

Profiling non-government community service organisations in NSW: Summary Report

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SPRC, University of New South Wales, Sydney, NSW, 2052, Australia. Telephone: +61 (2)
9385 7800 Fax: +61 (2) 9385 7838 Email: sprc@unsw.edu.au

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Research team

Social Policy Research Centre, University of New South Wales

Professor Ilan Katz

Dr Fiona Hilferty

Dr Natasha Cortis

Christine Eastman

Colmar Brunton Social Research

Kylie Brosnan

Jodie Gordon

Authors

Fiona Hilferty, Natasha Cortis, Christine Eastman and Ilan Katz

Contact for follow up

Dr Fiona Hilferty, Social Policy Research Centre, University of New South Wales, Sydney NSW 2052, Ph: (02) 9385 7836, f.hilferty@unsw.edu.au

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Abbreviations

ADHC	Ageing, Disability and Home Care (NSW)
ATSI	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
CBSR	Colmar Brunton Social Research
CS	Community Services (NSW)
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
HACC	Home and Community Care
NAPSA	Notional Agreement Preserving State Award
NGO	Non-government Organisation
SACS	Social and Community Services
SPRC	Social Policy Research Centre
UNSW	University of New South Wales

Introduction

This report outlines findings from a survey of non-government organisations (NGOs) that provide community services in NSW. The survey was commissioned by Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC), Department of Human Services and undertaken by the Social Policy Research Centre, (SPRC) University of New South Wales with the assistance of Colmar Brunton Social Research. The aim of the survey was to collect organisational level data to better understand non-government community services agencies and their workforce in New South Wales.

Non-government community service organisations work independently and in partnership with government agencies to relieve poverty, disadvantage, distress and hardship; provide emergency relief and support, and assist disadvantaged groups (Productivity Commission, 2010: xv). Employment in this area is growing rapidly. Across Australia, the social and community services workforce expanded by 66.2 percent in the decade to 2006, compared with national employment growth of 19.2 percent (Meagher and Cortis, 2010:2). In June 2009, more than half (53 percent) of community service organisations around Australia were non-profit, although this was lower in some areas such as childcare (34 percent) and aged care residential services (47 percent) and much higher in others. In “other residential care services” (which excludes residential aged care), 88 percent of organisations were non-profit as were 76 percent in “other social assistance services” (which includes a range of welfare services and disability assistance) (ABS, 2010).

Given the importance of the sector and its rapid rate of growth, policy, planning and capacity building efforts are paramount. Such efforts require comprehensive information about the structure and dynamics of non-government organisations, including their size, revenue sources, workforce composition and employment arrangements. In the current context, reliable information about non-government organisations and their workers is important for informing industrial relations initiatives aimed at modernizing the SACS Award, including the 2010 test case of the Federal Equal Remuneration Laws which has implications for Award settings.

In Australian community services however, a reliable evidence base to support policy and planning has been slow to develop. National datasets have collected limited, irregular and inconsistent information about community service organisations and their workers (Vaughn, 2006; Martin and Moskos, 2006). Academic studies of workforce issues have focused on specific subsectors such as child and family services or residential aged care (Healy et al, 2009; Martin and Richardson, 2004); on specific populations such as members (ACOSS, 2010; ASU, 2007) or on occupational groups such as frontline care workers (Meagher and Healy, 2005, 2006; Meagher and Cortis, 2010). Moreover, research has tended to focus on workers’ experiences rather than organisational practices (Cortis et al, 2009), and little has focused on New South Wales, or on the narrower group of workers of interest here: workers in organisations receiving funding from the NSW Government.

To fill this gap, this project profiles non-government organisations funded by the NSW government to deliver community services. This includes those funded under the disability, community care, and community services program, as well as some health programs. The project consists of two distinct phases: Stage 1, an online survey of state funded non-government community service organisations, and Stage 2, analysis and interpretation of data drawing on a wider range of data sources, because no single data source can be used to

accurately profile the sector. This summary report outlines key findings from stage 1, drawing on wider research findings where appropriate to assist interpretation. It needs to be emphasised that this is a report of preliminary analysis.

Background

The NGO Profiling Project was conceptualized to complement and build on work previously undertaken by SPRC for the NSW government reported in *Labour dynamics and the non-government community services workforce in NSW* (Cortis et al, 2009). Unlike the Labour Dynamics survey which collected data from workers in NSW NGOs about their personal experiences and perspectives, the NGO Profiling survey collected data from managers about workforce characteristics and arrangements at the organisational level. Whereas the Labour Dynamics study asked workers about their experiences of work and working conditions, the NGO Profiling Project gathered information about organisations directly from the person in the NGO responsible for human resources or industrial relations issues in NSW, such as a human resources manager or CEO. Only those NGOs receiving state government funding were invited to participate. As such, although there are some similarities in the perspectives expressed, methodological differences mean that the workforce profile emerging from this study differs in important ways from that evident from other studies.

Methodology

The study population consists of all non-government organisations funded by three core human services agencies in NSW (ADHC, Community Services and NSW Health). One representative from each NGO funded by these agencies were invited to participate in an online questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered by Colmar Brunton Social Research (CBSR) on behalf of SPRC. The person responsible for human resource issues in each of the 2,382 funded organisations was invited to participate in the survey via an email with a unique embedded link. After follow up telephone and email reminders, 743 respondents completed the survey, a response rate of 31.2 percent. This is a good response rate overall and indicates the willingness of the sector to engage with the government around workforce development issues. The survey was undertaken in April and May 2010.

The survey data is reported here descriptively. Results have not been weighted to account for potential sample bias. The accuracy of findings therefore depends upon the responding organisations being representative of all government funded NGOs in NSW. Some results have been extrapolated but these results are estimates and, as noted in the following sections, should be interpreted with caution. Final analysis will be included in the final project report, due for release at the end of September 2010.

Key Findings

Characteristics of Responding Organisations

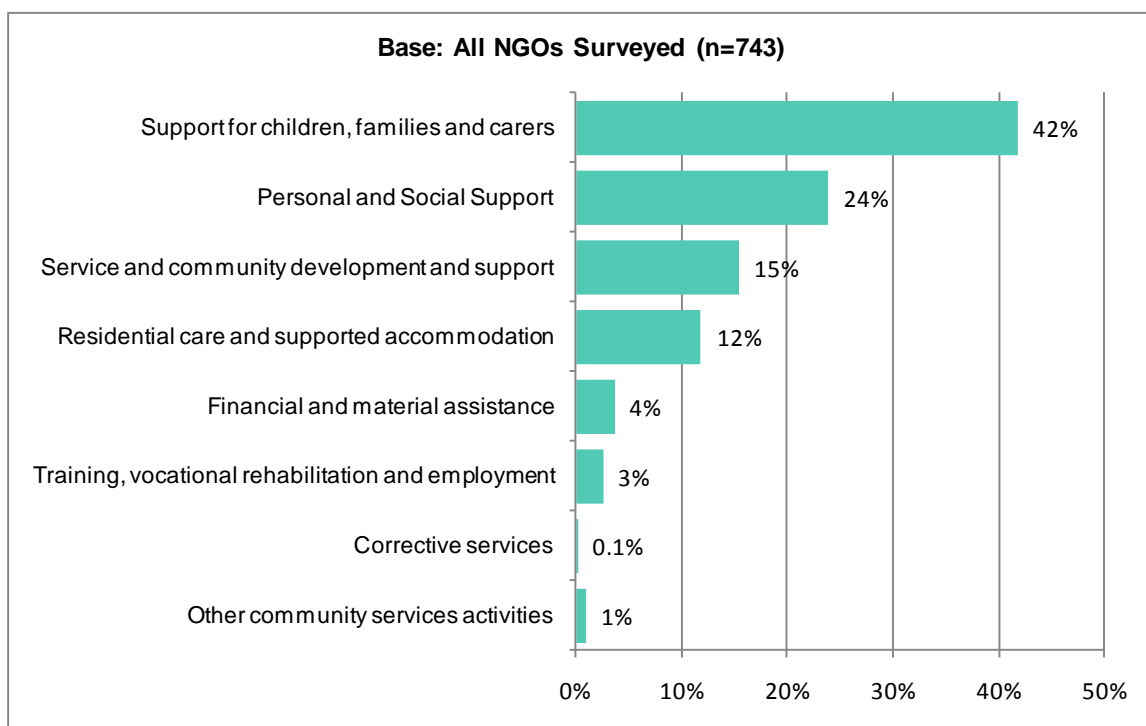
The 743 respondents that completed the survey represented a diverse range of organisations. Most commonly, respondent organisations were involved in providing support for children, families and carers, were small in terms of funding received and employee numbers, operated from multiple locations, and were highly reliant on government funding. Higher than average proportions of organisations responded who were funded by ADHC (45 percent) and from multiple agencies (32 percent), while there were lower response rates from Community Service funded agencies (28 percent) and Health (16 percent).

Primary activity of NGOs

Participants were invited to select the main activity their organisation was involved in, using categories drawn from the National Classification of Community Services (Version 2). Note that the survey did not collect information about the secondary activities of any organisations, although many could be expected to perform multiple activities.

As shown in Figure 1, the most common primary activity (reported by 42 percent of respondents) was support for children, families and carers, a classification which includes services such as childcare and preschool which might be considered mainstream, as well as more targeted services for disadvantaged groups such as family support and out of home care. The second most common primary activity was personal and social support (24 percent), a category which includes services usually targeted to particular populations or those in need, such as information, advice, referral, advocacy, counselling, domestic and personal assistance. Personal and social support also includes most Home and Community Care services.

Figure 1: Primary activity of NGOs



Size of organisation

Although there were a few very large organisations in the survey, most were small, both in terms of funding received and employee numbers. This is consistent with other evidence about non-government community service organisations (ABS, 2001; Productivity Commission, 2010). The survey showed most NGOs (77 percent) received less than \$500,000 in state government funding in the previous financial year, although it is unclear how much (if any) funding came from other sources. Organisations also appear small on the basis that a quarter (25.7 percent) employed 3 or fewer full time equivalent (FTE) staff (see Table 1)¹. Two thirds of organisations had 10 or fewer staff. One in eight organisations (12.8 percent) reported having more than 25 staff.

Table 1: Organisations by Number of Full Time Equivalent Staff employed

Number of FTE staff	Number of organisations	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
0-3	191	25.7	27.2	27.2
4-10	275	37.0	39.2	66.4
11-25	141	19.0	20.1	86.5
more than 25	95	12.8	13.5	100.0
Total	702	94.5	100.0	
Unknown	41	5.5		
Total	743	100.0		

Closer analysis shows that 2 percent of respondents worked in organisations which operated with less than one full time staff member. These organisations were operating with a part time worker and/or volunteers only. On average however, NGOs employed 23 FTE paid staff, with a median of 7. Mean figures are, however, skewed by the few organisations which were very large, employing more than 400 staff.

Location

In terms of the numbers of locations organisations were operating in, the 743 NGOs surveyed had 4,213 agencies or offices between them, a mean of 5.7 each. However, this average is inflated by the small proportion of agencies which reported operating in a large number of locations. 72 percent of respondents worked in organisations which had just one service agency or office.

In terms of location, 64 percent of agencies or offices were located in metropolitan areas, and 36 percent were in rural or regional NSW. Just over half of respondents were located in metropolitan areas only (52 percent) while 42 percent reported being located only in rural or remote locations. Only 6 percent of respondents reported that their organisation has offices across both metropolitan and regional locations.

Revenue sources

Although non-government community service organisations tend to rely upon a mixture of revenue sources, the survey findings suggest high reliance on government funding. In this survey, 73 percent of the total revenue of respondent organisations came from governments.

¹ In some types of services, such as Home and Community Care (HACC), higher proportions of services were very small. Of the 163 services funded to provide HACC, 30.7 percent were in organisations employing 3 or fewer FTE staff.

This is slightly higher than the rate suggested in the Australian Community Sector Survey (ACOSS, 2010: 26) which found 69 percent of total NGO community services funding came from government sources.

As outlined above, organisations were selected for the study on the basis that respondent organisations received NSW state government funding. Most respondent organisations reported receiving funding from Community Services (52 percent), while 34 percent received funding from ADHC, and 4 percent received funding from NSW Health. Eleven percent received multiple sources of government funding. Interestingly however, some survey respondents (9 percent) did not report that they received state government funding. This is likely to be due to respondent error. Respondents were responsible for human resources or industrial relations within the organisation and may not be fully aware of, or confused about their organisations' funding mix, for example, about whether funders were state or Commonwealth government departments, or whether a particular funding source had lapsed.

Because of the inclusion of childcare organisations and preschools in the sample, a large proportion (58 percent) reported that their organisation received some client contributions. More than half (51 percent) reported receiving Commonwealth funding, and 47 percent reported receiving income from donations, bequests and fund raising.

Workforce characteristics

Volunteers

In an effort to address a research gap about the use of volunteer labour within non government community service organisations, the survey asked organisations to indicate their number of volunteer workers, and the total weekly hours that volunteers contribute to the organisation. On average NGOs had 6 (unpaid) volunteers. However, a substantial proportion (29 percent) had none, and 23 percent of organisations had more than 20 volunteers. There was a large distribution of hours worked by volunteers, but in general, NGOs reported an average contribution of 20 hours per week by their total volunteer workforce. The value of this contribution in kind to the sector is significant. The survey did not collect data on the types of tasks volunteers performed within organisations, however, other sources show that they undertake varied roles ranging from management to service delivery and administrative tasks.

Paid workers: demographic characteristics

As mentioned above, two percent of organisations reported employing less than one full time equivalent member of staff, and NGOs had on average 23 FTE staff. These staff were primarily women. On average, organisations reported that 84 percent of employees were female. The study also asked organisations about the level of female domination within the sector, showing that 73 percent of organisations had workforces which can be considered strongly female dominated, in that more than three quarters of workers were women. Only 8 percent of organisations reported that less than half of their workforce was female.

In general, these figures accord with evidence of high levels of female domination emerging from other sources such as the Labour Dynamics Survey and Census analysis although each use different definitions. In the NSW Labour Dynamics Survey, Census analysis showed that 79 percent of sector employees in NSW were female, while 83 percent of survey respondents were women (Cortis et al, 2009: 27, 32). Census analysis for Australia (and including a different set of occupations) shows that across Australia in 2006, 88 percent of care workers

in all community service industries were women, although this figure was lower (80 percent) when the subsectors of nursing homes, other accommodation for the aged, childcare, employment placement and interest groups were omitted (Meagher and Cortis, 2010: 20).

Seventy four percent of organisations did not employ staff from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, although 23 percent did so, with these staff comprising less than half of their workforce. Only three percent of organisations reported that their workforce was mainly CALD, that is, that CALD workers constituted more than 50 percent of employees.

For forty percent of organisations, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander employees constituted less than half of the workforce, while in 5 percent of organisations, more than half of employees were ATSI. Fifty five percent of organisations had no ATSI worker. There were 10 organisations in which all staff were ATSI. These organisations were mid-sized, each having between 4 and 25 staff.

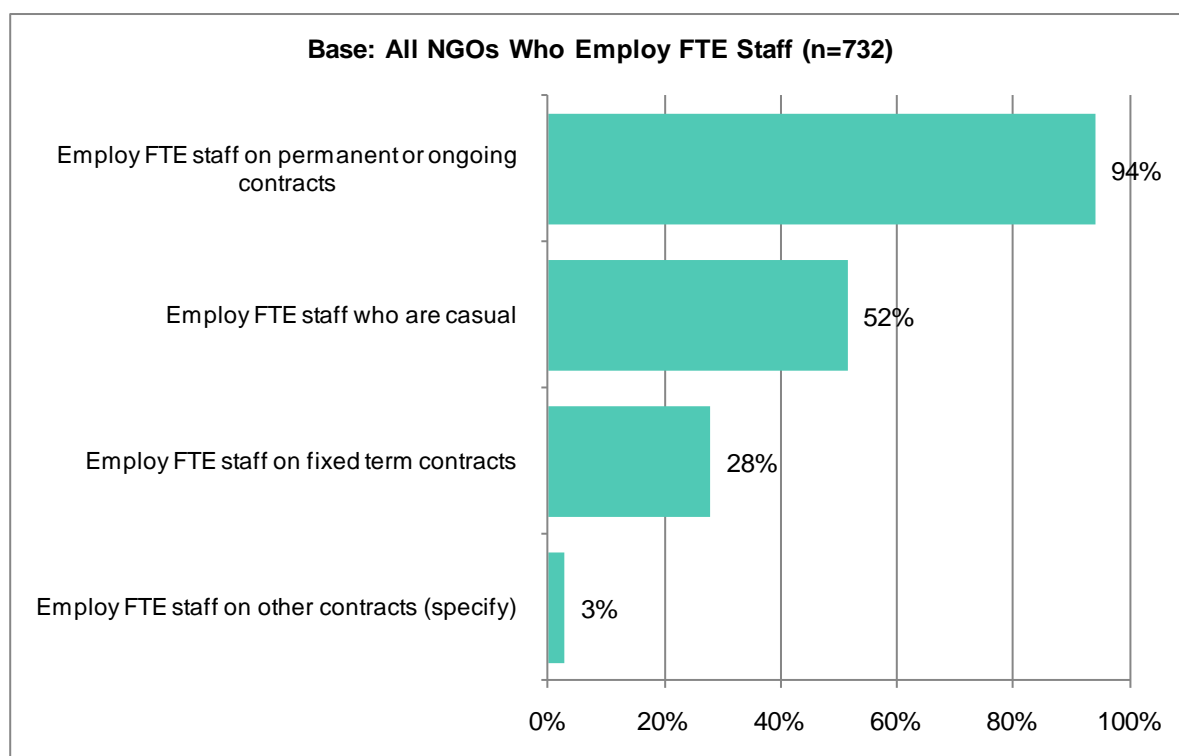
Employment arrangements

The survey asked respondents whose organisations employed at least one FTE staff member about the employment conditions and contracts they used. This showed that almost all organisations (94 percent) employed one or more staff member on a permanent or ongoing basis, with 78 percent of FTE staff being employed on this basis. Note however that this information is collected for full time equivalent staff: it does not distinguish between permanent full and part time staff. Recent ABS data shows there were more permanent part time (59 percent) than permanent full time staff (35 percent) in NGOs in Australia (ABS, 2010: 9). The Census also shows high part time rates of employment, especially for women: 59 percent of care workers worked less than 35 hours in the reference week (Meagher and Cortis, 2010: 25).

The NGO Profiling Project also suggests substantial proportions of casual staff. Just over half of organisations (52 percent) employed one or more casuals, and on average, respondents reported that 12 percent of FTE workers were employed casually. Twenty eight percent of organisations had staff on fixed term contracts, constituting an average of 8 percent of FTE staff. Three percent of organisations employed staff under other arrangements.

While working arrangements have been measured differently in this study compared with others, permanent or ongoing contracts clearly dominate the sector. In June 2009, in non-profit agencies across Australia, 29.6 percent of all staff (not FTE) were employed on a casual or temporary basis (ABS, 2010:9).

Figure 2: Employment arrangements in NSW NGOs



Employment Duration

The survey also captured how long staff had worked for each organisation. This shows some stability. In over a third (35 percent) of organisations, all staff had worked there for a year or more. In 83 percent of organisations, there was at least one staff member who had worked there for four to nine years, while 69 percent of organisations employed staff who had worked there for 10 years or more.

Award Use and Coverage

The NGO Profiling Survey asked organisations information about the industrial awards or enterprise agreements they use to employ staff. Specifically, the survey asked organisations to estimate the proportion of FTE staff employed under the following industrial awards: the NSW SACS Award; other state and/or national awards (such as the NAPSA award); enterprise agreements; and ‘other’ arrangements. As the NSW SACS Award is the main award for the sector, organisations using this award were also asked to indicate approximately how many FTE staff are paid at each grade classification. No grade level information was collected on any other award which may be used within the sector (such as the NAPSA award). We are also limited in what we can report on the NAPSA award because this data is combined with information on other state and/or national awards and it is impossible to disaggregate the data.

Fifty nine percent of respondents reported that their organisations employed staff covered by the SACS Award, and 57 percent employed staff under other Awards (including NAPSA Award, used by some larger organisations in the transition from the national system, and childcare award). Further analysis did not reveal any clear relationship between organisational size based on FTE staff and use of other awards such as the NAPSA. However, there was a relationship between organisational activity and award type with

NGO's providing support for children, families and carers, significantly more likely to employ their FTE staff on other state and/or national awards (such as the NAPSA) than NGOs that provide other service activities. Presumably, this is because of the inclusion of childcare providers, who are traditionally not covered by the SACS Award, in this category. On average, 68% of the FTE staff employed by organisations who provide support for children, families and carers are employed on other state and/or national awards (such as the NAPSA award). In addition, NGO's receiving small levels of funding (i.e. less than \$500,000) were significantly more likely than NGO's receiving higher funding levels to employ staff on other state/national awards (such as the NAPSA). A relatively small proportion of organisations (13 percent) employed staff covered by enterprise agreements. Enterprise bargaining was least common in Community Services funded organisations (6 percent) and most common in NSW Health funded agencies (33 percent).

Almost three quarters (74 percent) of organisations funded by ADHC had staff working under the SACS Award whereas less than 50 (45 percent) of those funded by Community Services did. This may be because childcare providers receive CS funding, yet are traditionally covered by other awards. The highest proportion of organisations employing staff under the SACS Award came from those with multiple funding sources (81 percent). Two thirds (66 percent) of organisations funded by Community Services employed staff under Awards other than the NSW SACS Award, compared with 45 percent of ADHC funded and 30 percent of NSW Health funded services. This is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Proportion of organisations employing FTE staff on each award according to funding organisation

	ADHC	CS	NSW Health	Multiple Funding Sources
Sample size	n=249	n=384	n=30	N=79
NSW Social and Community Services (SACS) Award	74% * This result is significantly higher than for CS funded NGOs	45%	70% * This result is significantly higher than for CS funded NGOs	81% * This result is significantly higher than for CS funded NGOs
Other state and/or national awards (e.g. NAPSA award)	45%	66% * This result is significantly higher than for ADHC and NSW Health funded NGOs	30%	60% c
Enterprise agreements	19% * This result is significantly higher than for CS funded NGOs	6%	33% * This result is significantly higher than for CS funded NGOs	18% * This result is significantly higher than for CS funded NGOs
Other	4%	2%	0%	1%

To ascertain levels of award usage within organisations, means were calculated for the number of FTE staff employed under each arrangement. The means are reported in Table 3 below, with a more detailed breakdown provided in Tables 6 and 7 of the Final Interim Report. Note that these averages do not take account of organisational size. This analysis will be provided in the final project report.

On average, ADHC funded NGOs employed 62 percent of their staff under the SACS Award, whereas CS funded NGOs had lower levels of coverage (39 percent).

More than half (55 percent) of ADHC funded services had more than three quarters of staff under the SACS Award. In CS funded organisations that used the SACS Award, 40 percent employed more than half their FTE staff under it.

Table 3: Proportion of NGOs employing FTE staff under varying arrangements

	% staff in ADHC funded NGOs	% staff in CS funded NGOs
	n=242	n=381
NSW Social and Community Services (SACS) Award	62	39
Other state and/or national awards (e.g. NAPSA award)	26	57
Enterprise agreements	11	4
Other	1	1

Employment levels under the SACS Award

The survey asked the 434 NGOs that employed FTE staff under the SACS Award about their use of each grade classification. As shown below, high proportions of agencies use Grades 3 and 4 (currently paid in the range of \$19-25 an hour). In terms of numbers of workers at each level, the profile shows that staff employed under the SACS Award tend to be concentrated on the mid level grades (Grade 2, 3 and 4) currently paid in the range of \$16-25 an hour. Data collected for the Labour Dynamics project indicate that this level of pay can make it difficult for organisations to attract and retain quality staff (Cortis et al, 2009: 60).

The data in the second column has been used to estimate the number of FTE staff employed at each grade of the NSW SACS Award among the population of government funded agencies. These figures (reported in the third column) are estimates only. Their accuracy depends on how representative the survey sample is. In addition, there is a margin of error of +/-3%.

Table 4: Proportion of FTE staff employed under the SACS Award

	% of organisations employing one or more FTE	FTE staff employed in respondent organisations (n=434)	Estimate for FTE staff in NSW (margin of error +/-3%)
Community Services Worker Grade 1	12%	263	844
Community Services Worker Grade 2	40%	2512	8063
Community Services Worker Grade 3	64%	2189	7026
Community Services Worker Grade 4	63%	1616	5188
Community Services Worker Grade 5	52%	951	3054
Community Services Worker Grade 6	54%	589	1890

Figure 3: Proportion of Organisations employing at least one FTE staff member under each grade classification of NSW SACS Award

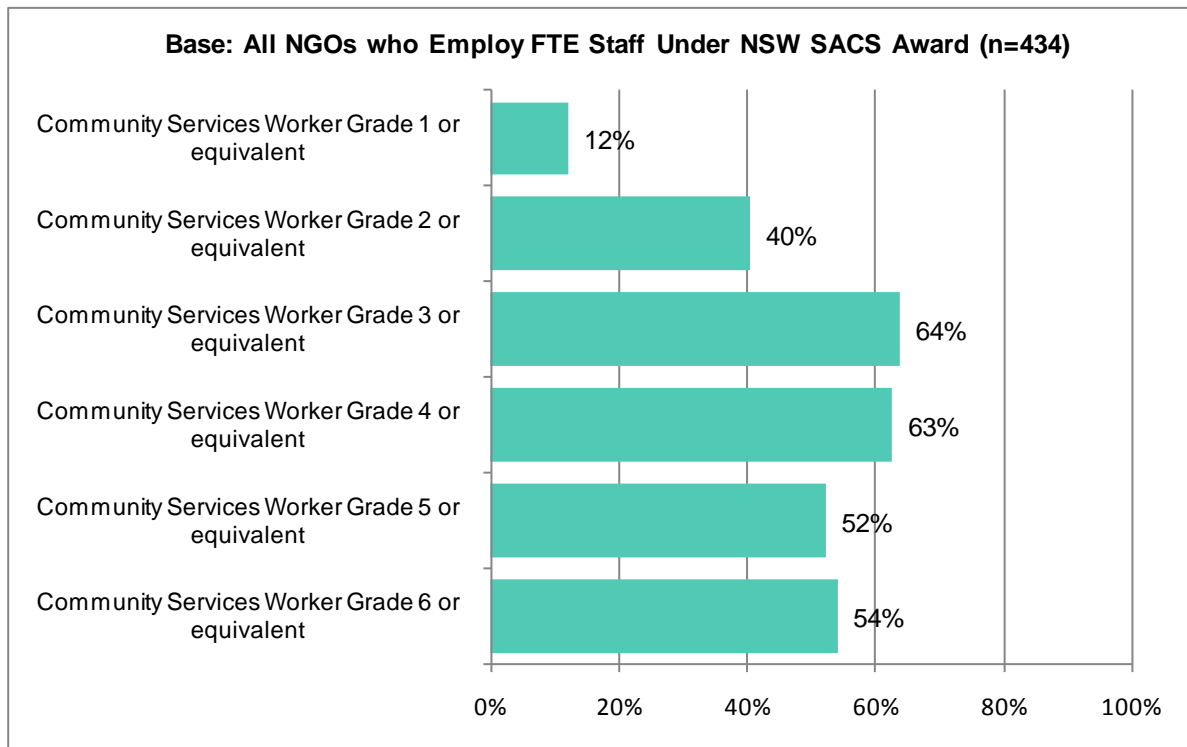
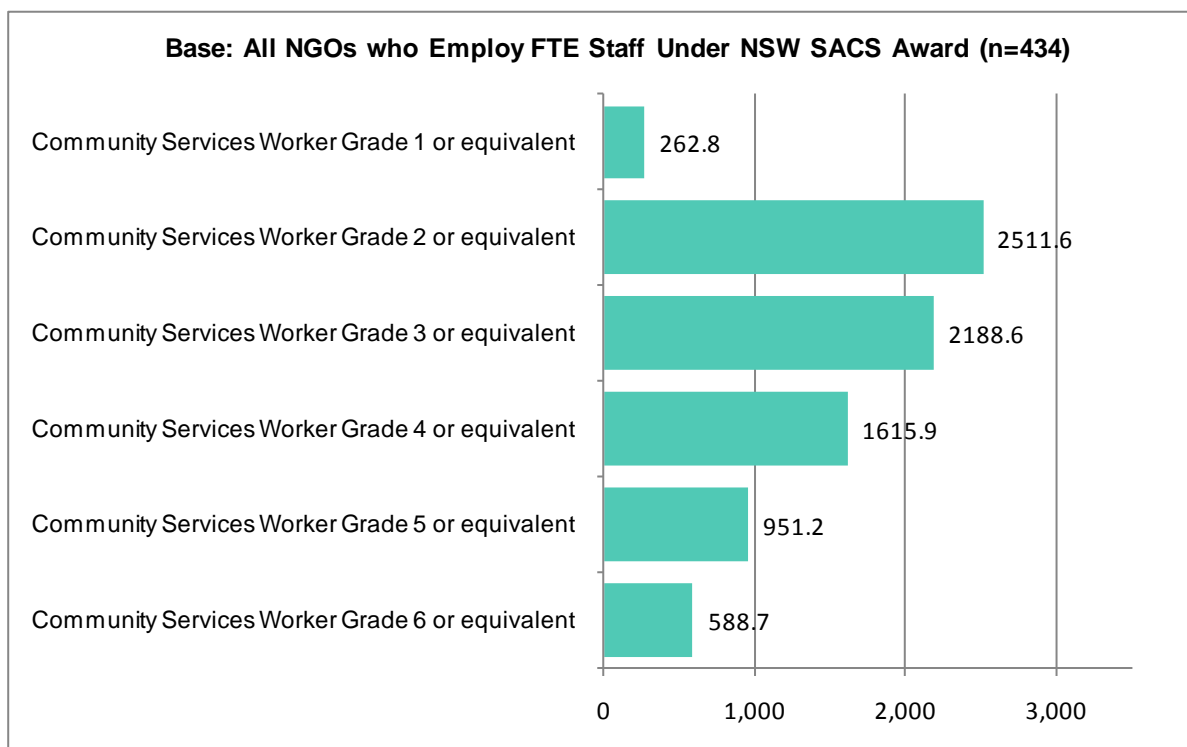


Figure 4: Numbers of FTE staff employed at each grade



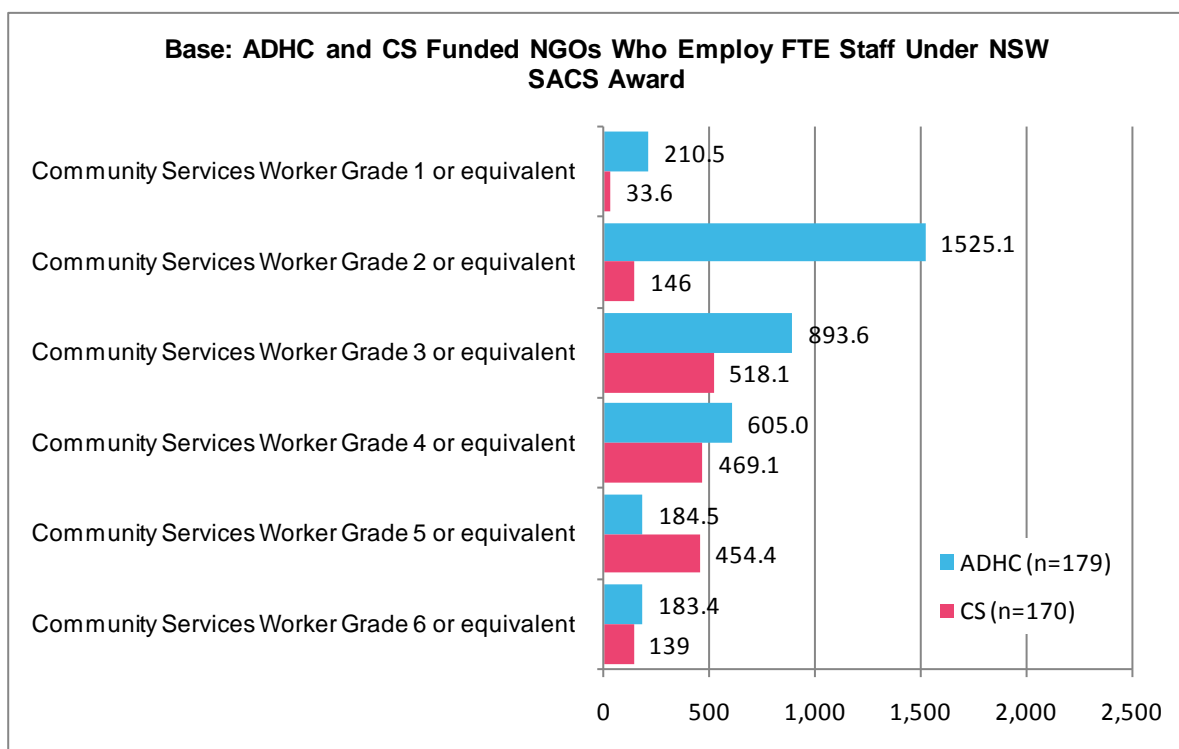
SACS Grades by Funding Agency

Table 5 shows the numbers of staff at each SACS Grade level in ADHC and CS funded organisations. This shows that staff in ADHC funded organisations tend to be concentrated on the lower Grades, with high numbers at Grade 2 (possibly because this is a common Grade level among Home Care workers). The data in the second column has been used to estimate the number of FTE staff employed at each grade of the NSW SACS Award among the population of government funded agencies. This figure is an estimate only and its accuracy depends on how representative the survey sample is. Again, there is a margin of error of +/- 3%.

Table 5: FTE numbers by SACS Award level

	FTE numbers in respondent organisations (n=434)		Estimate for FTE numbers in NSW (margin of error +/-3%)	
	ADHC (n=179)	CS (n=170)	ADHC (N=532)	CS (N=1398)
Community Services Worker Grade 1	211	34	450	122
Community Services Worker Grade 2	1525	146	3258	532
Community Services Worker Grade 3	894	518	1909	1886
Community Services Worker Grade 4	605	469	1293	1708
Community Services Worker Grade 5	185	454	394	1654
Community Services Worker Grade 6	183	139	392	506

Figure 5: Number of FTE Staff Employed at Each Grade of NSW SACS Award by funding agency



Employment at Grade 6

Those NGOs that employed staff at Grade 6 of the NSW SACS Award (31 percent) were asked whether they had employed staff at Grade 6 for more than 2 years, or more than 5 years. This offers further detail about the career paths offered under the SACS Award, especially for senior staff.

The majority (81 percent) of NGOs did employ staff who had been at Grade 6 for more than 2 years. For 63 percent of organisations, there was just one staff member who fell into this category, while 18 percent had two or more staff members at Grade 6 for more than 2 years. Only 6 percent had four or more FTE staff in this category.

Just under half (46 percent) had employees who had worked at Grade 6 for more than 5 years. For 37 percent, there was only one staff member that fell into this category, while 9 percent had two or more staff in this category. Only 3 percent of organisations had four or more staff at Grade 6 for over five years.

Above award payments

The survey asked NGOs that employed FTE staff under the SACS Award whether they paid staff above the SACS Award rate. The findings show relatively low rates of above award payment in this group. Most organisations (54 percent) did not pay above the award to any staff. 17 percent paid just one or two staff members above award rates, presumably CEOs or senior managers. 12 percent of organisations that used the SACS Award also paid 3 to 5 staff above award rates, and 16 percent paid more than 5 staff higher rates.

Those receiving the higher rates tended to be employed at higher levels. Most organisations (71 percent) did not pay any staff at grades 1-5 above award rates, but of those organisations with staff at Grade 6, over half paid at least some employees above award rates.

Perspectives on workforce issues and planning

To give organisations greater voice in future development activities, the survey also collected data on workforce issues and planning. Respondents were asked to identify the three most important issues confronting the sector. Responses were then coded into the main categories of response.

Funding emerged as a key theme, with 80 percent of respondents commenting on funding factors such as inadequate funding, short funding cycles, multiple and incompatible reporting requirements for government funding programs, and the competitive nature of tendering for funding. Responses included comments such as “unit costing is too low”; “funding: the lack of any increase in funding in real terms outside of CPI, in some areas for some 20 years” and “funding body reporting requirements constantly changing”.

A second area of concern related to labour dynamics, including issues relating to the recruitment, retention and movement of staff. Respondents identified factors such as “attracting suitably skilled workers on current wages” and “recruiting experienced and qualified staff, particularly in the area of management”. Issues on this theme were identified by 40 percent of respondents.

A third (and related area of concern) which was identified by 29 percent of respondents relates to working conditions, such as low pay, high caseloads and limited availability of training. Also identified by 29 percent of respondents were issues of governance, such as management structures and committees, bureaucracy, interaction with funding agencies and autonomy. A fourth area of concern, identified by 25 percent of respondents was the nature of the work, including dealing with clients with complex issues, and shortages of services.

Such comments, and the overall importance of funding issues to NGOs, are unsurprising. Focus groups with workers in non-government community services as well as consultations conducted with key stakeholders for the Labour Dynamics study found similar perspectives on recruitment, retention, working conditions and funding issues, also identifying funding inadequacy and the short term nature of funding contracts to be key issues for reform (Cortis et al 2009).

When asked to rank the most important issues confronting NGO community services today, the most important strategy is reform to funding contracts. Half (51 percent) of respondents ranked this strategy as the most important. Reform to funding arrangements thus appear integral to workforce development initiatives, as dissatisfaction leads to organisations feeling undervalued by the government, or that their role as partners with government agencies is undermined.

Award classification that recognises the skills of expert practitioners emerged as the second most important strategy, ranked as first or second by 29 percent of respondents. The development of an award structure that recognises the skills of expert practitioners was also identified in the Labour Dynamics study, with many participants concerned that quality workers needed to move out of face to face service delivery, and into management roles or to the public sector to maintain career progression.

The least important strategy for these respondents was portability of leave entitlements, in contrast to participants in the Labour Dynamics study, who placed higher priority on portability of leave.

Conclusion and next steps

This report provides a profile of organisations that are funded by core state government human service agencies to deliver community services. This shows that funded NGOs were primarily providing support for children, families and carers; were relatively small in terms of funding received and employee numbers, and were largely reliant on government funding. In terms of workforce characteristics, a small proportion of organisations (two percent) had less than one full time equivalent worker, and two thirds of organisations had ten or fewer staff. Most staff were women.

In terms of employment arrangements, almost all organisations employed one or more staff member on a permanent or ongoing basis, and just over half employed casuals. In a substantial proportion of organisations (35 percent), all staff had been employed for over a year, indicating some stability in the sector. 59 percent of organisations reported employing staff under the SACS Award, although this was higher in ADHC funded agencies. Further analysis excluding organisations providing childcare is likely to show higher levels of Award usage, and this will be provided in the final report. In terms of employment levels, SACS workers appear to be concentrated at the mid range, although staff in ADHC funded organisations tend to be concentrated at lower grades than others. In organisations with workers employed at Grade 6, the majority had a staff member who had been at that level for more than 2 years and just under half had a long term employee at Grade 6 (i.e. for more than 5 years). The findings also show limited use of above award payments. While more than half of organisations do pay above award rates these are paid to few staff members, mostly at higher levels.

The next phase of the project will refine and deepen this analysis, with the final report to be submitted to ADHC at the end of September, 2010. This report will include additional analysis of survey data, attempting to account, insofar as is possible, for bias. The report will extend analysis of survey data, by exploring, for example, how the findings may have been shaped by the inclusion of childcare providers, and levels of award coverage accounting for organisational size. The final report will also extend analysis of the qualitative data. In particular, it will analyse responses to the open ended question, to explore respondents' other thoughts about workforce issues in community services. The final report will also continue to contextualise the survey data, drawing on other literature and research sources, including the ABS Community Services Survey for 2008-09, which was released during the final stages of preparation of this report; the Productivity Commission's (2010) Report on the Contribution of the Not-for-Profit Sector; and the Meagher and Cortis (2010) recently released report examining the structure, workforce and pay equity issues of the Social and Community Services Sector in NSW.

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