteer suited to the task means that in some organisations the list of volunteer projects waits for suitable recruits who are placed on the basis of an interview (Interview 1).

In Organisation 5 a series of stages, including interviews, is used to select potential volunteers who have the right attitude, and then only when training is successfully completed is a volunteer appointed to the programme. This is partly due to the potential for damage to the programme a poor selection decision might have (Interview 5).

Such careful screening, realistic job previews and careful placement are also measures used with paid employees to reduce turnover, and maximise the effectiveness of the time and expense involved with recruiting and training new staff. The prescriptive volunteer literature has increasingly recommended such activities as the demands for volunteer numbers increase (Curtis & Noble, 1991; Volunteering WA, 1997 as amended).

6.5.2 Recruitment and Selection of Volunteers with High Support Needs

The issue of volunteers with high support needs arose in relation to recruitment and selection on several occasions. The use of selection criteria and procedures is an aid to the appropriate placement of volunteers. Co-ordinators, however, feel that they are in a difficult position when they are faced with a potential or current volunteer whose special needs are either not identified by the potential volunteer, or are likely to be challenging for the organisation. Discussion at one of the workshops, for example, identified that
some organisations ask that potential volunteers disclose information about any
medication they may be taking (NVW Workshop 1). In one organisation this concern is
associated with the need for screening to ensure that potential volunteers are able to work
in the existing team, and that some volunteers do not say that they have a special need of
any sort (Interview 4).

In a study undertaken for Volunteering Western Australia (Rowley, 1996), agency
concerns included the concept of the burden being placed on the interviewer to decide
whether the potential volunteer has the ability to do the job. Rowley (1996, p. 34) states
that all agencies should be careful to ensure that

*If the volunteer, with or without a current disability, cannot share
in the achievement of the agency’s goals, by having and applying
the necessary skills and abilities, then they can’t be placed. No-one should be expected to put aside the goals and needs of the
organisation in order to meet the ‘special needs’ of the potential
volunteer who just walked in the door.*

As mentioned previously, in Organisation 5, one volunteer who was accepted to the
programme with the right attitude is able to contribute despite a health condition which
impedes his ability to undertake the same tasks as other volunteers. He undertakes a task
which underpins and supports other key activities and which other volunteers find both
time consuming and frustrating:

“This person is considered a legend, I think, by other volunteers, he is
very well respected. I mean for instance,...... he sits there for maybe
six hours at a time [undertaking this task] So next time you go out it
is all done. Without that involvement we would be stuffed for want of
a better word. I mean it doesn’t take any effort really, physical effort,
but it takes time, it takes patience, it takes knowledge of how to do it
and this is something that he has and therefore he can contribute by
sitting at home with all the gear watching television doing this.”
(Interview 5).
Co-ordinators do not see the issue of high support as being straightforward, especially where the support need is one which might involve a mental health problem. One co-ordinator has felt increasing pressure to interview potential volunteers with high support needs who are referred by Volunteering Western Australia, disability and health professionals, and community members, as being ready to volunteer.

“And it is happening more and more that we are getting people who I don’t believe are appropriate ... our client base has a vulnerable dimension. Now I am not a health professional. I am not a psychologist. I am not a psychiatrist. If I inappropriately place somebody who proves to be absolutely inappropriate for the job because of some behavioural activity or some behavioural pattern they may follow that doesn’t become evident at the interview, then I am lumbered with this volunteer. You know?” (Interview 4)

Exploring this issue revealed that whilst there may be some indication in the referral that the volunteer has some support needs it is difficult to assess their suitability for a volunteer position:

“You might get that they are recovering from a breakdown, or ... it may be they need some occupation because they have a physical disability..... But then ..., you are discriminating if you don’t interview them because they can actually do the job that is in the job description. But whether their other skills, such as their social skills, their communication skills, ....It is very difficult to say I am unable to take on any more volunteers on board who have disabilities..... No! I don’t really think it is without being discriminate [sic], which I suppose in a lot of ways we are if you think about it, how can you ask? If it is stuffing things in envelopes, somebody who does not possess excellent communication skills or social skills could do the job, but they may not do the job with the team spirit in mind.” (Interview 4).

When the inclusion of the ability to work in a team environment in the selection criteria was raised it was not seen as sufficient by the interviewee, who felt that testing this in an interview would be difficult. The limited resources available to the interviewer mean that
there is a reliance on the potential volunteer, and any associated referees and health professionals, to disclose the nature of any potential problems.

Other organisations, whilst not being approached very often to take on special needs volunteers, will resist such approaches:

"And our general stand is if we do, we try to resist it, and it sounds fairly harsh, but the reason for that is that we see ourselves here to do a job and we haven't got the ability to or the facilities to adequately support those people and what they need. So to take a person on like that, they wouldn't get the support and attention that they need for that role. I think there are other organisations that are doing that better. [organisation name deleted] is one that springs to mind, they are able to take them on and use them and give them the attention that they deserve and need. ....We are fairly fully tasked office and I haven't got time to spend with people training them and teaching them when it is short term response." (Interview 6).

Health professionals have identified volunteering as an appropriate activity for people with some special needs, and one which might aid recovery and or integration (e.g. Rebeiro & Allen, 1998). Recent literature has suggested the possibility of “supported volunteering” (Woodside & Luis, 1997), a concept which might be explored by co-ordinators and managers of volunteers. Supported volunteering involves a programme in three phases which include assessment of potential volunteer, placement of the volunteer in a suitable volunteer position with the appropriate supports in place and finally implementation once the “supports and modifications” are in place. Key issues such as disclosure, volunteer - placement fit, and the extra time required to assist a volunteer with special needs are all acknowledged as part of the model of supported volunteering proposed by Woodside and Luis (1997). Volunteer managers in a Canadian trial were reported as suggesting that co-ordinators and managers of volunteers count volunteers with high support needs out too readily. Participants in the Canadian trial reported
feeling that they were providing a good example by supporting such a scheme (Woodside & Luis, 1997).

In Western Australia, the Volunteer Referral Service in 1998-1999 recorded 68 out of 2074 volunteers seeking placement who had high support needs. This represents a small percentage (3.2%) of applicants to the service. Of these 71% were referred by professionals, either in rehabilitation or health roles, and 29% were self referred (Volunteering WA, 1999, p. 21). With such a small percentage of referrals identifying themselves as having high support needs it is perhaps an issue for agencies to look at offering a small percentage of volunteer positions to people with high support needs.

A bigger difficulty might be the number of potential volunteers who do not disclose their special need, as in the case of “John” reported by Rebeiro and Allen (1998). There are problems, identified in the literature, of disclosure and also of the added pressure supported volunteering can place on the co-ordinator or manager (Rebeiro & Allen, 1998; Woodside & Luis, 1997). Certainly, the issue of supported volunteering sparked the interest of the participants in the follow up workshop (Co-ordinators’ Network September 1999). Concerns of co-ordinators and managers locally echoed concerns of co-ordinators in Canada:

Volunteer managers complained about individuals who have a special need but who don’t tell them about it. Managers become frustrated because often a problem comes along that might have been prevented if the new volunteer had disclosed a special need. (Woodside & Luis, 1997, p. 72).

The same frustrations must apply to those who develop a special need after appointment, and whose subsequent behaviour may be amongst some of those behaviours included in the discussion of inappropriate behaviour (Section 6.4.2).
It is apparent that undisclosed needs may pose a greater problem for the co-ordinator or manager of volunteers, but that issues of discrimination and privacy affect the right of the agency to require disclosure. Similarly, the right of the volunteer not to disclose illness or incapacity where this is seen as not likely to affect the individual’s ability to undertake the tasks of the position is also an issue. In “John’s” case the decision not to disclose was based on his perception of the stigma that is attached to a diagnosis of paranoid schizophrenia and the likelihood that he would be treated differently by fellow staff members (Rebeiro & Allen, 1998).

There is a very delicate balance between the right of the individual not to disclose such a diagnosis, and the right of the agency or manager to be advised so that any problems which may arise may be handled in the appropriate manner. There is also a potential issue associated with the line between volunteer providing assistance and volunteer as client. This may become complicated especially where resources are diverted to volunteer support. This is an area demanding further research.

6.5.3 Recruitment and Selection of Short Term Volunteers

Short term, episodic and ‘work experience’ volunteers pose a dilemma for some organisations:

“....We don’t have that many because they require more supervision and we don’t have enough staff for that. And this is where we really in some ways do not do so well ... youth require more supervision. That is something we would like to do, however we are constrained by staff. .... So really I am saying that our social commitment in terms of that area, is something that we could really do more.” (Interview 1).

Short term or “episodic” volunteering (Macduff, 1990; 1991) and “mandatory volunteerism” (Stukas et al., 1999) are issues being explored in the literature to some
It is generally thought that volunteer work is a pathway to employment for some, and that the short term, experience-gaining volunteer is a fact of the future of volunteering. “Work experience” has not been viewed as “volunteering” in its true sense, but many agencies have amongst their volunteer populations students seeking experience to accompany their studies, in some cases required by their courses (Stukas et al., 1999), and cite the gaining of experience as a reason for seeking volunteer work (Clary et al., 1998).

The advent of such programmes as the Voluntary Work Initiative, Mutual Obligation and other programmes designed to offer people the opportunity to undertake worthwhile activities whilst gaining experience poses a challenge for agencies to best utilise the talent and assistance likely to come their way. Arguments that involvement in “mandatory volunteering” might undermine the future potential of a volunteer have not been supported by recent research which found that

only those individuals who would not otherwise be volunteering... or who feel that it would take external control to get them to volunteer... may find their future intentions undermined by a requirement to volunteer... Future intentions to volunteer may depend importantly on whether individuals’ personal agendas are in harmony or in conflict with the agenda behind the requirement. (Stukas et al., 1999, p. 63, 64).

Involvement in student placement volunteering, or in programmes to encourage the unemployed to volunteer is an issue for agencies to address. Forsyth (1999, p. 41) suggests that agencies can develop an approach to volunteer management which incorporates an ability “to respond to volunteers’ requests for short-term and one-time opportunities while maintaining longer-term volunteer assignments”. She offers an approach which identifies the degree of intensity required for effective volunteer...
management according to such issues as the type of client, the setting, the type of activity and the level of supervision required.

Identification of positions and activities according to the degree of intensity allows placement of volunteers whose need is for short term placement into low risk and low supervision positions, to which less time can be devoted, and for which less rigorous administrative support can be provided. Short term, episodic, one time and work experience volunteering represent another area for further research.

6.5.4 Briefing: Job Descriptions, Induction and Training
The questionnaire data indicated that many volunteers had received some form of written duty statement, procedures manual or letter outlining their responsibilities (some had received more than one of these), and most had received some training (refer Table 6.3)

Table 6.3: Questionnaire data on Job Descriptions and Training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Written details of duties</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Format of written details</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duty statement</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedures manual</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General letter</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other written format</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of training</strong></td>
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</tr>
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<td>On-the-job with volunteer</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Induction</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periodic training</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informally</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal On-the-job</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If things go wrong</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal changed duties</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other volunteer position this organisation</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other written formats in which duties were outlined included *method sheets* (Free response 1), and additional training was received by respondents in volunteer positions in organisations other than the one in which the research was being conducted, and in both current and previous paid positions. Some organisations provided regular meetings for their volunteers to keep their skills and knowledge up to date, whilst some provided regular newsletters for this purpose. In one organisation both of these mechanisms are in place (Interview 5).

All of the organisations offered some level of training for their volunteers, from a formal module by module training approach such as that found in Organisations 5 and 6, to on-the-job training with a paid staff member or more experienced volunteer. All the organisations recognised the need to orient the volunteers to the organisation and to the tasks they are to carry out.

It was apparent that in most of the respondent organisations the level of job information given, and training provided had increased over time. Longer term volunteers in Organisation 6, for example, had participated in recently introduced training modules long after they commenced volunteering, but new volunteers in this organisation must participate in the training as part of their introduction to the organisation (Group 6; Interview 6). In most cases the introduction of training programmes was viewed positively by the volunteers. Where negative comments were made these were more likely to relate to improvement of the training process rather than in opposition to the training itself, for example:

"The training was undertaken on the job which was good, but I would like it to be a little more specific and taken one step at a time. I notice further volunteers were taught a little more slowly. A little more background would have been helpful. I did not enjoy the first few
weeks because I felt at a disadvantage but I am glad I stuck to it, as I now look forward to it and have discovered, as you often do, that the other volunteers aren’t perfect either.” (Free response 1).

These findings are in keeping with the information from the foundation study.

6.6 Feedback Received by Volunteers

The central issue being examined by this research is feedback. The model presented in Chapter 2 (reproduced below at Figure 6.1) identifies that the three main components of feedback are the source, the message and the recipient, with the organisational setting in which feedback occurs as a factor.

![Figure 6.1: The Feedback Process](image)

The research findings on the feedback process are discussed in relation to the components identified in this figure.

6.6.1 Sources of Feedback

Eighty questionnaire respondents indicated that they received some level of feedback. In addition to the supervisor and co-workers, about whom specific and detailed questions were posed in the questionnaires, the client, and the self were identified as important. There were varying levels of importance placed on the numerous sources of feedback identified by volunteers. Table 6.4 shows the sources of feedback from which volunteers receive feedback. Volunteers were asked to tick as many sources as were appropriate to their situation:
Table 6.4: Sources of feedback

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>No of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-workers</td>
<td>49 (Some volunteers indicated that they do not have co-workers either paid or unpaid)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clients</td>
<td>36 (Some volunteers do not have “clients” per se.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Managers</td>
<td>21 (one example here was the Minister’s office and the Premier)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board or Management Committee</td>
<td>12 (not all organisations have a board or committee)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other sources of feedback</td>
<td>10 (examples included newsletters, mailouts, and one respondent indicated “God”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subordinates</td>
<td>6 (very few of the volunteers have subordinates)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automated system</td>
<td>4 (Very few volunteers have the opportunity to receive this sort of feedback)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were asked to select which of the sources of feedback they considered to be the most important. Forty-four considered the supervisor to be the most important, 15 considered the self to be the most important and 14 the client. The question which sought to find out which or the sources available to the volunteer was considered to be the least important was interpreted by many respondents to refer to the complete list provided in the questionnaire and not to those sources from which feedback is received by the respondent. Thus some respondents indicated that they did not receive feedback from an automated system, but then ranked this in their response to the question about importance, perhaps affecting the results. Thirty three indicated that an automated system was the least important. All other sources received between one and eight responses with the most frequent of these being the board or management committee and the self both being rated the least important by eight respondents.

In Organisation 3 client feedback was rated most important by approximately half of the respondents to the questionnaire, and the importance and nature of client feedback became very apparent during the group interview:

“The client is quick to comment when things or performance don’t suit.” (Free response 3).
"I work on a one to one with my client - she gives me my feedback I don’t need a well done from a co-worker." (Free response 3)

"I don’t think we look for thanks as such. I mean the clients always invariably will say thanks. You know thanks for helping us and all that sort of thing .... [second speaker] Yes that probably means more than having the CEO or somebody who probably wouldn’t even know who we were.” (Group 3)

"Just to see the smile on their face. [new speaker] is more important.” (Group 3).

Co-workers were not considered to be very important sources of feedback by the volunteers in Organisation 3:

"I work with my clients..., I am not affected by others.” (Free response 3);

with some not having any real contact with co-workers:

"does not apply as I have only limited contact with other workers” (Free response 3).

In Organisation 1 where there is no direct “client”, whilst feedback from other workers was not particularly identified as being important, the interaction with others about the work was reported as being friendly and happy:

"When I finished an extremely big box last week, [name of person deleted] who is a paid part-timer in my section she said ‘did you get right down to the bottom?’ , and I said ‘yes’. She said ‘did you find anything?’ and I said ‘well I found two sheets of cardboard with binding around it’ and she said ‘yes’ and I said ‘well I opened it and it just had a little green slip which had an advertisement for the spring fling from the wildflower society’ and she laughed and said ‘you must have looked on the wrong side. I had said well done [name deleted]”(Group 1).

"Yes that is the two things that we try to do. It is just really trying to acknowledge ... Again we are not very good at it, but we are getting better and I think to the staff’s credit here too, they support that strongly and they are also very good at it. [staff names and positions], if they are in charge of the events they write the letter to the volunteers and say we really appreciated it. Give people feedback ... that is the level of it at this stage.” (Interview 6).
Perhaps one of the most interesting comments about the sources of feedback came from the free response data in the surveys where the least important source of feedback was cited as:

"any person who does not have the full facts or perception of the situation on which the feedback is related." (Free response 2).

As discussed in the literature review, the source of feedback can have a very strong influence in the outcome of feedback, especially with regard to such matters as perceived accuracy.

6.6.2 Feedback Messages to Volunteers

Recognition

All of the organisations have mechanisms to reward and recognise the work of their volunteers. Issues such as cost influence the form and frequency of such recognition. Volunteers described the various rewards they receive as including annual get-togethers, thanks at the Christmas party, and Christmas presents. In Organisation 1 volunteers are given shirts with the organisation logo on them, and offered the opportunity to be part of country expeditions on behalf of the organisation, to undertake their volunteer duties in a different setting.

Many volunteers value the simple thanks that comes from others when they leave at the end of the day (Group 4; Group 6). Volunteers in Organisation 3 saw the reward as coming directly from their work, referring to their work as “the best job in the world” and “very satisfying” (Group 3).

Co-ordinators identified the more formal mechanisms in place including recognition of milestones with a cake, a celebratory lunch or morning tea, a story and photo in the in-house newsletter (Interview 1); “volunteer of the year” awards in the parent organisation (Interview 1); certificates of appreciation presented at the International Volunteer Day
celebrations (Interview 3) or at other annual events (Interviews 5 and 6); and regular Christmas functions for all volunteers (Interview 4).

It is interesting that the volunteers cited the less formal mechanisms rather than the more formal ones identified by the co-ordinators. It is likely that the latter would be missed by the volunteers were they not in place, or were they to be reduced. In Organisation 5, for example, there was a perception that perhaps the greater recognition of the additional work load of group leaders which had been present in the past, had been less in recent years with end of year recognition of group leaders now being the same as all other volunteers (Group 5). This view was not shared by the co-ordinator, who agreed that perhaps the format for presentation of these had altered, thus paying less attention to recognition of the additional workload carried by these volunteers, thus the change of emphasis or focus was noticed by some of the volunteers.

In Organisation 4 the volunteers’ appreciation of the little things was noted by the Co-ordinator:

“As far as I am concerned, I tell them, I believe that small things like making tea and coffee for them having informal morning teas, having volunteers meetings, listening to their needs. The two functions a year I think are fine, I think it is ... I don’t necessarily think that, that is the best way for an organisation to acknowledge the volunteers. They do look forward to their functions. They are usually well attended, the Christmas one in particular. But I think that personal [sic] seeing me walking around and doing some small thing for them such as making tea and coffee for them on the odd occasion and asking them to come to my office to see them, that is where that real people contact is important. That is the way I acknowledge them.” (Interview 4).
Constructive and negative feedback

Very few of the respondent volunteers had received what they saw as negative feedback. Many were at pains to point out in their questionnaires that they had never received such feedback.

"Never occurred" (Free response 1)
"I have not had this situation occur up to this time" (Free response 2)
"This is a difficult question, it seems to imply I do things wrong and I haven’t felt that I have so I can’t really respond." (Free response 3).

Table 6.5 sets out the responses to the questions posed about what action the supervisor takes when the respondent volunteer does not meet the expectations of the organisation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My supervisor</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Missing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Publicly points out what I did wrong</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publicly expresses displeasure with my work (eg raises voice in front of others).</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takes me aside and publicly expresses displeasure with my work</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takes me aside and privately points out what I did wrong</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not let me know if s/he is unhappy with my performance</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takes me aside and privately explains what I should be doing</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Twenty three respondents made additional comments with regard to this series of questions, including those reported above. Of those who indicated that their supervisor never expressed public displeasure (65), 11 indicated that their supervisor always took them aside and explained what they should be doing, 19 indicated that their supervisor sometimes took them aside and explained what they should be doing and 30 indicated that their supervisor never took them aside and explained what they should be doing.

The process or manner of delivering messages about undesirable behaviour differs from organisation to organisation, but apparently can differ between volunteers as well. In one
group interview the discussion about the actions of a particular member of the paid staff who was reported as frequently feeling that volunteers were being too noisy indicated that some felt that this person "will not face us directly" (Group 4).

Another volunteer reported being "forced" to overcome her nerves at a public function related to her volunteer role by a more senior volunteer:

I think with a lot of them they have a sort of way of, if you are doing something wrong, of telling you without telling you kind of thing. He just dragged me up the front and sort of was showing me what to do and I was just having so much fun and laughing so hard by the end of it. He was actually singing Christmas carols at one point of time to the whole [location] and I was just going 'oh! My God'.

...If I didn't want to do it then I didn't have to, but he encouraged me to do it by sort of having fun. By making it fun." (Group 6).

The respondents who volunteered to be involved in group interviews tended mainly to be those who had not received feedback about poor or declining performance. During the initial time in the organisation they had received support, training and encouragement from staff and fellow volunteers, and received little or no negative feedback.

Volunteers were usually unaware of the action taken when another volunteer performed poorly. In the questionnaires, the indication was that they either did not know what had happened, had not encountered what they considered to be poor performance by another volunteer or did not have much contact with other volunteers.

When asked about the actions of supervisors when other volunteers are not performing to the expectations of the organisation many respondents chose not to answer these questions (35). Amongst the responses collected, 34 indicated that this was always handled well by the relevant supervisor, whilst 31 indicated it was never not handled well. More importantly, however, 32 indicated that they were unaware of what action was taken. This is supported by comments in the group interview in Organisation 3.
All indications are that action taken is discreet and carefully handled and causes little disruption. Volunteers who don't fit in seem to just not come back according to the volunteer group interview participants (Group 3), but the information provided by the co-ordinator indicated that new starters are followed up soon after starting to see how they have fitted in, and any complaint from a supervisor is followed up with private discussions as to what might be done to improve the situation - both with the supervisor, and if necessary with the volunteer (Interview 3).

In a number of cases volunteers do not know what action is taken because they do not have much contact with other volunteers:

"I don't work with other volunteers and so am unaware of any problems" (Free response 4)

"Doesn't really apply because I don't have many close co-workers" (Free response 4)

Many volunteers indicated that they would like to hear if they were not meeting the expectations of the organisation:

"I hope someone would tell me if I was doing a bad job I've been told I do really well." (Free response 3)

"If I didn't meet the expectations of my supervisors I hope this would be discussed with me. I thoroughly enjoy my time at [organisation] and this is the reason I work there." (Free response 3).

In Organisation 5, however, there was some concern expressed about the lack of follow up on those volunteers who were not meeting their commitments in terms of time spent undertaking their allocated activity. The perception of at least one volunteer was that there was, to some extent, a failure by the co-ordinator to follow through on policy with regard to asking a volunteer who is no longer contributing regularly to give up their volunteer position and surrender the equipment and uniform supplied for that purpose.
(Group 5). The co-ordinator did not share this view, indicating that there were steps taken to follow up on those volunteers whose contribution had declined over time, including a series of contacts such as letters, and that this was handled in a sensitive and discreet manner (Interview 5). Once again the volunteers are unaware of the steps being taken by the Co-ordinator.

6.6.3 Recipient responses to feedback messages
Respondents to the questionnaires were asked in a number of ways how they felt about the feedback they currently receive - both from their supervisor and from co-workers. As indicated above, other sources of feedback were not explored in depth.

Essentially four groups emerged with regard to feedback:

- Those who are happy with current level of feedback and don’t need more.
- Those who want more feedback.
- Those who are not really interested in feedback.
- Those who expect that they will be told if they are not performing, but who have not had experience of this.

In the Co-ordinators’ Network seminar (September 1999) there seemed to be recognition of these groups, although co-ordinators had not defined the groups in this manner. Discussion indicated that many co-ordinators had unconsciously identified that some volunteers might not want feedback and that others did. The seminar canvassed the possibility that there is a possible link between volunteers’ reasons for undertaking volunteer work and their feelings about feedback. This was not explored by the research, but work undertaken recently by Clary, Snyder, Ridge, Copeland, Stukas, Haugen and Miene (1998) in the development of a Volunteer Functions Inventory might be a useful tool in examining this link.
Recipient responses to supervisor feedback

Ratings of quantity, utility, consistency, timeliness, objectivity, accuracy and fairness were sought on a scale of one to five with regard to the two sources of supervisor and co-worker. Table 6.6 sets out the means and standard deviation for each of these dimensions of supervisor feedback.

Table 6.6: Mean and Standard deviation on dimensions of supervisor feedback

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quantity</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utility</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistency</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>1.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timeliness</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objectivity</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>1.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accuracy</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairness</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>0.98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These results would lead to the conclusion that whilst not perfect, supervisor feedback was generally highly regarded on all of these dimensions.

One way ANOVA was conducted on each of these dimensions to determine if there were any significant differences between organisations, but none were found (Refer Table D9 in Appendix D)

Respondents were also asked to rate the frequency and quality of the feedback received from their supervisor on a separate scale later in the questionnaire. On these two aspects similar results were obtained indicating general agreement on the frequency and quality of feedback (Frequency: $\chi=3.61$, $\text{SD}=1.20$; Quality: $\chi=3.96$, $\text{SD}=0.96$).

When asked what about the feedback from supervisors, respondents would like to change approximately on third of those who chose to answer this question indicated that change was necessary. Forty four respondents answered this question and fifteen indicated that
any change was necessary. Most of these comments related to increased information they would like to receive:

"Sometimes the feedback is a bit beyond me; i.e. I don’t always understand the terms and expressions used as I have no previous experience in this particular …[activity]" (Free response 1).

"I would like to be advised if my performance is making a difference to the client so that I may determine if changes need to be made with myself to correctly address the current situation." (Free response 2).

"I would like more direct supervision of the specific needs of individual clients for effective [identifier deleted] therapy" (Free response 4)

"I don’t require feedback on my performance as such, but it would be nice to get the overall results of the [fundraiser]" (Free response 6).

Other respondents commented on the standards of feedback being achieved:

"A first class supervisor, patient and encouraging us to achieve higher standards" (Free response 1)

"The quality of feedback communication we receive is excellent. It is a very good system and I see no need to change" (Free response 5)

or problems outside the supervisor’s direct feedback:

"This is not related to the supervisor but more the do with the co-operations between the many other departments. There are just so many of them it has got to be difficult." (Free response 3)

and the final area on which comments were offered was on the lack of a personal need for feedback:

"I know if I’m being successful or not in the tasks I am given. I don’t need people to pat me on the back and say ‘well done’ "(Free response 1)

"I work as a volunteer for my pleasure and my client. If I didn’t do a good job I’d go and I’m too old to be bothered by others' opinions and appraisals or no feedback" (Free response 3).

"I do not feel the need for feedback with my duties in this organisation. Wen [sic] I volunteer I do the best I can and I hope it is appreciated. A thank you is all I require. Feedback and training makes me think certain expectations are required of me and I would feel pressure to meet them." (Free response 6).
This last comment ties in with the concerns mentioned earlier of the participants at the National Volunteer Week Workshops regarding the longer term volunteers who commenced their volunteer work before there was the current level of "management" of volunteers.

In the interview concerns arose such as the absence of any "supervisor" as such:

"I find it a bit limited I suppose. But then again that is because I am doing something a bit different to the rest of you because I don't have much contact with the person who is the, the person who is in charge of the [section name deleted] because she is not here when I am here. I know I can always phone her, and she does phone me and we have a general sort of chit chat, and we try to get together occasionally, but more or less I am left to my own devices with the client." (Group 3).

or a lack of knowledge as to who the "supervisor" is:

"I haven’t found who my boss is anyway." (Group 3)

Volunteers who participated in one of the National Volunteer Week workshops, however, indicated that it was important for them to be told if they are not pulling their weight or getting it right, and that they would feel insulted if they were not told because they were "just a volunteer" (NVW Workshop 2).

**Recipient responses to co-worker feedback**

Table 6.7 sets out the mean and standard deviation for co-worker feedback on each of the dimensions measured.

**Table 6.7: Mean and standard deviation on dimensions of co-worker feedback**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quantity</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>1.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utility</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>2.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistency</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>1.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timeliness</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objectivity</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>1.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accuracy</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>1.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairness</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>1.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The ratings for each dimension were all slightly lower than for supervisor feedback with the exception of utility for which the slightly increased mean was accompanied by a much larger variability in responses. A number of respondents indicated that they did not feel the need to receive feedback from co-workers for example:

"Not relevant. Although I am fond of and respect my volunteer co-workers I look to the office professionals for information and feedback." (Free response 6)

"I work on a one to one with my client - she gives me my feedback I don’t need a well done from a co-worker" (Free response 3).

whilst others indicated that they do not have contact with co-workers for example:

"Doesn’t really apply because I don’t have many close co-workers" (Free response 4)

"I guess, I know I tend to think more of reinforcement with clients. I don’t tend to have much contact with other volunteers. I am pretty much sort of isolated, and only come in once a week for 4 or 5 hours. It is pretty much do those tasks. Sometimes I do have interaction with others, and it is more a conversational kind of thing, I don’t really know what they do, so I can’t make a comment on how their performance and that kind of thing." (Group 4).

Once again an ANOVA indicated that there were no significant differences between the organisations on any of these dimensions (Refer to Table D10 in Appendix D).

Comparison with the ratings given to frequency and quality indicated that general agreement that these were positive (Frequency: \( \bar{x}=3.39, \text{SD}=1.20 \); Quality: \( \bar{x}=3.55, \text{SD}=1.08 \)) albeit a little lower.

Comments on how co-worker feedback could be improved were similar to those on supervisors. Thirty eight respondents made some comment but only thirteen indicated how improvements could be made, with many making comments about the lack of contact or the lack of a need for feedback from co-workers:

"Need more contact with team leader" (Free response 5)
"I would like to hear feedback on how a negative situation has been addressed and what steps or procedure was adhered to, to transform the situation to a positive direction over a period of contact with a client, rather than receive the negative details and how it is affecting the co-worker" (Free response 2)

'Co-workers are great but sometimes delays are created because of lack of information being passed on from other departments." (Free response 3).

"Sometimes it would be handy to know the diagnosis - this would give me a better picture of the client’s potential e.g. disability from birth, as a result of accident, or degenerative disease." (Free response 3).

One respondent indicated that it is the relationships that are important:

"This is why it works. It’s the people not the structure that has to be right first." (Free response 5).

### 6.7 The Feedback Environment

Increasingly throughout the data collection process the importance of the feedback environment in the management of the performance of volunteers became apparent. The feedback environment was defined in the literature review as having a wider meaning than that identified by Herold and Greller (1985, p. 303) “the amount and type of performance feedback available to individuals in work settings.” It includes other environmental factors such as the organisational culture, the organisational or management attitude to feedback and performance; and the psychological contract or the relationship between the organisation and the feedback recipient. This section outlines the findings in relation to the feedback environment as it has been broadly defined for this study.

#### 6.7.1 Organisational support and assistance for the co-ordinator

One aspect of the organisational culture is the unspoken message inferred from the actions of the organisation by the volunteers in the form of the systems in place to
support the volunteer programme. The organisational support for the co-ordinator varied between the organisations examined. In all the organisations except Organisation 1 the co-ordinator occupies a dedicated position created to care for the volunteers in the organisation. In Organisation 1 this role is not reflected on the co-ordinator's duty statement despite recognition of the volunteers' vital role in the organisation coming from the top. (This is further discussed in relation to organisational culture in Section 6.7.3).

In Organisation 3 the position is part-time and has recently been increased from two days a week to four days a week for a trial period. In Organisation 4 the position is 4 days a week, and in Organisation 6 the position is five days a week. Whilst the Co-ordinator in Organisation 5 works five days a week there is only an allocation of 50% of his time to the volunteer programme. In Organisations 5 and 6 there are often events and activities which require attendance by the co-ordinator at nights and on weekends. Senior management in Organisations 1, 5 and 6 seems to be very supportive and whilst there are always budgetary constraints the programmes are valued and supported. This seems to be a little less evident in Organisations 3 and 4 where the efforts of the co-ordinator might be viewed as being undervalued, and where for each change, idea, programme, development the co-ordinator has to work hard to gain executive support and resources.

Other organisations, identified via workshops, have varying levels of support for the co-ordinator with some organisations going so far as to have more than one person to take care of the volunteers:

"I think it is also to do with evolution of the organisation. The organisation that I am at, we had one volunteer co-ordinator who was so hugely overworked she didn’t ever have the opportunity to sit and have a cup of coffee with her volunteers, and the role was then divided into two and it is my role to have that personal, to build those
personal relationships to really nurture those volunteers keeping in
mind the managerial aspects." (NVW Workshop 2).

In all the organisations the co-ordinators appear committed, and prepared to put in more
than the time allocated by the organisation, with the Co-ordinator in Organisation 3 being
available to the organisation and especially to volunteers seven days a week, and twenty
four hours a day (Interview 3, Group 3). This dedication was not confined to the
organisations studied and appeared to be common to many co-ordinators and managers of
volunteers (NVW Workshops 1 and 2).

6.7.2 Responsibility for supervision of volunteers

Very few of the volunteers are directly supervised by the co-ordinator of volunteers in
their organisation. Often there is a paid staff member responsible for some aspect of the
organisation and the volunteer reports to them on a day to day basis. In Organisations 1,
3 and 4 this is usually the same person in the same area of work on most occasions that
the volunteer attends. In Organisation 6 this may change depending on the activity being
undertaken, and in some cases may not involve "supervision" at all, in that groups of
volunteers organise themselves for a particular event or activity. In Organisation 5 a
cascading team environment is in operation with volunteer "group leaders" being
responsible for briefing and organising groups of volunteers, and with volunteers always
carrying out their duties in pairs where public contact is involved. The group leader
approach is currently being established in Organisation 6 as well. The team or group
leaders are all volunteers.

Fifty questionnaire respondents indicated that the paid co-ordinator was their supervisor,
and five indicated that they were unsure who the supervisor was. The questionnaire
indicated that the term supervisor referred to "the person who organises, supervises, co-
ordinates, is your contact, or generally looks after your needs while you volunteer”. The co-ordinators were all clear that their role was not one of direct supervision but of facilitation of the volunteer - organisation relationship; a role which was also discussed in workshops. The volunteer-organisation relationship is further discussed in relation to the psychological contract in section 6.7.3.

**Contact with supervisor**

The level and type of contact with the supervisor was explored in the questionnaires. Participants were asked to indicate the level of contact they have with their supervisor on a five point scale from “never” to “always” in three categories from formal to social. Sixty-six respondents answered all four questions with one additional respondent making written comments instead. Seven respondents indicated that their supervisor never had the opportunity to assess their performance as a volunteer, with one respondent from Organisation 5 making a comment indicating that they did not know whether this opportunity arose or not. Of these five were with Organisation 6 and two with Organisation 4. Thirty four, however, indicated that their supervisor always had such an opportunity (Table D11 in Appendix D sets out the mean and standard deviation for responses to these questions.) The standard deviation for all of these questions indicates a high variability in responses.

A significant relationship was found between organisation and direct informal contact with supervisor ($F = 3.604, p = .006$) and between organisation and social contact with supervisor ($F = 2.503, p = .039$) (Table D12 in Appendix D), thus indicating a variation between the organisations studied.
Organisation 1 showed a lower level of direct formal contact than the whole group ($\chi^2 = 1.89, SD = 1.17$), but it also had a much higher level of direct informal contact ($\chi^2 = 4.45, SD = 0.47$). Social contact seems to be varied and depends largely on the role undertaken by the volunteer in the organisation. Factors such as the personality of the volunteer and their reasons for volunteering, whilst not the subject of data collection, may also have influenced this aspect of the interaction between volunteer and supervisor. In Organisation 6, for example, there are many volunteers who never attend head office, and whose activities are local, self-driven and require only occasional telephone or mail contact. This is part of the manner in which the organisation operates and is one of the choices offered volunteers (Group 6; Interview 6).

In Organisation 1, for example, there are facilities for tea and coffee, breaks are encouraged and the paid and volunteer staff mingle in the designated area. A sign indicating that volunteers are not expected to pay for their tea and coffee was not mentioned by anyone at any point but was obviously adhered to by paid staff. In Organisation 3, the volunteers enjoy morning tea with the clients (Group 3), and in Organisation 4 there were observations by some volunteers about the fact that the volunteers were not to go into the staff lunch room (Group 4). The reasons for this ruling are known by volunteers - that is to allow staff respite from contact with clients, some of whom are volunteers, and to enable staff to discuss clients in confidence when necessary. This is not necessarily accepted by some volunteers (Group 4).

6.7.3 Communication
Regular contact newsletters are sent out to volunteers in Organisations 5 and 6, and were planned for Organisation 4. Organisation 1 has regular meetings and a dedicated notice
board specifically for volunteers. Organisation 5 has regular briefings for group leaders to which all volunteers are welcome, and regular sessions for both briefing and social interaction amongst volunteers. Organisations 1, 3, and 6 have facilities available for volunteers and paid staff to mix socially for morning coffee. Social interaction and communication with other staff in Organisation 4 was perhaps somewhat influenced by the cultural and organisational constraints which seemed to separate “them” from “us”, a factor which was not apparent in other organisations. In one of the workshops volunteers reported being included in regular briefings which included all staff both paid and unpaid, at which everyone reported progress on projects and future plans. Such a meeting created a feeling of inclusion in the organisation (NVW Workshop 2).

In all the organisations the volunteer co-ordinator was seen by the volunteers as being easily accessible and approachable.

6.7.4 Organisational culture and the psychological contract
In Organisation 1 the volunteers spoke highly of the person responsible for them, of the staff who undertake their direct supervision, of each other and of senior management in their section of the organisation.

Free response data from the questionnaires:

“Volunteers in this organisation are very well treated, appreciated and have friendly relations with all staff members from top to bottom. We are free to discuss anything with them and social occasions are provided for friendly interchange.” (Free response 1)

was supported by interview data:

“I think that from the boss [name of director deleted] down, all the paid staff are very supportive of the volunteers and [name of director] has said quite categorically, that as far as he is concerned there is no difference between the volunteers and the paid staff. We are all
working together with a common purpose and they treat us very well.”
(Group 1).

The atmosphere in this organisation was described by volunteers as being “very good” and “excellent” (Group 1).

An illustration of the role this positive culture plays in the feedback environment was the belief by volunteers that they do not comment on or criticise the performance of others and the observation of the co-ordinator that, in fact, they do, but that they do it in such a way that it is never negative, is always encouraging and is part of the good communication between volunteers:

“No! I wouldn’t say anything, because mainly I wouldn’t know that they were going off track. I wouldn’t know what they were actually doing unless I came up to their shoulder and looked....Maybe they just have a specimen in front of them. The other day, when I was doing my work, a new volunteer, virtually a new volunteer, asked if I would help her do the procedure of boiling up, and I said ‘yes. Certainly, I will show you how you go about it.’” (Group 1).

The response of their co-ordinator was a very surprised “but they do” (Interview 1). The discussion which ensued with the interviewer recorded an observation that perhaps the view of the volunteers, that they do not comment adversely on the work of others, is because the communication environment is so friendly and supportive.

In Organisation 3 the atmosphere was described as being like family both in the free response data from the questionnaires “they all enjoy their work and it’s a FAMILY \[emphasis in speech noted in transcript\] atmosphere” (Free response 3) and in the group interview:

“Not only what we do to the clients, but I suppose if one of us has a problem, the others are there saying they want to help the person, it is a real family, but I hope not only a family to all of the patients it is a real thing between us. We are always there for the others and they are always there for you.” (Group 3).
Organisation 6 seemed to have a different feel to it, but one of a strong culture nevertheless:

"I think a lot of it is basically just to do with the full-time staff members just being so accepting and so ... no real expectations, just if this is what you can do, then great. You know thanks very much for your help. [and from another]: Interaction, co-operation, it is very good. [and a third] they always have time. No matter how busy they are, you know they could be swamped under with work but they always have time for you. And, back to the second, I guess because they value the volunteers as much as themselves" (Group 6).

"I don’t ever have the feeling that there is [sic] first and second class citizens, and I think it is not just the volunteer manager that ensures things like that, but every body on our staff.” (NVW workshop 2).

Organisation 5, however, had a different cultural message for some of its volunteers. Despite the positive relationships between volunteers, and with the co-ordinator, one volunteer felt that senior management had sent a clear message by not putting full time relief into the co-ordinator’s position while the co-ordinator was seconded to other duties:

“the organisation has spat on the volunteering programme” (Group 6). This view was not considered by the co-ordinator to extend to all volunteers, and he suggested it was perhaps a legacy of earlier problems with the programme (Interview 6).

Organisation 4 had sent mixed messages to its volunteers with some being of the strong opinion that there was a very strong delineation between “them and us” which was imposed from above:

“ The powers that be don’t listen, ....[interjection] Not everybody was asked....It was really not worthwhile giving an opinion because they took jack shit notice of it anyway. In this society you have got your running people that make decisions and it sticks, and you have to blend in because you are only a volunteer anyway. [interjection] Don’t you ever say that. Only a volunteer. [response] I mean to say I look at it in the sense that you are only a volunteer. You know they ask your opinion, like you said what is the good of opening your mouth they take jack shit, so you know this what I am saying. We are volunteers ..[interjection ] And members, don’t forget that…”(Group 4).
There was even a description of the building having a line down the middle. Some of the discussion examined parts of the building into which volunteers and members are not welcome, the staff lunch room for example. The issues of respite for staff from contact with members who might also be volunteers and of confidentiality of discussions between staff about members were given as the reason for the delineation having been introduced. This reasoning did not seem to be appreciated by those volunteers who had expressed concerns about this factor. Many of those who expressed concern were in fact dual role volunteers who were also members of the organisation. This view was not held by all the volunteers, and the co-ordinator whilst recognising the problems, felt that efforts had been made to overcome them.

It was from these two organisations that the most dissatisfaction with the handling of performance problems seemed to emanate, however such dissatisfaction was not universal, nor was it sufficient to make the volunteers leave (Group 4; Group 5). Farmer and Fedor (1999) have recently determined that the “psychological contract” can play a significant role in the participation and turnover rates of volunteers. The psychological contract is defined as “the set of reciprocal expectations between an individual employee and the organisation” (Stiles, Grattan, Truss, Hope-Hailey, & McGovern, 1997, p. 57). In the case of volunteers, Farmer and Fedor (1999, p. 362) argue that this concept is valid and that managers of volunteers can draw on its strength to manage the contributions of volunteers by paying attention to “what volunteers perceive them as obliged to provide”, and to “provide ... symbolic support” for the work that volunteers undertake. They argue that such support takes the form of recognition and appreciation, an interest in the personal life and “the well being of the volunteer,
timely and helpful feedback [my italics] on the results of their efforts, and providing a supportive social network of other volunteers.” They further go on to point out that many volunteers’ expectations included “an assessment of whether the organisation is providing sufficient resources (information, funds, training)” for the volunteer programme. These observations of Farmer and Fedor (1999) provide support for the findings of the current research with regard to the organisational culture and the messages the organisation is sending its volunteers. Colomy, Chen and Andrews (1987) found that volunteers have expectations that their work will be well organised, their voluntary status acknowledged, and their work valued. There is evidence that some volunteers interpret the actions and decisions of the organisation as messages about the volunteer programme which might be contrary to their expectations, and that the organisational culture might constitute part of these messages. It is argued that the organisational culture might be a significant part of the psychological contract between volunteers and organisations, and that this is an area for further research.

6.7.5 Feedback seeking behaviour
A further aspect of the feedback environment is the efforts of volunteers to seek feedback as and when they need it. It became apparent during the group interviews, and from some of the free response data in questionnaires, that there were many volunteers who actively sought feedback. This seemed to be something with which they felt comfortable.

“...and I know that if I strike a difficulty, that I often do, that I can go straight to [staff member named and position identified]. I have no trouble there, and he will just give me the answer or tell me where to look...” (Group 1).

“There is a colleague that I never hesitate to ask for feedback and she never hesitates to tell me there are things that I need to know. So I believe that there is a good working relationship.” (Group 3).
"I would go and tell somebody and say 'this isn't working. What is going wrong?' You would generally go to someone who is a bit further up than you." (Group 3).

"I just ask what do you want me to do, and she just gives me a task and I go and do it." (Group 4).

Occasionally volunteers find that feedback or information seeking is not always possible:

"And if we can't find somebody....we don't just sort of have a barrier, we just wander along and help ourselves, and it all seems to work doesn't it?" (Group 3)

"There should always be someone available. This is not the case here. It is not the fault of the co-ordinator as she is only part time, and has many people to deal with" (Free response 3).

The availability of someone to ask when uncertain was of concern to co-ordinators:

"I think that would probably be quite a relevant criticism of most organisations because everybody is so busy doing their task and if the volunteer co-ordinator, and I am sure that is often the case with volunteers "well who do I speak to?" You know..." (NVW Workshop 1).

"To support them as the situation arises. I always pass them on to supervisors and people like that, and I always say 'but if you [volunteers] have a problem and I am not here you go to this particular officer,' but often they are out [undertaking a specific task] or whatever and they are not in the office so I think sometimes, I think that is relevant in our organisation." (NVW Workshop 1).

All of the co-ordinators interviewed indicated that they tried to make themselves available to volunteers who had concerns or queries, and that they also tried to make sure that supervisors or group leaders had sufficient information to adequately brief the volunteers assigned to work with them. Volunteers indicated that occasionally these systems break down and, for example, they came in to find there was nothing for them to do (Group 4) or that they did not hear from the person who was expected to brief them (Group 5).

There has been considerable research done by Ashford and her associates in the area of feedback seeking behaviour amongst paid employees (e.g. Ashford & Northcraft, 1992).
This research has shown that employees' feedback seeking behaviour is influenced by a number of factors including impression management (Ashford & Northcraft, 1992). Ashford and her associates explored the role of feedback seeking in employee performance and motivation and found that "managers need to design work contexts that decrease the apparent impression management costs of seeking feedback" (p. 351).

Feedback seeking has been found to increase people’s impressions of superior performers, but that poor performers are often reluctant to seek feedback for fear of being perceived as weak or ingratiating if they do seek feedback, and having to operate without information if they don’t. Ashford and Northcraft (1992, p. 331) warn that the negative feedback poor performers might obtain also affects self esteem and self efficacy, thus complicating the picture. The creation of a work context which encourages poor performers to seek feedback "unencumbered by impression management concerns" (p. 331) is one which might also apply to volunteers. The motivation to volunteer, and to continue to volunteer, might be linked with the feedback seeking process.

6.7.6 “Appraisals”

Whilst this study did not examine the use of performance appraisals per se, the issue arose on a number of occasions and was of great interest to workshop participants. The issue of appraisals is a sensitive one, and the existence or otherwise of an appraisal system may have a significant influence on the feedback environment. Many of the coordinators have either contemplated some form of appraisal or commenced implementation. The balance between the special nature of the organisation’s relationship with the volunteer and the need for the organisation to make sure its volunteers are effective, efficient and accountable is a delicate one.
“This is why we are so careful ... this is the difference. The paid employees have to have the performance appraisals, the volunteers don’t, well they don’t think they have to. ...” (NVW Workshop 2).

In one organisation a regular renewal of the confidentiality agreement is becoming a vehicle for reviewing job descriptions and discussing allocation of duties (Interview 4). This could be a vehicle for an informal discussion of performance if the need arises, and options such as reallocation to different duties might be an outcome of such a discussion. In Organisation 5, however, regular submission of paperwork by volunteers is one of the few mechanisms available to the volunteer co-ordinator to monitor performance, and this is an area where some volunteers are haphazard (Interview 5). The introduction of paperwork associated with the appraisal process is a burden many volunteers might resent. Vanstien (1999, p. 35) suggests that some volunteers will occasionally see the implementation of policies, procedures and guidelines, such as those involved in appraisal, as “a threat, a waste of time, or simply too much paperwork” which can in turn lead to disinterest, or demotivation.

In Organisations 3 and 4, an annual evaluation of the volunteer programme as a whole is conducted. In this process, data is collected from a variety of sources including the volunteers, about the positives and negatives of the volunteer programme. This information is used to implement changes suggested by respondents, and to identify problem areas (Interview 3, Group 4).

The introduction of evaluation of a whole programme is the vehicle suggested by Gaston (1989). Gaston reports the introduction of a performance evaluation programme into an existing volunteer programme. She suggests that self evaluation is possibly the least
threatening first step in a three stage programme developed over three years. She warns that programme evaluations which generate information about the programme must be accompanied by a commitment to follow through on the information gathered. She advises extreme caution in the introduction of evaluation: "Change of any kind generally produces some anxiety, but when that proposed change involves evaluation, the anxiety is intensified. Easy does it." (Gaston, 1989, p. 30). It is, however, the perspective of one volunteer (Medaugh, 1999) that evaluations can strengthen the volunteer's relationship with the organisation, and can be very helpful, particularly for longer assignments. Medaugh (1999, p. 10) argues that “the first challenge is to determine which projects and volunteers will benefit most from formal evaluation” and that the techniques for paid employees “can be borrowed and reshaped to be very effective tools” for use with volunteers.

One option which is being contemplated in one of the participant agencies in this study, and which was discussed by the Co-ordinators' Network (September 1999) with great interest, is the idea of a renewal of commitment rather than an appraisal. This would provide an opportunity to renew confidentiality agreements, to offer training opportunities, to offer reassignment or reallocation to a new position, and where necessary to allow a volunteer who is having difficulty to save face by being allowed the dignity of resigning. The future focus of a renewal of commitment would also serve to help sever contacts with volunteers who have lost interest or whose time constraints have meant that they need to reduce their commitment. As discussed in relation to the foundation study (Section 3.4.2), the concept of a behavioural contract would then be possible, although the use of the term contract may have negative effects.
The concept of a renewal of commitment could, however, include commitments from the organisation, and the commitment renewal process could offer the volunteer the opportunity to express concerns and doubts about the organisation or its operations, or to indicate areas where they feel ill equipped or over burdened. Similarly, if they have other commitments which will require them to reduce their volunteer commitment, such an exercise is likely to prompt them to make a clear statement to that effect and this might reduce the number of volunteers who simply drift away. It might also offer the possibility of a satisfactory closure to the volunteer efforts of the individual.

Finally, the renewal discussion or interview could offer the opportunity for expectations about standards of behaviour, performance expectations, changes in procedures or potential opportunities for reassignment and reallocation to be raised with the volunteer.

This is an idea which could benefit from further exploration, especially in consultation with volunteers who might be the beneficiaries of such a programme.

6.7.7 Longer term volunteers

In three of the organisations, and in discussions during the workshops, it became apparent that in some organisations there was a distinction in the relationship with the organisation between those volunteers who had been with the organisation longer than the co-ordinator and those who had joined the organisation after the co-ordinator had commenced work.

"[with] the new volunteers, if you start them off saying 'this is the paperwork we require' they are fine, they are accepting. The problem is the volunteers we have had for 8 - 10 - 20 years, and all of sudden you are saying to them 'come and have a sit down'. They have never been sat down and said... how do you feel, it has never happened to them in 8 years so it is like you are dealing with two different types of volunteers. The new ones, yes it is not a problem because they know
what their expectations are, but is it getting the old ones. [interjection]
Perhaps this is something you have to learn to live with, and treat
them in two different ways. [response] That is what we are doing.”
(NVW Workshop 2).

In the organisations studied, this view was influenced by the changes that had been
introduced into the management of the volunteers, and into their recruitment, selection,
placement and training, by the, at one time new, co-ordinator. It also reflected the
changes in the programme which had involved the appointment of the co-ordinator.
The changes introduced by the “new” co-ordinator in each case were part of the new
approach to volunteering which has accompanied increased governance requirements,
and the need to better manage volunteers due to the competitive recruitment opportunities
out there. In some cases this has caused discomfort for the older, or longer term,
voluteers.
The changes, however, do not seem to have created any animosity toward the co-
ordinator, but there are echoes of the previous relationship between the organisation and
the volunteers. Both volunteers and co-ordinators referred to what it was like before the
cordinator was appointed. In the case of the volunteers this was largely related to the
changes that had been introduced by the “new” co-ordinator, such as the introduction of
duty statements, and new training materials. In the case of the co-ordinators reference
was made to some of the “history” accompanying some of the longer term volunteers.

This included some element of resistance to change,

“I think it comes down to uninformed volunteers performing tasks in a
lot of cases and again reluctance to change with upgrades with the
way in the past workers have perform a particular task.” (NVW
Workshop 1),

but more often to previous arrangements which were no longer relevant but which had
enduring outcomes for the co-ordinator:
“Changes that had come across, particularly charitable industry .... and the increased requirements for statistics and all those sorts of things, the changes that have taken place in organisations and volunteers need to adapt to that and sometimes they don’t. They don’t recognise the move, they don’t recognise the pressures” (NVW Workshop 2).

The external pressures faced by organisations were varied and whilst there were some which were specific to the organisation or the sector in which the organisation operates (e.g. accreditation of nursing homes) many were experienced across all organisations. Funding, accountability, recruiting, contracts and competition were accompanied by technology, and greater demands from both clients and volunteers.

The issue of the longer term volunteer who is to some extent unaware of the changing external environment, or at least is comfortable with the previous environment, is regarded as a sensitive area by the co-ordinators. Concern and regret were both expressed about this situation. In all cases the volunteers who had been recruited prior to the “new” co-ordinator were regarded as having knowledge, skills and experience which are a valuable part of the volunteer programme. There was discussion in one of the workshops about how to convince volunteers of the need for some of the more bureaucratic changes being introduced across volunteering, for example:

“Passing on information to volunteers in information sessions, educating volunteers to go along with the changes that are coming up, that is very important. [second speaker] just a note in a hand over book is not sufficient, it must be more than that [and a third] The Board of Management needs education in many cases. That is the trouble where I am. (NVW Workshop 1).

Vanstein (1999, p. 37) points out that there is a need for much of the change that the longer term volunteers might find burdensome, and that “today’s professional volunteers can no longer expect to avoid necessary administration, ... and need to keep in mind the responsibility the co-ordinator and agency have to the volunteers themselves.”
As the organisations change to keep pace with the changing world around them it may be necessary to ensure that the longer term volunteers are considered and invited to participate in the change process.

6.8 Reassignment, Separation and Dismissal

Volunteers seemed to know little about what happens when a volunteer leaves. Coordinators indicated that they would always be reluctant to have to dismiss a volunteer, but that on occasion this did happen. Indications are that reassignment to another task which might be more suitable, was usually the first option when a problem arose.

"You can do that more easily with volunteers because you can move them around the organisation a lot more. It is, you know, depending on what they are interested in doing. I mean if they are in this particular role and it is not quite working out for them then you can do that. You can say ‘how about this?’ And ‘have you thought about this?’ and slowly move them into a different area. You can’t necessarily do that with paid staff. They are in a particular role and it is not as easy to move them around." (NVW Workshop 2).

Co-ordinators often felt helpless when a volunteer left in unhappy circumstances, either because they were dissatisfied or because they had to be asked to leave.

In Organisation 5 some of the volunteers feel the co-ordinator should be more rigorous in severing the relationship between the organisation and a volunteer who is not contributing as they should. The Organisation 5 Co-ordinator, however, chooses to follow through on inappropriate behaviour as a higher priority than declining activity, and to have the volunteer agree to resign from the volunteer programme, rather than effect a dismissal (Interview 5). In one organisation there were occasions when the co-ordinator was placed in the position of severing the volunteer relationship without revealing the reason:
“Yes, and in one occasion I did not agree, in fact in two occasions I would not have done it, but my hand was forced. It came from a higher authority and I was asked to ask them to not come back. The reasons given were not I believe.... This is confidential? [interviewer] Oh! yes.[speaker continues] ...were not the true reason I had to give the volunteers, that were the reasons that were public. So I was put in a very ... nothing in writing just I was told that was what I had to do, and that is what I did. But that then of course there was a lot of flack that rebounded back onto me so I now had to find another position for that volunteer. There is nothing here for them because they have a disability and they are not able to do any of the work that is involved here. It also involved the CEO, so it really went to quite a high level [material deleted]. But I did not have to give the reason why, I just had to tidy up the pieces and make that person feel they were worthy. That they were not being asked to leave because they were not valued as a volunteer. They were not needed in that department any more. That is really what it was and in truth it was a personality clash within the department which is just on the rebound.” (Source concealed by agreement).

Such requirements from higher up in the organisation do little to enhance the co-ordinator's relationship with the volunteers, and can serve to undermine the considerable good work being done by the co-ordinator.

As discussed previously, the literature, other research and the foundation study, indicate a reluctance to dismiss volunteer amongst co-ordinators and managers. The processes involved are fraught with emotional difficulties, not only for the volunteer being dismissed, but also for the person charged with the unenviable task of carrying out the dismissal. The prescriptive literature indicates that the concept of “firing” a volunteer is not new (Williamson, Rehmborg, Disney, Washburn, & Roberts, 1979), and has persisted as a difficult topic for managers and co-ordinators (Park, 1984). Lundin (1996), whilst acknowledging that there is no way of making the process pleasant, offers a fair and straightforward approach not unlike the dismissal procedures recommended for paid employees by the Human Resource Management literature (e.g. Cascio, 1998). She suggests that prevention of poor performance is a far better option.
6.8.1 Dual role volunteers
Some organisations reported experiencing difficulties with volunteers who have dual roles in the organisation - for example the volunteer who is also a member or beneficiary, or the volunteer who also makes substantial financial contributions to the organisation.
In times when rapport, performance and relations are good the dual role poses no problem for the organisation. When performance declines or relations and rapport deteriorate, very difficult conflicts can occur. In Organisations 3 and 6 the dismissal of a volunteer can be complicated by the member/volunteer or donor/volunteer relationship and the co-ordinator can be the one having to work on maintaining one relationship whilst ending the other (Interviews 4 and 6). In the instance of the member whose performance declines, when the organisation decides to have the volunteer relationship terminated, the fact that the member must still be allowed access to the services of the organisation and therefore still interact with everyone can cause some serious conflict. In one instance:

"The person still came in to the department from which they had been dismissed and proceeded then to be a consumer from that department, which they were entitled to, but would spend extraordinary lengths of time being in that department. They were just a very long term consumer. Lets just put it that way. They had valid reason to be in the area. They had legitimate reason to be there. So they were to all intents and purposes looking as if they were still in their volunteering capacity. [interjection] So other people that were coming in would still expect them to be there, and still be a volunteer? [first speaker] Well, yes, it was not apparent to the client that this person had actually been dismissed. So for all intents and purposes it looked like they were still volunteering in that department..." (NVW Workshop 1).

This problem is not confined to one organisation:

"I have the same situation with members being volunteers and members having privileges in the organisation, so effectively I can't dismiss a member volunteer, because they can walk into the
organisation at any time under their membership.” (NVW workshop 1).

Nor is it confined to members:

“We have a lady who is doing volunteer work who is also a major donor...that is a major donor as well was a volunteer, came in here to do some work, a lady who is used to very much being in charge was working with her to tell her how things needed to be done and through the day, for whatever reason, there was this sort of mounting tension which resulted in an explosion and the lady sort of spitting the dummy completely and walking out saying 'this is ridiculous'. (Interview 6).

This does not appear to be an area which has been investigated. It is likely that there are many more combinations of dual role volunteers, such as the grass roots volunteer who also holds a place on the board of management (or did previously) or the active volunteer who is also an aid employee. The Co-ordinators’ Network (September 1999) explored options such as a written delineation of roles and behavioural contracts but did not reach any consensus on this issue.

6.9 Conclusion

It is apparent that organisations are using feedback with volunteers. It is also apparent that in addition to this being a valuable management tool it is part of a more complex picture. The most important aspect of this picture seems to be that the environment in which the feedback process occurs underpins all other aspects of the processes of performance management. This chapter has presented the findings of the study in a thematic form. Chapter 7 discusses these findings in relation to the research questions and examines the implications for research, policy and practice.
CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings outlined in Chapter 6 and the implications of these findings for research, policy and practice. The discussion is intended to both guide and inform practitioners and stimulate debate. It is also intended to serve as a basis for further research. The use of a largely qualitative approach in this study has allowed exploration of related issues to develop a contextual view of the use of feedback to manage volunteers, and has allowed the development of a picture which might otherwise have been obscured by the use of quantitative methods alone. This picture includes identification of the broader feedback environment including the organisational culture as a central contextual element in the successful use of feedback in the management of volunteers. It commences with an overview of the issue of the application of management theory developed with the paid workforce to the management of volunteers.

7.2 Application of management theory to volunteers

Lafer and Craig (1993) outlined the following strategies to reduce the turnover of volunteers:

- improved recruitment and selection procedures
- better training and
- better supervision and support.

The ABS survey on voluntary work in 1995 identified that in Western Australia whilst most (62%) volunteers had no concerns about their volunteer work (Rosenberg-Russell, 1995) of those who did have concerns (38%), lack of support (13.8%), was the main one.
Interestingly "amount/adequacy of supervision" was of concern to only 3% of volunteers. It appears support and supervision are not regarded by volunteers as the same thing.

The findings from this research indicate that volunteers do not wish to be managed as if they were employees, but that they do expect their work to be well organised. This research supports the view that co-ordinators and managers of volunteers have found that there is much that is known about managing a paid workforce, which can be utilised in the management of volunteers. Such practices, however, might benefit from being tempered by the special "nurturing" aspect which has been identified as an important element of volunteer management.

The bureaucratic requirements which have evolved due to the increasingly complex nature of the legislative and funding requirements which govern voluntary work mean that there is an increasing demand from the top for better organised work, and the competition for volunteers means that agencies must offer their volunteers a well organised environment which meets individual needs. Such a finding is supported by recent findings in the UK which indicate that:

organizations can no longer afford to treat volunteers as well meaning amateurs, but need to give them skills to the point where they emerge as trained, professional, unpaid members of staff...[However, it is also clear that] tensions between managerialism and volunteerism emerge and alienate the volunteer workforce (Cunningham, 1999, p. 21).

To avoid the alienation of volunteers, special consideration needs to be made of their voluntary status and the "nurturing" approach to management may be that which serves to meet this need.

It can be argued that the use of feedback is one area where this applies.
7.3 Discussion of the findings relating to the research questions

This study examined the use of feedback in the management of performance of volunteers. It aimed to gain insights into this phenomenon and describe and identify patterns in how feedback is used in practice across participant organisations. The study explored elements of poor volunteer performance as defined by respondents and their views on key factors which might influence the successful use of feedback in managing poor or declining performance by a volunteer.

The investigation of the subject was premised on three research questions:

The objective of this study was to examine the use of feedback in the management of performance by volunteers. The foundation study indicated that feedback is used as part of the broader Human Resource Management processes in the management of volunteers. In the absence of significant prior research, this study aimed to gain insights into this phenomenon and to describe and identify patterns in how it is used. In order to achieve this primary objective three subordinate objectives were identified:

To identify what is perceived as “poor performance” by volunteers and volunteer managers and co-ordinators.

To identify the nature of feedback received by volunteers about their performance.

To identify how feedback is used in the participant organisations to manager the performance of volunteers.

To identify the elements of feedback identified by volunteers and volunteer managers and co-ordinators as influencing performance outcomes.
In order to address these objectives the research focussed on the following research questions:

**What do volunteers and volunteer managers and co-ordinators perceive constitutes poor performance by a volunteer?**

This question sought to identify what volunteers and those who manage or co-ordinate their activities classify as poor performance in order to provide a context for the examination of the management of performance.

**What is the nature of the feedback given to volunteers?**

This question examined the feedback process, the level of information and training provided to volunteers, who provides feedback on performance and the setting or context in which it occurs.

By addressing these questions the research attempted to establish:

**How is feedback used in the management of poor performance by volunteers?** and

**What are the elements which are perceived to influence the outcomes of the use of feedback to manage the performance of volunteers?**

The issues examined included: the perceived problems associated with providing and receiving negative feedback, and the consequences. The effectiveness of feedback in the management of poor performance was not be measured, but the perceived effectiveness was examined in the context of this question, as was the context or environment in which such feedback is provided.

The discussion which follows addresses these questions, and leads to a discussion of the implications of the findings for research, policy and practice.

**7.3.1 Performance problems**

The study has identified that performance problems are experienced in the management of volunteers. Many of these are day-to-day management issues such as communication and briefing, and to a large extent cause anxiety for the manager or co-ordinator. There are, however, particular performance problems and particular categories of volunteers whose situations present dilemmas for the co-ordinator or manager of volunteers and which can be the cause of much concern.
The performance problems reported to be experienced when managing volunteers included absence without contact, tardiness, failure to pass on information, breach of confidentiality and conflict with staff or clients. More importantly, however, problems with communication and personality "clashes", inappropriate behaviour, and declining performance due to age or illness (which increase safety risks or increase the burden on the co-ordinator in terms of time or support) are of most concern. Managers and co-ordinators seek to offer a fulfilling experience to their volunteers whilst utilising their services in the best manner possible for the respective organisations. These performance problems can inhibit the ability to care for volunteers as a group and address the needs of the individual volunteer at the same time.

These findings are in agreement with the literature in that the types of performance problems identified are not unique to the organisations studied. Issues such as retiring the older volunteer when service is no longer possible (e.g. Cook, 1992), outlining the case for releasing a volunteer (e.g. Lundin, 1996) and dealing with performance problems (e.g. MacKenzie, 1988) have long been discussed in the practitioner literature. There is an element of apparent contradiction, however, in that there is also literature advocating "supported volunteering" (Woodside & Luis, 1997) and non-disclosure of special needs (Rebeiro & Allen, 1998), as well as material advocating the promotion of volunteering to older persons (e.g. Caro & Bass, 1997). The ideas are not entirely contradictory.

Ultimately the same goals of recruiting and retaining volunteers in meaningful work are sought. The contradiction arises in that the promotion of volunteering to groups such as those with special needs, or to older persons, does not necessarily take into account the difficulties which may arise. Managers and co-ordinators of volunteers need mechanisms
to prevent as many potential performance problems as possible, and to be able to handle those which do arise with dignity and professionalism.

### 7.3.2 The nature of feedback given to volunteers

Volunteers receive feedback from supervisors and co-workers both paid and unpaid, from clients, from each other and from the work itself. The most important sources identified by volunteers were the client and the supervisor. Volunteers receive recognition of their efforts in both formal and informal ways.

Certificates of appreciation, celebratory functions and awards and prizes are traditional methods for recognising the work of volunteers. Whilst these were not particularly noted by volunteers, a perceived reduction in the awards was, thus indicating that these are important aspects of the recognition process. Expressions of thanks from clients and paid staff, as well as other volunteers, were identified by volunteers as being important.

Many volunteers reported not having received feedback that they identified as negative feedback. Occasional instances revealed that where negative feedback was inexpertly delivered it was noticed, and feedback which makes the volunteer feel uncomfortable was remembered, but that in the main feedback or assistance which is offered as part of the daily exchange about the volunteer work was not categorised as feedback by the volunteers.

Most volunteers expect to be advised when they need to do something differently. Most volunteers expect to help out a fellow worker who needs a hand to get things right but do not identify this as feedback, merely as part of the spirit of helping which accompanies their role.

The study identified four groups which emerged from amongst the volunteers with regard to feedback perceptions:
Those who are happy with current level of feedback and do not feel they need more.
Those who want more feedback.
Those who are not really interested in feedback.
Those who expect that they will be told if they are not performing, but who have not had experience of this.

Similar groups were recognised by the co-ordinators. There is a possible link between the need or desire for feedback and the individual volunteers’ motivations for becoming and remaining a volunteer. Improving the feedback given to volunteers is likely to be related to the type and nature of the work being undertaken, the type of volunteers the organisation wants to attract and retain, and volunteers' personal needs with regard to feedback. Some volunteers have indicated a preference for more feedback and more information, whilst others do not feel that they need this. Feedback seeking behaviour may need to be encouraged by organisations for those volunteers who feel they need more information.

Most of the volunteers surveyed had received briefing and training in the roles and responsibilities they were expected to undertake. Some felt that they would like to have more information about changes in the organisation or results of some of their activities, but the overall ratings by volunteers of feedback from both supervisors and co-workers indicated that feedback levels and quality were rated by the volunteers as good in the organisations studied.

There is limited literature on the use of feedback in the management of volunteers. Some authors (e.g. Allen, 1987; Noble, 1991; Penn, 1990) suggest that there is a reluctance to monitor and provide feedback to volunteers on performance, and sometimes these are completely absent. MacKenzie (1988, p. 11) and Allen (1987) suggest that feedback should be an integral part of the management process. The advice of the prescriptive
literature, developed from the experience of the authors in working with volunteers, is borne out by the findings of this research and that of others (e.g. Adams & Shepherd, 1996).

7.3.3 The importance of the context in which feedback occurs
Adams and Shepherd (1996, p. 381) suggest that "sometimes the message is less important than the context in which it is spoken" referring to the need for "clear and publicly stated policies and expectations for conduct".

The broader feedback environment was found by this study to play a major role in the feedback process. Whilst the source, message and recipient responses are all important factors, the context in which the feedback occurs serves to facilitate or hinder efforts at effective feedback. For example, the credibility of the source may be undermined if the source is not seen to be receiving adequate support from other parts of the organisation. The unspoken message to the volunteers as to how valued they are can be transmitted by policies and norms which fail to validate the words of the volunteer manager or co-ordinator, or the supervisor. Ineffective training and briefing or poor communication of activities within the organisation can have the same effect. The valence of certificates of recognition or annual prizes can be reduced where "problem" volunteers are not seen to be managed appropriately by the organisation and where they too are recipients of the awards.

On the other hand the inexpert handling of a particular situation may be forgiven if the overall feeling or culture in the organisation is one which values the contribution of volunteers and includes them part of the team in the organisation. The concept of a feeling of inclusion is confirmation of the identification by Mason (1984) that
volunteering encompasses special qualities which need to be preserved in the move towards "professionalisation" of the field of volunteer management. It also further complements the argument that the importation of management theory should not fail to recognise the need for the "nurturing" of volunteers.

The concept of the psychological contract is also valid in this context. The recently published work of Farmer and Fedor (1999, p. 362) confirms the special relationship between the organisation and the volunteer. They conclude that "volunteers link their participation to their perceptions of how well the voluntary organisation meets its obligations" in terms of organisational support. Such organisational support is said by Farmer and Fedor (at p. 362) to include "recognition and appreciation for work done, personal interest in the life and well-being of the volunteer, timely and helpful feedback on the results of their efforts and providing a supportive social network of other volunteers."

Overwhelmingly, the research highlights the importance of the feedback environment, which includes the organisational culture, in the management of performance by volunteers. Where the culture is one of inclusion, and volunteers are an important and integral part of the organisation, where they feel valued and recognised and where the communication is good, feedback is an integral part of the bigger picture. In such a setting the new volunteer receives support and encouragement, and anyone who needs assistance receives it as part of the relationship with paid staff and other volunteers. Volunteers experiencing problems, whether they are performance related or not, are able to receive advice and support without this becoming a burden to them or to the organisation.
Where the culture is divisive, or is perceived by some to be a “them and us” culture, all support and assistance roles fall to the volunteer co-ordinator, and the volunteer can feel undervalued, or unappreciated, and what might constitute a small matter in one organisation will become much larger in others.

It is apparent that organisations are using feedback to a large degree. It is also apparent that there are specific performance problems including the decline of performance due to age, or illness and certain categories of inappropriate behaviour which are impediments to effective performance which feedback may help to address. Co-ordinators and managers of volunteers need to be supported in the development of policies, tools and processes which minimise the problems which can be caused by having to deal with performance problems. There are certain categories of volunteer: longer term, short term and dual role volunteers, and those with high support needs; whose needs should be considered in the development of the policies, tools and processes to ensure fair and equitable treatment of all whilst minimising the complications for an already busy manager or co-ordinator. A programme such as an annual/regular "renewal of commitment" offers a tool which allows for these problems to be addressed in a non-threatening manner.

7.4 The Influence of External and Internal Context on the Feedback Process

The feedback process occurs in a unique environment which has a crucial role in the use of this tool. The environment has two aspects - the external environment in which the organisation or agency operates, and the internal environment including the culture of the organisation or agency. These are discussed in detail below.
7.4.1 The Influence of the External Environment on Local Feedback Context

At the external level many organisations face the same or similar pressures, and as these change over time, organisations which use the services of volunteers have to adapt and adjust to keep up the momentum and meet the various demands. External pressures are many, but the key pressures currently include: political pressures; community and social pressures; increasing regulatory and legislative frameworks; competition and funding constraints; and technological advance.

**Political Pressures**

The political pressures facing organisations which use the services of volunteers are not confined to the politics of the particular service, industry or sector in which they operate. Political pressures include those coming from the rolling back of the welfare state and the increasing reliance on volunteers to take on roles previously undertaken by government or government funded services. Ever present is the pressure to ensure that volunteers do not take on roles which undermine the work of paid workers and thus arouse the opposition of unions.

There is a need to balance activities designed to place pressure on government to take responsibility for services to the environment, to the health and welfare sectors, or education, with the need for the volunteer movement to provide many of these services where they are not provided by government. At times this puts volunteers and organisations in a position which constitutes a conflict of interest.

Further, there are internal political pressures within the volunteer movement, which include the debates on terminology discussed in Chapter 2. Such internal pressures stem not only from the disagreement and debate on terminology but from differing
philosophical views of the world, and in particular on approaches to markets, management, volunteering and the roles of government, business and community in service provision.

Community and Social Pressures

Part of the pressure associated with reductions in government spending is the issue of contracting out, where agencies not only have to lobby government for funds and for recognition, but must compete in the market and offer services which are of a high quality to meet consumer demand. Such social pressures can be as simple as seeking to improve the public identity for their organisation or cause, or as complex as gaining recognition of the legitimacy of their organisation or cause in the face of social norms which state otherwise, or in volatile political context where other organisations or agencies are promoting opposing, competing or complicating arguments or views. Community and social support for an organisation increases its chances of gaining funding from both public and private sources and are often accompanied by a demand for greater accountability for actions.

Increased Legislative and Regulatory Frameworks

The social pressures associated with demands for increased quality standards and accountability for dollars spent, link to increased legislative and regulatory frameworks. Some of these are not confined to those organisations involving volunteers, and can be associated with a reasonable level of uncertainty as to the specifics of the regulatory framework (e.g. the Goods and Service Tax legislation). Some come from within the industry or organisation in which the volunteers are operating, (e.g. accreditation standards in aged care, and self regulation). Still more regulatory frameworks are
specific to volunteering, (e.g. the Volunteering Standards adopted by Volunteering Australia and its affiliates Volunteering WA, 1997 as amended, and volunteering codes of conduct).

Many of these legislative and regulatory changes arise from the social and political climate whilst others derive from the demands of risk management. Insurance requirements are placing increasing pressure on organisations to comply with more and more rigorous frameworks. Other legislative and regulatory demands accompany the financial demands placed on organisations and agencies by the increased competition for funding which means that funding sources require greater and greater justification of requests for funds, and greater reporting and accountability. Community and social pressures, however, demand that funds are put into service delivery and not into the administration of the paperwork, with the funding sources, both private and public requiring high levels of reporting and evaluation.

**Competition and Funding Constraints**

Competition for funds increases as the dollar amounts are reduced. Government spending cuts and a greater reliance on volunteers increases the competition for the grants available from government, and for the sponsorship and donor dollar. Competition for funds is accompanied by competition for clients whose needs they serve, and for volunteers - reliable, professional and appropriate volunteers who have no obligation to stay in an organisation and experience has shown that they will leave if they are not happy. The number of agencies recruiting volunteers means that volunteers have a choice about where they will work, and that agencies need to "work" at retaining them.

Funding constraints, however, mean that many agencies feel they cannot direct spending
to their volunteer programmes and expect that the volunteers and their co-ordinators will continue on, despite limited resources and equipment.

**Technological Change**

Technological change, too, places pressure on agencies. With limited funds many agencies cannot afford to keep up with the rapid pace of change, but consumer demand, the demands of reporting and evaluating placed by funding sources and the competitive nature of the environment means that this must be considered a priority in order to survive. Funding and regulatory bodies expect to have information readily available, and clients or consumers expect to be able to have information and other resources quickly. Even those agencies without “clients” must keep pace with technology to remain competitive for funding, for contracts, and to be heard in their quest - whatever that may be.

**The Contingent Nature of the External Pressures**

The complex external environment varies in its constitution for different agencies - and the severity of the pressure changes over time. For some agencies the funding issue is cyclical, perhaps annual or biannual, for others it is a day-to-day battle. For some organisations the political issues extend only as far as combatting or fitting in with the policy of the government of the day, and for others the fight is constant. Social pressures may appear to be less on the larger more well known agencies, but their relevance and their need to meet consumer demand changes constantly, whereas the smaller self-funded agencies need to find a niche to gain social acceptance of their cause or their clients. Figure 7.1 delineates the pressures placed on agencies by the external environment, but cannot fully capture the complexity or variability of that environment. This complexity is
increased by stakeholders often having more than one role, so that the volunteer is a client, or the funding source is government, and in some cases these roles can be in conflict.

Figure 7.1: External Contingencies Impacting on Organisations with Volunteers

This external environment, whilst not having a direct impact on volunteer feedback, helps shape the unique environment in which volunteers are managed. Organisations have limited funds to put towards the management of volunteers, and in some cases this leads to an expectation on the part of management that the volunteer co-ordinator or manager should be a voluntary position, yet the external pressures placed on such a position from outside the organisation mean that this role is a demanding one and that volunteer co-ordinators or managers will soon burn out. In addition to the pressures from the external
environment, there are internal pressures which make up the internal environment in which the volunteer programme operates.

7.4.2 The Internal Environment
The findings of this research have focussed more on the internal environment than on the external pressures on organisations. As a context for the use of feedback to manage poor performance the internal environment has a crucial role to play.

Organisational Systems and Policies
It is evident that it is insufficient to have the appropriate systems and policies in place to manage volunteer performance. The appointment of a dedicated volunteer manager or co-ordinator, the implementation of HR policies and practices in the management of volunteers, the funding of the volunteer programme and the espoused organisational support for the volunteer programme are a sound basis for the management of volunteers, but there are some hidden elements to the internal environment which play a key role in using feedback to manage poor performance by volunteers.

Organisational Culture
This study has shown that the internal organisational culture is part of the feedback environment. The organisational culture sends important messages about the volunteer programme in an organisation through both formal and informal mechanisms. The formal mechanisms include the funding of resources and staff support, as well as recognition programmes and facilities. The informal messages, often stronger than the formal or overt messages, involve such things as the inclusion of volunteers in social events, or small reminders of the voluntary status of volunteers in the organisation.
One example from this study is the casual morning tea arrangements which include staff and volunteers mixing freely, and the small sign on the tea urn indicating that whilst tea and coffee costs 30c, volunteers can have theirs free. Such messages are reinforced in this particular organisation by the CEO regularly expressing his appreciation of the volunteers and mixing with them in their work. This adds to the appreciative and inclusive atmosphere promoted amongst volunteers. Sometimes the messages are in conflict with each other. The espoused appreciation of volunteers and their efforts is undermined by the exclusion of volunteers from decision making or consultative processes - or by consultative processes being seen to be empty gestures, or by the failure to provide them with information about the effect their work is having - such as information about how much money has been raised, or who won the raffle. Such negative messages are compounded by practicalities such as the provision of separate amenities for staff to allow them to have respite from client contact where there are dual role volunteers (client and volunteer) and therefore requiring separate staff amenities. Such practicalities can restrict actions to create an inclusive culture.

The Psychological Contract

The creation and maintenance of the psychological contract between the volunteer and the organisation can enhance the ability of the organisation to retain the volunteer's services, and to manage volunteer performance. The creation of an "inclusive culture", and a "nurturing" management style will contribute to this. The development of a strong relationship between the volunteer and the organisation will allow free and open communication in a feedback environment which not only allows feedback, but which values it and the contribution it can make.
As has been previously stated, co-ordinators and managers of volunteers can draw on the strength of the psychological contract to manage the contributions of volunteers by paying attention to what volunteers perceive organisations should provide, and by providing "symbolic support" for the work that volunteers undertake - including recognition and appreciation, an interest in the personal life and well being, and "timely and helpful feedback [my italics]" and a social support network (Farmer & Fedor, 1999, p. 363).

"Nurturing"

The message from co-ordinators is that there is a special “nurturing” aspect to managing volunteers. The message from volunteers is that they like to feel included in the organisation and valued for their contribution - with recognition of their voluntary status. The recognition must come not only from the volunteer co-ordinator or manager but from all members of the organisation, paid staff, clients, and management. The "nurturing" of the relationship between the organisation and the volunteer - the psychological contract - and of an inclusive culture is likely to be the manifestation of what co-ordinators identified as that special element to managing volunteers. As identified by Dartington (Dartington, 1992) and others (e.g. Selby, 1978) those who “manage” volunteers need to ensure that they do not lose those qualities which make volunteering special. Dartington also warns that to lose sight of the concerns of those who resist the application of management theory could lead to unthinking application of management practices and a loss of those qualities of volunteering which attract volunteers. Figure 7.2 depicts the elements of the internal environment discussed above.
Feedback giving and seeking

The evidence from this study is that whilst it is not always recognised by them as feedback, volunteers do value information about how they are performing, and do offer support and assistance to each other in their volunteer work. They have informational needs and, if they feel comfortable, will seek feedback or assistance themselves. It is appropriate to note, however, that both the need for feedback and information, and the tendency to seek feedback and information differ among volunteers. Thus it is important for volunteer managers/co-ordinators and supervisors to recognise that there are varied needs and create an environment that allows for the varied needs to be met.

When feedback seeking behaviour is encouraged and supported, and when friendly advice is part of the day to day culture of the organisation rather than a special or separate
event, volunteers feel a greater commitment to the organisation and to their volunteer work. The evidence in this study is that in some organisations day to day assistance of each other is as normal a part of their interaction as having coffee together and assisting a friend. In others the atmosphere is such that the feedback when it is provided is neither friendly nor welcome, and merely serves to add to the volunteers' sense that the organisation does not value them as they feel they should be valued.

7.5 The Use of Feedback to Manage Poor Performance

Feedback theory is complex. The models and theories proposed by the various researchers are by no means in agreement and, as pointed out by Onsman (1999), there are only a few points on feedback which are generally accepted: goal setting and knowledge of results have a positive influence on performance, the sources of feedback can have differing effects, and the perception of the accuracy of the feedback, determined by the credibility of the source and the timing of the feedback, will affect subsequent performance. Anything beyond that, suggests Onsman, is “conjecture and theory” (p. 12).

What became apparent in the course of this investigation is that feedback is an important tool in the management of the performance of volunteers. Whilst the main focus of this study was to examine the issue of the management of poor performance using feedback, it emerged that the feedback environment could be more important than any negative or constructive feedback messages that might be delivered to volunteers. From the perspective of volunteers, most would like to know if they are not performing to the standard required by the organisation, but many do not feel they have either received or
delivered such messages, even when this is the case. If the environment in which they are volunteering is supportive and open, communication about the work they are doing is a normal part of their day-to-day interaction. Managers and co-ordinators identified some specific performance problems which are not easily addressed by feedback processes. Many of these are problems which need to be attended to in a preventative form - that is by clear expectations, appropriate recruitment, selection and placement, and by training and instructions which set out the standard of work required. Some of the more difficult problems, such as declining performance due to age or illness or inappropriate behaviours, might also be addressed by the use of a regular "renewal of commitment" process as a preventative measure which allows for the sensitive handling of early problems. The vital role of the internal environment in which volunteers work, and in which any feedback processes take place has become increasingly evident as this study has progressed. Preventative measures are widely promoted in the prescriptive literature as the best method for handling poor performance. It appears from this study, however, that a supportive "nurturing" environment for volunteers is a key element of this process.

7.6 Implementation of the findings

The evidence from this study is that feedback is but one tool in the management of volunteer performance. It works best when the communication lines between the sender and the receiver of feedback are not clouded by "noise" or interference from the atmosphere or environment in which the volunteer is working. The prescriptive literature advises good planning, recruitment and selection processes, clear job descriptions, manuals or instructions adequate training and regular communication with volunteers. Such practices would appear, from this study, to offer a more effective context in which
to offer feedback to volunteers. Volunteers who feel confident about what they are doing will discuss their work with each other and offer ideas and suggestions in the climate of friendly discussion, sometimes not even aware that it is feedback they are providing or receiving.

The foundation study indicated that organisations which use the services of volunteers are implementing many HRM practices. The follow up to that preliminary research indicated that those charged with the responsibility for managing or co-ordinating volunteers feel that the management of performance was an area that required further attention.

This study has indicated that there are many factors which complicate the management of poor performance, and which require further attention. Most importantly, however, it is clear that feedback is one tool which can be employed to manage the performance of volunteers if an appropriate feedback environment is created. Such an environment involves the creation of an inclusive culture, and a "nurturing" style of management.

Volunteers need to feel free to seek feedback when they are uncertain or unhappy. Volunteers need also to have a clear understanding of how to be heard when they have concerns or grievances. Volunteers need to have a clear understanding of disciplinary procedures and dismissal provisions so that the boundaries of acceptable behaviour are clear, and managers and co-ordinators can use these to assist in dealing with inappropriate behaviours.

The development of the psychological contract with volunteers is an important part of the management of performance of volunteers. The cultural norms developed by the organisation and the messages sent to volunteers are part of this contract.
Areas highlighted by this research where agencies may need to examine their practices include:

**Reporting relationships** - the volunteer needs to have a clear supervisor and a clear level of contact within the organisation to enable feedback and information seeking behaviour. Some volunteers in this study felt they did not have enough contact with their supervisor, and some were even unsure as to who their supervisor or organisational contact should be.

**Communication mechanisms** - newsletters and other communication mechanisms such as notice boards, that allow volunteers to be kept informed about what is happening in the organisation are promoted widely by the prescriptive literature. These are valuable tools in providing information to volunteers about the organisation, about changes, about the results of their efforts and the efforts of others. Newsletters are also a vehicle for promoting the volunteer programme and for recognition. They also provide opportunities to promote policies and activities which aid the development of an inclusive culture in the organisation. Whilst all of the organisations had some of these tools in use, some volunteers in this study felt that they would like to have more information about the outcomes of their efforts.

**Evaluation or appraisal of performance** - regular examination of the volunteers' placements in the organisation and the role they play. The evidence appears to be that the development of any programme of evaluation needs to be in keeping with the "nurturing" approach to managing volunteers. The development of a "renewal of commitment" approach in consultation with volunteers could prove to be a significant contribution in the development of the psychological contract. A two way process which emphasises the value that the organisation places on the volunteer is more likely to be accepted by volunteers. The concept of a "renewal of commitment" approach emerged from the volunteer managers and co-ordinators who participated in this research.
Drucker (1989) and others have suggested that employers could learn from the actions of those who manage a volunteer workforce and that some of the elements of the "nurturing" aspect of volunteer management may bear scrutiny and replication with paid employees.

7.6 Limitations of the research

The limitations of this research are largely related to sample size and selection of the sample for study. Generalisations have been made on the basis of the response of a wider group in workshops which has tended to indicate that the issues raised and the options discussed are not limited to the small number of agencies and volunteers who contributed to the qualitative and quantitative data gathering process. The conclusions reached and frameworks provided, however, are intended as a basis for future research and cannot be interpreted as being conclusive. They do, however, offer signposts for practice options.

7.7 Contribution of this research

Much of this research has documented and confirmed what many practitioners in the field of volunteer management and co-ordination have already considered. It has explored the use of feedback with volunteers in Western Australia. It has gone some way to confirming that the training being offered by Volunteering WA is vindicated in its use of literature from overseas and interstate, as much of the theory being developed about volunteers appears valid locally. It has also served to extend the body of knowledge about volunteering by contributing a picture of how feedback is used in the local organisations and what problems are encountered in managing the performance of volunteers.

The findings offered here represent a reference point for managers and co-ordinators of volunteers seeking to employ feedback effectively as an effective tool in managing.
volunteers. Although much work remains to be done it is clear that the feedback environment, of which the organisational culture and the psychological contract are part, plays an important role in the feedback process.

7.8 Potential for further research

This study offers a basis for the development of causal research to investigate the strength of the relationship between the feedback environment and the success of feedback as an intervention strategy where poor performance is detected amongst volunteers. The link between the motivation to volunteer and feedback - perhaps drawing on the Volunteer Functions Inventory (Clary et al., 1998), and the concept of the psychological contract (Farmer & Fedor, 1999) would also play a role in such a study. It would be necessary also to examine whether this link was stronger or weaker when compared with that of paid workers, and this would require a comparative study of paid and volunteer workers within the same organisations.

This study has also highlighted a number of other areas for further exploration. These include:

- The management of declining performance due to age or illness - an issue which will increasingly affect the paid workforce as well as volunteers, now that paid workers can no longer be forced into retirement merely because of their age.
- The concept of "supported volunteering", an area of interest to both mental health professionals and agencies.
- "Mandatory volunteering" and its benefits for volunteering and the community.
- Short term and episodic volunteering and the ways in which this can be used by agencies to their benefit.
- The management of dual role volunteers.
- The idea of the “renewal of commitment” on a regular basis, with the development of such a scheme being undertaken in consultation with volunteers.
- The concept of feedback seeking and its role in helping volunteer co-ordinators and supervisors of volunteers further develop their programmes to meet the needs of volunteers and therefore increase volunteer retention.
All of these areas are awaiting exploration in the development of this interesting field. Research published recently confirms the need for greater research into Human Resource Management in volunteering (Cunningham, 1999). It outlines the difficulties faced when implementing Human Resource Management policies and procedures in organisations which utilise the services of volunteers, and the pressures for change being faced by these organisations.

The adoption of the field of volunteers and volunteering as an area for research and study can only serve to benefit the volunteers and the agencies with which they work by assisting them to provide the best volunteer experience possible, whilst improving the utilisation of this invaluable resource.

7.9 Conclusion

This study was a descriptive study which examined the use of feedback to manage the performance of volunteers in six organisations in Western Australia. It has clearly identified the importance of managing the performance of volunteers in a way which promotes volunteering and utilises volunteer resources in the best way possible, whilst maintaining that special ingredient which makes volunteering unique. The strengthening of the volunteer - organisation relationship by careful nurturing, a supportive organisational culture and a positive psychological contract including a feedback environment which induces open feedback giving and seeking, are bases from which satisfactory and excellent performance can develop. Feedback is an invaluable tool in the management of poor performance by volunteers, but its use is limited without the supportive environment in which to utilise it.
List of references


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Sherman, V. (1987). *From losers to winners: How to manage problem employees... and what to do if you can't*. New York: AMACOM.


Primary sources

Co-ordinators’ Network September 1994: Refers to the workshop held for the Co-ordinators’ Network in 1994 to feed back the results of the foundation study.

Free response 1-6: The free response data from questionnaires in the central study has been grouped according to organisation and each organisation is referred to by the number assigned that organisation throughout the paper.

Group 1-6: Each group interview is referred to by the number assigned to the organisation throughout the paper.

Interview 1-6: Each interview with a co-ordinator is referred to by the number assigned to the organisation in which the co-ordinator works.

National Volunteer Week Workshops (NVW) 1 and 2: These workshops were held during National Volunteer Week in 1999 with workshop 1 in the morning and workshop 2 in the afternoon.

Co-ordinators’ Network September 1999: This seminar was held in September of 1999 at Volunteering WA.
Appendices

Appendix A: Questionnaire

Appendix B: Qualitative Data Collection Tools

Appendix C: Statements of Disclosure and Informed Consent forms

Appendix D: Supplementary Quantitative Data
Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. Completion of this questionnaire should take you between 15 and 30 minutes.

Unless otherwise indicated you are asked to tick the answer which most closely represents your immediate response to the questions.

Most questions refer to this organisation.

Please respond to all questions, even when you feel you are repeating yourself. Space is provided for you to make additional comments if you would like to clarify or qualify your response.

In this questionnaire:

- **feedback** means information about your performance as a volunteer. This information could be in many forms - from a beep from a computer when you make an error, - to a formal recorded discussion.
- **supervisor** means to the person who organises, supervises, co-ordinates, is your contact, or generally looks after your needs while you volunteer.
My duties in this organisation mainly consist of (Please select up to 3 and number in order of priority, 1,2,3):

☐ fundraising
  eg selling raffle tickets
    sponsored events
    door to door collection
    opportunity shop

☐ management/committee member
  eg board/management committee
    working party/planning committee

☐ day to day organising/co-ordinating/supervising
  eg youth/seniors club organiser
    rosters

☐ preparing/serving food
  eg kitchen assistant/chef
    canteen

☐ administrative or clerical work
  eg typing/filing
    bookkeeping
    mailing

☐ teaching/instruction
  eg literacy tutor
    training

☐ transporting people or goods
  eg hospital driver
    meals on wheels driver
    delivering food parcels

☐ repairs/maintenance/gardening
  eg weeding/planting
    painting
    household repairs

☐ protecting the environment
  eg black spot rubbish collection
    tagging wildlife
    planting trees

☐ coaching /refereeing/judging
  eg tee-ball base umpire
    scorer
    flower show judge

☐ recruiting
  eg seeking new members
    preparing/supervising displays
lobbying/advocacy/policy research
eg approaching members of parliament
     recording statistics
     documenting evidence

representing the organisation
eg addressing meetings
     public speaking
     attending conferences
     letter writing

representing clients
eg pro bono legal work
     advocacy

performing/media production
eg community radio/tv
     theatre

search and rescue/first aid/fire fighting
eg volunteer sea rescue
     state emergency service

befriending/supportive listening/counselling
eg parent help
     telephone help line
     advice bureau

visiting people
eg hospital/prison visitor
     home visitor
     buddy

providing information
eg injury prevention
     neighbourhood watch information distribution
     parenting information distribution

personal care assistance/services
eg shopping
     washing
     mending

guiding/tours
eg showing visitors around
     museum, gallery, park

other duties (please specify)
I have been a volunteer for:

- Under 1 year □
- 1 year to under 2 years □
- 2 to under 6 years □
- 6 to under 10 years □
- 10 years or more □

I have been with this particular organisation for

- Under 1 year □
- 1 year to under 2 years □
- 2 to under 6 years □
- 6 to under 10 years □
- 10 years or more □

On average I volunteer with this organisation:

- Less than 2 hours per week □
- 2 to under 4 hours per week □
- 4 to under 8 hours per week □
- 8 to under 16 hours per week □
- 16 to under 25 hours per week □
- 25 or more hours per week □

The approximate amount of time I spend on all my volunteer work (in all the organisations for which I am a volunteer) is:

- Less than 2 hours per week □
- 2 to 4 hours per week □
- 4 to 8 hours per week □
- 8 to 16 hours per week □
- 16 to 25 hours per week □
- more than 25 hours per week □

My “supervisor” in this organisation is

- a paid co-ordinator of volunteers □
- an unpaid co-ordinator of volunteers □
- a paid staff member with other duties □
- a volunteer with other duties □
- a committee or board (member) □
- the person(s) I am helping □
- unsure □
- other (Please specify): ___________________________ □

NOTE:
In subsequent questions the term supervisor refers to the answer you have provided in this question.
Tick the box which best represents your situation in this organisation:

(Where 1 means never and 5 means every time you meet)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have direct formal contact</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with my supervisor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ie we meet to talk about my duties)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have direct informal contact</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with my supervisor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ie we meet in the course of our work)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have social contact</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with my supervisor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(eg we meet at social occasions or at morning tea)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My supervisor has the opportunity to assess my performance as a volunteer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have been given details of my responsibilities in: (Tick as many as necessary)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a general letter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a duty statement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a procedures manual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>another written format</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Please Specify)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No written details</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I receive(d) training for my volunteer position (Tick as many as necessary):</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the job in a formal training programme</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the job with a more experienced volunteer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In formal training sessions when I started with the organisation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In formal training sessions when I changed duties</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At training sessions along the way</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If things go wrong</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informally</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In another volunteer position in this organisation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (Please specify)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I receive feedback from: (Tick as many as necessary)

- my supervisor
- my own thoughts and feelings
- my client(s)
- my co-workers
- my subordinates
- our board or management committee
- senior managers
- an automated or electronic system (such as a computer)
- other sources (please specify)

I consider the most important source of feedback to be: (Tick only 1 please)

- my supervisor
- my own thoughts and feelings
- my client(s)
- my co-workers
- my subordinates
- our board or management committee
- senior managers
- an automated or electronic system
- other sources (please specify)

I consider the least important source of feedback to be: (Tick only 1 please)

- my supervisor
- my own thoughts and feelings
- my client(s)
- my co-workers
- my subordinates
- our board or management committee
- senior managers
- an automated or electronic system
- other sources (please specify)
As a general rule my current supervisor:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gives feedback on the strong aspects of my performance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gives feedback on the weaker aspects of my performance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advises on how I can improve my performance in weak areas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advises on how I can build on my performance in strong areas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Praises me in public</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reprimands me in private</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clearly communicates what is expected of me</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follows up on the tasks I am asked to accomplish</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumes I know what I am doing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not check that I know what I am doing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other Comments:
Please rate the following sources of feedback on a scale of 1 to 5:

My current supervisor:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Provides almost no feedback.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provides a great deal of feedback.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Provides a great deal of feedback.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gives no useful feedback</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gives extremely useful feedback.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is not at all consistent in giving feedback</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Is extremely consistent in giving feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is extremely prompt in giving feedback</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Is extremely prompt in giving feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is not at all objective in giving feedback</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Is extremely objective in giving feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is extremely accurate in giving feedback</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Is extremely accurate in giving feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is not at all fair in giving feedback</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Is extremely fair in giving feedback</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments: ________________________________

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________
My co-workers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provide almost no feedback</th>
<th>1 2 3 4 5</th>
<th>Provide a great deal of feedback.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Give no useful feedback</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>Give extremely useful feedback.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are not at all consistent in giving feedback</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>Are extremely consistent in giving feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are not at all prompt in giving feedback</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>Are extremely prompt in giving feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are not at all objective in giving feedback</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>Are extremely objective in giving feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are not at all accurate in giving feedback</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>Are extremely accurate in giving feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are not at all fair in giving feedback</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>Are extremely fair in giving feedback</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments: ____________________________________________________________
If I do not meet the expectations of this organisation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My supervisor</th>
<th>Never/Sometimes/Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Publicly</strong> expresses displeasure with my work (eg raises voice in front of others)</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Publicly</strong> points out what I did wrong</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Publicly</strong> explains what I should be doing</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takes me aside and <strong>privately</strong> expresses displeasure with my work</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takes me aside and <strong>privately</strong> points out what I did wrong</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takes me aside and <strong>privately</strong> explains what I should be doing</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not let me know if s/he is unhappy with my performance</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (Please specify)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I receive negative comments</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from my co-workers if they are unhappy with my performance</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nobody tells me if they are</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unhappy with my performance</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When other volunteers do not meet the expectations of this organisation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never/Sometimes/Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This is handled well by the relevant supervisor</td>
<td>0 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This is <em>not</em> handled well</td>
<td>0 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am unaware of whether action is taken</td>
<td>0 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I get angry that I have to take up the slack</td>
<td>0 0 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other comments:

When I am doing well:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never/Sometimes/Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My supervisor lets me know <em>publicly</em> that s/he is happy with me</td>
<td>0 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My supervisor lets me know <em>privately</em> that s/he is happy with me</td>
<td>0 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I receive positive comments from my co-workers in <em>public</em></td>
<td>0 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I receive positive comments from my co-workers in <em>private</em></td>
<td>0 0 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nobody comments

Other comments:

When others are doing well:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never/Sometimes/Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I see no public acknowledgement</td>
<td>0 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciation is expressed in front of other volunteers</td>
<td>0 0 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nobody comments

Other comments:
Please rate the following on a scale from 1 to 5
(Where 1 is extremely poor and 5 is excellent):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Extremely Poor</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I would rate the frequency of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feedback I get from my</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>supervisor to be</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would rate the quality of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feedback I get from my</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>supervisor to be</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would rate the frequency of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feedback I get from my</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>co-workers to be</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would rate the quality of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feedback I get from my</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>co-workers to be</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please make brief comments on the following:

I would like to change the following about the feedback I get from my supervisor:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

I would like to change the following about the feedback I get from my co-workers:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
In order that a profile of the group of volunteers completing this questionnaire may be compiled please take the time to complete a few demographic details about yourself (optional)

The categories and groups align with those used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and will be used for comparison with Australian Statistics on volunteering.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Male □</th>
<th>Female □</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 18</td>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-24</td>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-64</td>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65-74</td>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 and over</td>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Is English your first language?  Yes □   No □

What level of education have you achieved?  
(Tick a maximum of 1 box in each column)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Completed</th>
<th>Progress Towards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Higher degree</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor degree</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade qualification</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificate or diploma</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed secondary school to year 12</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete secondary school to year 10</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not complete secondary school</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Still at school</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (Please specify)</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What is your employment status?

- Employed – Full time
- Unemployed seeking work
- Not employed - not seeking work
- Student
- Retired
- Employed – Part time regular hours
- Employed – Part time irregular hours
- Employed – casual
- Other (Please specify)

What occupational group do you belong to (whether you are currently employed or not)?

- Manager/Administrator
- Professional
- Para-professional
- Tradesperson
- Clerk
- Salesperson/personal service worker
- Plant /machine operator/Driver
- Labourer
- Other (Please specify)
Thank you for taking the time to fill out this questionnaire.

The following space is provided for any comments, observations or advice you may have.

Thank you
Megan Paull, Researcher
Are you prepared to participate in a group interview for the second phase of the study?

This will take approximately 45 minutes. Consent forms setting out the confidentiality and anonymity provisions, plus detailing what use is to be made of interview data will be completed prior to any interview taking place, and interview candidates may withdraw at any time.

Your name ____________________

Contact TELEPHONE NO: ________________

The best day and time to call you ________________.

Best day and time to schedule interviews ____________________

_________________________________________________________________________
Appendix B: Qualitative Data Collection Tools

B1: Group Interview Framework

B2: Group Interview Guide

B3: Co-ordinator Interview Guide

B4: National Volunteer Week Workshops

B5: Co-ordinators’ Network Seminar September 1999
B1: Group Interview Framework for Discussion

**Topic:** Using feedback.

**Time:** Approximately 45 minutes

**Names:** We'll keep to first names only and these will not be transcribed.

**All comments are acceptable:** everyone's opinion is valid, and disagreement is to be directed to content not to people or individuals, and it is okay to play "devil's advocate" as long as this is done with tact and discretion.

**Parking lot: Time will be short.** If we find that one particular matter is taking up a lot of our time we will place the issue on our list of deferred matters, a parking lot if you will, to return to in the concluding stages of our discussion.

**Accuracy of statements for reporting:** The discussion will be recorded to allow accurate reporting of content. Names will not be reported in the written documents generated by the discussion, and by using audio rather than video recording the anonymity of participants is better preserved. I will hold the original tapes in accordance with University policy on preserving research data, but these tapes will not be made available to anyone else.

**What happens to the information gathered:** The information gathered will be summarised before being passed on to your manager. You will be provided with a copy of this summary and your comments are invited. The information gathered here will be examined with information gathered in other organisations to try and develop some sort of model or guide which might assist those charged with managing volunteers to better meet the feedback needs of volunteers.

If you have any concerns about this research please discuss these with me.

Once again I thank you for your co-operation and assistance.

Megan Paul
B2: Group Interview Guide

It appears to me from the data generously provided by those of you who were able to complete the questionnaires that there are two broad categories of opinion with regard to feedback.

The first group feel very confident with the work that they are doing and do not feel the need for much feedback. They are aware of just what is expected of them and feel that there is sufficient information provided to them by supervisors and colleagues to allow them to monitor their own work.

The second group are less confident about the work they are undertaking and would appreciate some more feedback. In some cases this is attributed to feeling that they did not get enough information to begin with, and in others to feeling that they would like to have information now about how well they are getting along. This feeling does not appear to be negative, and was often accompanied by very positive comments, but appears to be an expression of a need for some feedback from colleagues and supervisors about their progress.

I would like to start by having you tell me just what sort of information you got about the work you are doing when you first started as a volunteer.
(Probe here for professional background, study in relevant area, interests, why chose this sort of voluntary work, written procedures, induction and training)

➢ How do you know if you are doing what you should be doing?

➢ Do you know if you are getting anything wrong?

➢ How do you find out when procedures change?

➢ Do you seek feedback? From whom?
➢ Do you make sure you tell other people how well you think they are doing?

➢ What if you see someone doing something in what you consider to be an incorrect manner?

Now we have reached the end of the planned questions but I am sure there are issues you would like to explore, which I have not covered. Would anyone care to lead off?
B3: Co-ordinator Interview Guide

This guide was developed to ensure some consistency in data collection and to provide me with a guide. Probing was undertaken where answers seemed vague or incomplete and issues raised by the co-ordinator were explored where this was appropriate. Accordingly the interviews varied somewhat between organisations as discussion ranged over issues relevant to particular organisations. In addition material raised by volunteers in the focus groups were raised with the co-ordinator to enable exploration.

- Confirm description of organisation.
- Please confirm for me that you are responsible for the management/supervision/co-ordination of volunteer in this organisation.
- Is that the primary purpose of your employment, is it considered to be one of the major duties - how does it fit into your job description?
- Describe for me the role you play in ensuring that the services of volunteers are utilised in the best possible way by this organisation.
- What sort of training do you offer volunteers?
- How would you know if a volunteer was not performing their tasks in the way considered desirable or essential by the organisation?
- Does this occur - or has it occurred in the past?
- What action was taken (would be taken)?
- Is it your responsibility or someone else's to do something about it?
- Do you or have you dismissed volunteers?
- What sort of feedback and recognition is given to volunteers?
- What is your reading of how the volunteers feel about this?
- How would you describe the culture of the organisation in terms of the relationship with volunteers?
- My observations from the surveys indicated that there are two groups of volunteers - a group who feel that they do not need feedback and are quite happy and capable, and a group who feel that they would like more information about how well they are doing. Does this ring true with you?
- In the focus group interview held with volunteers in your organisation the following issues were raised:
  - >
  - >
  - Are there any aspects of the management of performance of volunteers which you would like to change?
  - Do you have any concerns or issues that you feel are relevant but which we have not covered?
Presentation by Megan Paull 18/5/2000

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The Research Process

Organisational Profiles

1. Semi-autonomous branch of a government department working in area of environment
2. Small self-funding incorporated body working in area of family services located outside Perth metro area
3. Larger mainly government funded organisation working in the area of disability services
4. Larger mainly fundraising funded organisation working in the area of disability services
5. Metropolitan component of state-wide programme of government department working in the area of the environment
6. West Australian branch of Australia wide organisation which is part of a world wide organisation working in the area of aid to third world countries.

Participant Profiles

Demographics

- Gender
  - 28.2% male, 62.6% female
  - Rosenberg-Rossell (1996) 55% female
- Age
  - 35-44 yo age group under represented, 65+ age group over represented
- Language
  - 90% from English speaking background,
  - Organisations 1 and 5 more from non English speaking background
- Educational Attainment
  - almost 25% held a higher degree or bachelor degree, 5% did not complete secondary
- Occupational Background
  - 27 out of 75 are either currently or previously from professional background, 6 indicated a managerial or administrative background.
- Employment status
  - 34% also in paid workforce as compared with 59% from ABS

Duties

- befriending, office work, personal care such as hairdressing, transporting clients, fundraising, mounting specimens, updating data bases, representing the organisation, board/committee member, food preparation, lecturing, providing information,
- No sporting, emergency services or tours/guiding organisations surveyed

What Constitutes a Performance Problem?

- New to task
- Unsuitable to task
- Inappropriate behaviour
• Special needs

• Declining performance due to age

9 Can we (do we) apply Management theory?
• Workshop participants: Yes and no
• Special nurturing aspect to volunteer management

• Hedley (1992, p. 115)
  “Managing volunteers is, in many cases, more difficult, and requires more skill, than managing paid staff.”
• These difficulties stem from the fact identified by both Hedley and by Colmey, Chon and Andrews (1987, p. 24) that volunteers expect their non-employee status to be recognised and their personal needs to be met, whilst at the same time demanding well organised, clearly defined, well supported and supervised work.

10 Prevention is better than cure
• Recruitment, selection, placement

• Induction, Orientation, Training

• Job descriptions

• Supervision

• Communication

11 What are agencies doing?
• Realistic “job” previews
• Screening and placement
• Behavioural “contract”
• Job Description
• Induction/Orientation
• Training
• Supervisor
  – Contact with supervisor
• Communication
• Rewards and recognition
“Appraisal”
- Limited application
- Limited acceptance
- Recommended by Standards Manual
- What might be appropriate?
  - "Renewal of commitment"
  - Opportunity for input into organisation
  - Planning
  - Suggestions?

Feedback
- What is it?

- What makes it work?

Feedback

Literature

Source
- Supervisor
- Co-worker
- Client
- Self
- Task
- Board or Committee
- Senior Management
- Other

Message
- “Thanks”

- Specific

- Negative
Knowledge of Results

- Arps (1920) "work with knowledge of results versus work without knowledge of results"
- Knowledge of results and feedback facilitate performance
- Greller and Herold (1975) informational and motivational aspects of feedback

Recipient

- Those who are happy with current level of feedback and don't feel they need more.
- Those who want more feedback.
- Those who are not really interested in feedback.
- Those who expect that they will be told if they are not performing, but who have not had experience of this.

The feedback environment

- Culture
- Communication
- "Supervision"
- The "psychological contract"
- Co-workers

Feedback seeking

- Ashford
- Seeking for information
- Seeking for recognition
- Seeking for other reasons

Negative Feedback

- Who?
- How?
- Feelings of co-ordinators
- Feelings of volunteers

What does the literature say?
23 The experience of others in preventing poor performance
- Prevention of poor performance is better.
- Be sure volunteers are clear as to what is expected of them.
- Have adequate resources and realistic goals.
- Be sure they know and understand at the outset how important the outcomes are.
- Be sure they know the consequences of not reaching those outcomes.
- Make sure they know that for the purpose of organizational and individual effectiveness a friendly check as to what they are doing will happen from time to time and that they will be receiving feedback about both the good and the bad.
- Encourage them to seek feedback and to ask questions when uncertain.
- Circumstances for dismissal must also be clear.

24 Dealing with poor performance:
What does the literature say?
- When a problem arises it is important to be clear as to what the problem is.
- It is important to keep emotions out of the feedback.
- It is important to focus on specific behaviors and to be specific.
- It is important to provide feedback as soon as is practical after the event.
- It is vital that the feedback not be personal or too general.
- It is also important to offer the volunteer the dignity of a private discussion where possible.
- You must hear the volunteer’s response – there may be a very good reason!
- You must be consistent both with the same volunteer and with other volunteers.
- It is important to try to get the volunteer to see why poor performance is unacceptable.
- It is important to define what will happen next.
- When all else fails you must make a decision to dismiss a volunteer.

25 Separation
- Dual role volunteers
- Consistency
- Honesty
- Dignity
- Support
- Options – reassignment
  - this agency
  - new agency

26 Conclusion?
1 Managing Feedback
Some preliminary findings

2 Who is this researcher?
• Why have a workshop?
• What benefits can arise?

3 Some preliminaries
• Record and transcribe workshop
• Utilise printouts from whiteboard
• List of participants confidential
• No individual identified by name or organisation
• Consent forms

4 An Outline of the Study
• 3 part study (triangulation)
  – Questionnaires - to gain an overall picture
  – Focus/group interviews - to flesh out the picture
  – Interviews with managers/co-ordinators to get another perspective

5 Organisations
1: Semi autonomous, government, environment
2: Incorporated body, small, regional, family services
3: Incorporated body, larger, based in Perth, disability services
4: Incorporated body, larger, based in Perth, disability services

6 Respondents
• Carry out a variety of tasks:
  • befriending, office work, personal care such as hairdressing, transporting clients, fundraising, mounting specimens, updating data bases, representing the organisation, board/committee member, food preparation

7 Limitations
• Respondents appear at this stage to be largely:
  • female,
  • older,
  • not seeking work
  • from English speaking background

8 Should the performance of volunteers be “managed”?
• What do we mean by “managing”?
9 Should the performance of volunteers be managed according to the theories developed for the business world?

- Is this possible?

10 Is there such a thing as “poor performance” by a volunteer?
  - MacKenzie (1988) uses the term “difficult volunteers”. Is this more appropriate?
  - What are the consequences of “poor performance” by volunteers?

11 Do volunteers want to know if they are not doing well?

12 Do they need to be told?

13 Responses to Feedback

14 Ideal Feedback
  - Consider what you would list as the 5 characteristics of the ideal situation in which you would like to be giving feedback when performance has not met the expectations of the organisation.

15 Ideal Feedback
  - Now list the 5 characteristics of a situation in which you would like to receive feedback that your performance has not met the expectations of the organisation.

  - Recall at least one situation in which you received feedback where the ideal conditions did not exist.

16 The experience of others in preventing poor performance
  - Prevention of poor performance is better.
  - Be sure volunteers are clear as to what is expected of them.
  - Have adequate resources and realistic goals.
  - Be sure they know and understand at the outset how important the outcomes are.
  - Be sure they know the consequences of not reaching those outcomes.
  - Make sure they know that for the purpose of organisational and individual effectiveness a friendly check as to what they are doing will happen from time to time and that they will be receiving feedback about both the good and the bad.
• Encourage them to seek feedback and to ask questions when uncertain
• Circumstances for dismissal must also be clear.

19 Dealing with poor performance: What does the literature say?

• When a problem arises it is important to be clear as to what the problem is.
• It is important to keep emotions out of the feedback.
• It is important to provide feedback as soon as is practical after the event.
• It is important to focus on the undesirable behaviour and to be specific.
• It is vital that the feedback not be personal or too general.
• It is also important to offer the volunteer the dignity of a private discussion where possible.
• You must hear the volunteer’s response – there may be a very good reason!
• You must be consistent both with the same volunteer and with other volunteers.
• It is important to try to get the volunteer to see why poor performance is unacceptable.
• It is important to outline what will happen next.
• When all else fails you must make a decision to dismiss a volunteer.
Appendix C: Statement of Disclosure and Informed Consent

Researcher: Megan Paull (9310 1286)
Master student
Faculty of Business
Edith Cowan University

Supervisor: Associate Professor Catherine Smith (9273 8330)
Head of Department: Associate Professor Alan Brown (9273 8278)

Aims of the Study:
Poor performance is an occasional problem amongst volunteers, however the consequences of failing to deal with poor performance can be serious. Concern has been expressed by those who manage and co-ordinate volunteers that they do not necessarily feel equipped to handle poor performance. This study aims to examine the use of feedback as a tool in the management of poor performance by volunteers.

What is involved?
The first part of the study will involve the completion of questionnaires by a group of fifteen to twenty volunteers in your organisation on a range of subjects including the type of volunteer work you undertake, the organisational environment in which you work and the feedback you receive. The questionnaire will take fifteen to thirty minutes to complete.

The second part of the study involves interviews with both the person responsible for co-ordination or managing volunteers in your organisation and with a small number of individual volunteers. The interviews will be semi-structured in that a similar set of questions will be asked of all interviewees with scope to pursue areas of interest. The interviews will be recorded and transcribed. Those who complete the questionnaires will be asked to volunteer to be interviewed. A smaller group will be randomly selected from amongst those who volunteer to be interviewed.

What will happen to the data collected?
The data collected will be used by the researcher to describe the use of feedback in the management of poor performance by volunteers. The raw data in the form of completed questionnaires and interview transcriptions will be retained by the researcher at her home for the period of five years required by the University. This data will be stored separately from the details of participants.
Confidentiality and anonymity:

The data collected in this study will not be stored with your name, and every effort will be made to ensure anonymity. At no time will particular individuals be identified and the written report will not attribute particular statements to any organisation or individual. However, as has been mentioned, due to the unique nature of some of the work undertaken by you and your organisation it may be possible for individuals to be identified by those who are familiar with them and their work.

Results:

The results of this study will form part of the thesis prepared for submission to fulfil the requirements for the award of the Master of Business. The final thesis will be placed in the library collection at the University, and it has been agreed that the Volunteer Centre of Western Australia will also receive a copy for their library. Further, the outcomes of the study may also form the basis of other publications and research by the researcher.

Potential benefits to you and others:

By participating in this study you will help to increase the body of knowledge on the management of volunteers and on the management of performance generally. Managers and supervisors of volunteers have expressed concern that this is a particularly difficult area and it is hoped that this study will assist them in this task.
STATEMENT OF DISCLOSURE AND INFORMED CONSENT

I have attended the briefing session conducted by Megan Paull at
____________________ on __________________ regarding her study of
the use of feedback in the management of volunteers. I have read the statement
of disclosure outlining the aims and objectives of the study and understand the
arrangements made regarding confidentiality, and storage of data and results. I
have been provided with a copy of this information for my own reference. Any
questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.

I ______________________ agree to participate in this activity, realising I
may withdraw at any time.

I am aware that although it is not intended to use the names of participant
organisations, some of the results may allow others familiar with the organisation
to identify both the organisation and the people involved. I agree the research
data gathered for this study may be published provided I am not identified by
name at any time.

_________________________________________  ______________________
Participant                                      Date.

_________________________________________  ______________________
Researcher                                      Date
STATEMENT OF DISCLOSURE

Project: The Management of Performance by Volunteers:
The Use of Feedback.

Researcher: Megan Paull (9310 1286)
Master student
Faculty of Business
Edith Cowan University

Supervisor: Dr Scott Gardner, (9273 8735)
Head of School: Associate Professor Alan Brown (9273 8278)

Aims of the Study:
Poor or declining performance is an occasional problem amongst
volunteers, however the consequences of failing to deal with poor
performance can be serious. Concern has been expressed by those who
manage and co-ordinate volunteers that they do not necessarily feel
equipped to handle poor performance. This study aims to examine the use
of feedback as a tool in the management of performance by volunteers.

What is involved?
The first part of the study will involve the completion of questionnaires
by a group of fifteen to twenty volunteers in your organisation on a range
of subjects including the type of volunteer work you undertake, the
organisational environment in which you work and the feedback you
receive. The questionnaire will take fifteen to thirty minutes to complete.

The second part of the study involves focus group discussions with small
groups of volunteers, and an interview with the person responsible for co-
ordination or managing volunteers in your organisation. The interviews
will be semi-structured in that a similar set of questions will be asked of
all interviewees with scope to pursue areas of interest. The interviews
will be recorded and transcribed. Those who complete the questionnaires
will be asked to volunteer to be interviewed. A smaller group will be
randomly selected from amongst those who volunteer to be interviewed.

What will happen to the data collected?
The data collected will be used by the researcher to describe the use of
feedback in the management of poor performance by volunteers. The raw
data in the form of completed questionnaires and interview transcriptions
will be retained by the researcher at her home for the period of five years
required by the University. This data will be stored separately from the
details of participants.
Confidentiality and anonymity:

The data collected in this study will not be stored with your name, and every effort will be made to ensure anonymity. At no time will particular individuals be identified and the written report will not attribute particular statements to any organisation or individual. However, as has been mentioned, due to the unique nature of some of the work undertaken by you and your organisation it may be possible for individuals to be identified by those who are familiar with them and their work.

Results:

The results of this study will form part of the thesis prepared for submission to fulfil the requirements for the award of the Master of Business. The final thesis will be placed in the library collection at the University, and it has been agreed that the Volunteering WA will also receive a copy for their library. Further, the outcomes of the study may also form the basis of other publications and research by the researcher.

Potential benefits to you and others:

By participating in this study you will help to increase the body of knowledge on the management of volunteers and on the management of performance generally. Managers and supervisors of volunteers have expressed concern that this is a particularly difficult area and it is hoped that this study will assist them in this task.
STATEMENT OF INFORMED CONSENT

I am a participant in the National Volunteer Week Workshop on Volunteering Feedback. I understand this forms part of the research being conducted by Megan Paull for her study of the use of feedback to manage the performance of volunteers. I have read the statement of disclosure outlining the aims and objectives of the study and understand the arrangements made regarding confidentiality, and storage of data and results. I have been provided with a copy of this information for my own reference. Any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.

I __________________________ agree to participate in this activity, realising I may withdraw at any time.

I am aware that although it is not intended to use the names of participant organisations, some of the results may allow others familiar with the organisation to identify both the organisation and the people involved. I agree the research data gathered for this study may be published provided I am not identified by name at any time.

_________________________________________  _______________________
Participant  Date.

_________________________________________  _______________________
Researcher  Date
STATEMENT OF DISCLOSURE


Researcher: Megan Paull (9310 1286)  
Post Graduate Student  
Faculty of Business  
Edith Cowan University  

Supervisor: Dr Scott Gardner (9273)  
Head of Department: Associate Professor Alan Brown (9273 8278)

Aims of the Study:  
Performance management is an occasional problem amongst volunteers, however the consequences of failing to deal with performance problems can be serious. Concern has been expressed by those who manage and coordinate volunteers that they do not necessarily feel equipped to handle poor performance, and that they do not know how volunteers feel about the use of feedback. This study aims to examine the use of feedback as a tool in the management of performance by volunteers.

What is involved in the workshop?  
The workshop will explore some of the preliminary findings from the data collected in 4 participant organisations. Discussion of options and ideas from participants' own experiences will be used to add depth to the material already collected.

What will happen to the data collected?  
The data collected will be used by the researcher to describe the use of feedback in the management of the performance of volunteers. The raw data in the form tapes will be retained by the researcher at her home for the period of five years required by the University. This data will be stored separately from the details of participants.
Confidentiality and anonymity:

The data collected in this study will not be stored with your name, and every effort will be made to ensure anonymity. At no time will particular individuals be identified and the written report will not attribute particular statements to any organisation or individual. However, as has been mentioned, due to the unique nature of some of the work undertaken by you and your organisation it may be possible for individuals to be identified by those who are familiar with them and their work.

Results:

The results of this study will form part of the thesis prepared for submission to fulfil the requirements for my degree. The final thesis will be placed in the library collection at the University, and it has been agreed that the Volunteering WA will also receive a copy for their library. Further, the outcomes of the study may also form the basis of other publications and research by the researcher. I have also agreed to offer workshops and presentations through Volunteering WA.

Potential benefits to you and others:

By participating in this study you will help to increase the body of knowledge on the management of volunteers and on the management of performance generally. Managers and supervisors of volunteers have expressed concern that this is a particularly difficult area and it is hoped that this study will assist them in this task.

Thank You

Megan Paull

Researcher
STATEMENT OF INFORMED CONSENT

I am a participant in the Co-Ordinators' Network Workshop on Volunteering Feedback. I understand this forms part of the research being conducted by Megan Paull for her study of the use of feedback to manage the performance of volunteers. I have read the statement of disclosure outlining the aims and objectives of the study and understand the arrangements made regarding confidentiality, and storage of data and results. I have been provided with a copy of this information for my own reference. Any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.

I ______________________ agree to participate in this activity, realising I may withdraw at any time.

I am aware that although it is not intended to use the names of participant organisations, some of the results may allow others familiar with the organisation to identify both the organisation and the people involved. I agree the research data gathered for this study may be published provided I am not identified by name at any time.

_________________________________________  ______________________________________
Participant                                           Date.

_________________________________________  ______________________________________
Researcher                                           Date
STATEMENT OF DISCLOSURE


Researcher: Megan Paull (9310 1286)  
Post Graduate Student  
Faculty of Business  
Edith Cowan University  

Supervisor: Dr Scott Gardner (9273)  
Head of Department: Associate Professor Alan Brown (9273 8278)  

Aims of the Study:  
Performance management is an occasional problem amongst volunteers, however the consequences of failing to deal with performance problems can be serious. Concern has been expressed by those who manage and coordinate volunteers that they do not necessarily feel equipped to handle poor performance, and that they do not know how volunteers feel about the use of feedback. This study aims to examine the use of feedback as a tool in the management of performance by volunteers.

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Confidentiality and anonymity:

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Results:

The results of this study will form part of the thesis prepared for submission to fulfil the requirements for my degree. The final thesis will be placed in the library collection at the University, and it has been agreed that the Volunteering WA will also receive a copy for their library. Further, the outcomes of the study may also form the basis of other publications and research by the researcher. I have also agreed to offer workshops and presentations through Volunteering WA.

Potential benefits to you and others:

By participating in this study you will help to increase the body of knowledge on the management of volunteers and on the management of performance generally. Managers and supervisors of volunteers have expressed concern that this is a particularly difficult area and it is hoped that this study will assist them in this task.

Thank You

Megan Paull

Researcher
Appendix D: Quantitative Data from Questionnaires
Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table D.1 Cross tabulation: Age distribution of respondents by organisation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-24</td>
<td>3 1</td>
<td>8 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>1 4 5 2 12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>2 2 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>2 5 3 2 16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-64</td>
<td>2 1 13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65-74</td>
<td>8 3 2 18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75+</td>
<td>2 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12 6 13 20 11 21 83</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table D2: Cross tabulation: Level of Completed Education by organisation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Completed</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher degree</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor degree</td>
<td>6 1 3 4 15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade qualification</td>
<td>1 3 9 13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificate or diploma</td>
<td>3 1 7 7 5 23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yr 12</td>
<td>1 1 9 11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yr 10</td>
<td>2 1 3 2 8</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Did not complete secondary</td>
<td>1 1 2 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>11 4 13 20 11 21 80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table D3: Cross tabulation: Employment Status by Organisation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment status</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed full time</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9 3 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed seeking work</td>
<td>3 3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not employed - not seeking work</td>
<td>3 3 3 1 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>12 4 8 1 31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part time regular hours</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part time irregular hours</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed casual</td>
<td>1 1 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1 2 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>12 4 13 19 11 21 80</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**Table D4: Cross tabulation: Occupational Group by Organisation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational group</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager/admin</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Para-professional</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tradesperson</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerk</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salesperson/personal services</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant/machine/driver</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Volunteer service profile:**

**Table D5: Cross tabulation: Length of all volunteer service by Organisation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 1 year</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 years</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-6 years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 10 years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 years or more</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table D6: Cross tabulation: Duration of service in this organisation by Organisation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 1 year</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 years</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-6 years</td>
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<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 10 years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 years or more</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Table D7: Cross tabulation: Time spent on all volunteer work by organisation

<table>
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<th>Time</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>less than 2 hours per week</td>
<td>1 3 8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 to under 4 hours per week</td>
<td>4 3 4 5</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 to under 8 hours per week</td>
<td>9 2 4 6 4 3</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 to under 16 hours per week</td>
<td>2 2 11 3</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 to under 25 hours per week</td>
<td>1 2 4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over 25 hours per week</td>
<td>1 1 2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12 6 12 21 11 21</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table D8: Cross tabulation: Average time spent on volunteer work in this organisation by organisation.

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>less than 2 hours per week</td>
<td>1 4 13 19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 to under 4 hours per week</td>
<td>3 6 5 4 5 2</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 to under 8 hours per week</td>
<td>6 4 8 2 4</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 to under 16 hours per week</td>
<td>1 1 9 1 12</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 to under 25 hours per week</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over 25 hours per week</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>added in by respondent - irregular occasional contact</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12 6 13 21 11 21</td>
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### Table D9: ANOVA Supervisor feedback ratings between groups.

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<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quantity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>8.923</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.785</td>
<td>1.147</td>
<td>.344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>107.397</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>1.556</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>116.320</td>
<td>74</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Utility</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>5.145</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.029</td>
<td>.785</td>
<td>.564</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>85.249</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>1.312</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>90.394</td>
<td>70</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consistency</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>5.251</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.050</td>
<td>.681</td>
<td>.639</td>
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<tr>
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<td>103.270</td>
<td>67</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>.843</td>
<td>.594</td>
<td>.705</td>
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<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>93.769</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>1.421</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
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<td>.537</td>
<td>.748</td>
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<td>65</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<td></td>
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<td><strong>Accuracy</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
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<td>1.932</td>
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<tr>
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<td>62</td>
<td>.958</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>.961</td>
<td>1.048</td>
<td>.397</td>
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<td>Within Groups</td>
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### Table D10: Co-worker feedback ratings between groups

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<th>Sig.</th>
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<td><strong>Amount</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Utility</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
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<td>62</td>
<td>1.398</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>91.529</td>
<td>67</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Objectivity</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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### Table D11: Mean and standard deviation for contact with supervisor

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Direct formal contact</th>
<th>Direct informal Contact</th>
<th>Social Contact</th>
<th>Opportunity to assess</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>73</td>
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<td>Missing</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>3.44</td>
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<tr>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
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<td>1.36</td>
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### Table D12: ANOVA Relationship between contact with supervisor and organisation

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<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
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<td>Direct formal contact</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>3.284</td>
<td>1.635</td>
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<td>69</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct informal Contact</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>2.005</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Contact</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>21.086</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.217</td>
<td>2.503</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to assess my work</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
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<td>1.430</td>
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<td>1.862</td>
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### Table D13: Frequency distribution: English as first language

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</tr>
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### Table D14: Cross tabulation: English as a first language by organisation

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<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>English as first language</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>21</td>
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### Table D15: Duties undertaken by volunteers

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<th>Count</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>ABS***%</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
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<td>22</td>
<td>27.50%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management/Committee</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day to day organising</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8.80%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparing/serving food</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative clerical</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>23.80%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching/instruction</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18.80%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transporting</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repairs/maint./gardening</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.80%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protecting the environment</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12.50%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coaching/refereeing/judging</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.80%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruiting</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7.50%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lobbying/advocacy/policy research</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.30%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Befriending/supportive listening/counselling</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing information</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17.50%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
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<td>Personal care/services</td>
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<td>8.80%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guiding Tours</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performing/media</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search and Rescue/first aid</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>7%</td>
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<td>13.80%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting</td>
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<td>11.30%</td>
<td>11%</td>
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<td>40</td>
<td>49.00%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* All figures allow for an individual to be counted under more than one category. This means that figures will not add up to the total for the population and will equal greater than 100%.

** Source: ABS figures Western Australia 1995 (Rosenberg-Russell 1995 Table 7).